Brook Primary School

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement

Children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and to grow up in a safe, secure and nurturing environment. Their welfare is paramount, and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Brook Primary School recognises its statutory duties under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We work in partnership with parents/carers, the Local Authority, safeguarding partners and other agencies to protect children from harm and support their wellbeing and development.

We are committed to providing a safe, caring and inclusive environment in which all children can learn, achieve and thrive. Our approach is child-centred, meaning that we always consider what is in the best interests of the child and take account of their views, wishes and feelings.

Safeguarding includes protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and radicalisation; promoting online safety, attendance, mental health and wellbeing; and preventing child-on-child abuse. As school staff have daily contact with children, they are well placed to identify concerns, recognise indicators of harm and respond appropriately. All staff are expected to maintain an attitude of *"it could happen here"* and follow school safeguarding procedures at all times.

This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, supply staff, contractors and anyone working on behalf of the school. It is consistent with statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and local safeguarding partnership procedures. The principles and procedures within this policy apply to all school activities, including extended provision, educational visits and off-site activities.

Approved by:	Ilona Wylde	**Date:** 01 September 2026
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IMPORTANT CONTACTS		
ROLE / ORGANISATION	**NAME**	**CONTACT DETAILS**
Designated Lead for Child Protection	Miss Sheryl Nicklin Assistant Head Teacher / SENDCO	info@brook.dudley.sch.uk 01384 389888
Deputy Designated Lead for Child Protection Filtering and Monitoring	Mrs Marie Fellows Head Teacher	info@brook.dudley.sch.uk 01384 389888
Deputy Designated Lead for Child Protection: Prevent Lead Filtering and Monitoring	Mr Matthew Allen Deputy Head Teacher	info@brook.dudley.sch.uk 01384 389888
Deputy Designated Lead for Child Protection	Miss Hannah Didlock Maths Lead	info@brook.dudley.sch.uk 01384 389888
Deputy Designated Lead for Child Protection	Mrs Rebecca Taylor Curriculum Lead	info@brook.dudley.sch.uk 01384 389888
Deputy Designated Lead for Child Protection	Mrs Stacey Waterworth Early Years Lead	info@brook.dudley.sch.uk 01384 389888
Named Governor for Safeguarding/Child Protection	Ms Lynn Partridge	info@brook.dudley.sch.uk 01384 389888
Chair of Governors	Mrs Ilona Wylde	info@brook.dudley.sch.uk 01384 389888
School CiC Designated Person:	Miss S Nicklin Assistant Head Teacher / SENDCO	info@brook.dudley.sch.uk 01384 389888
School E-Safety Lead:	Mr Matthew Allen Deputy Head	info@brook.dudley.sch.uk 01384 389888

Local Authority Designated Officer LADO):	Yvonne Nelson Brown / Sukchandan Kaur	allegations@dudley.gov.uk Sukhchandan.Kaur@dudley.gov.uk 01384813110
OFSTED	whistle blowing hotline	www.ofsted.gov.uk 0300 123 3155
Children's Front Door (MASH)		0300 555 0050 OPTION 3 ADVICE LINE
Out of Hours Duty Team /Emergency		0300 555 8574
Prevent Officers: DMBC Prevent SPOC WMP CTU	Mark Wilson PC Haroon Akhlaq (Rooney)	mark.wilson@dudley.gov.uk 01384 816 883 07966 503 370 haroon.akhlaq@westmidlands.police.uk 101 ext. 871 3035 07393 142188
WM Police Safeguarding in Schools	PC Kat Andrews	kat.andrews@westmidlands.police.uk
CHANNEL Helpline		020 7340 7264
Safeguarding in Education	Jane Dickens	Jane.Dickens@dudley.gov.uk 01384 810000
Exploitation Hub		CS.Hub@dudley.gov.uk Lorna Nolan
School Nurse	Nicola Low	07817076985
NSPCC		0800 028 0285
Dudley School Virtual Head	Emma Thomas	01384 813493 / 01384 813494
Brierley Hill Children's Centre Stourbridge Family Centre Halesowen Family Centre Family Help Guidance		01384 813322 01384 818780 01384 813954 http://www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/care-health/children-and-family-care/early-help-for-children-and-families/

1: Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding.
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues.
- Ensuring that safeguarding is a whole-school responsibility and that children are supported through a child-centred approach where their wishes, views and feelings are taken into account.

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEND) or disabilities.
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other protected characteristics.
- Have English as an additional language.
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence,
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual and criminal exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers.
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are Children in Care or previously Children in Care
- Are absent from education, persistently absent, or missing education.
- Whose parent/carer has informed the school of their intention to electively home educate.

KCSIE 2026 continues to highlight children who:

- are victims of child-on-child abuse
- are missing education
- have experienced abuse, neglect or adverse childhood experiences
- Are at risk of online harm, including abuse, exploitation or inappropriate use of technology

Staff should recognise that prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-targeted abuse and other discriminatory behaviour, may significantly impact a child's welfare, wellbeing and sense of safety and should be considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.

2: Legislation and statutory guidance (KCSIE 2026 Part Two page 29)

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, the Maintained Schools Governance Guide and Academy Trust Governance Guide. We comply with this guidance and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements published by the Dudley Safeguarding Partnership.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils

- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques.
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children.
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Act 2021, which recognises that children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse are victims in their own right.
- The Online Safety Act 2023, which strengthens protections for children online and supports schools in promoting online safety and digital resilience.

3: Definitions (KCSIE 2026 Part One: paragraphs 1-12 (pages 8-10)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children create, share or receive nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The safeguarding partners are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.
Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrators(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

4: Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or specific health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers.
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or disability.
- Have English as an additional language.
- Are known to be living in difficult situations, for example, temporary accommodation, domestic abuse, substance misuse or parental mental ill health.
- Are at risk of FGM, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, forced marriage or radicalisation.
- Are asylum seekers.

- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs.
- Are looked after, previously looked after or have a social worker (see section 12)
- Are absent from education, persistently absent or missing education.
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

5: Roles and responsibilities (KCSIE 2026 Part Two pages 35-50)

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- Attendance, online safety and healthy digital relationships
- How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, exploitation (including child criminal and sexual exploitation), abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based abuse, forced marriage, FGM and how to access support.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

Safeguarding is taught through a broad and balanced curriculum and pupils are supported to recognise risks, stay safe, develop resilience and know how and when to seek help.

5.1 All staff

All staff, including those who do not work directly with children, must read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Staff working directly with children and those with safeguarding responsibilities should also read Annex B as appropriate to their role.

Staff complete an annual online KCSIE module through Safeguarding Network.

DSL's will:

- Read and understand annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, KCSIE and review this guidance at least annually.
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns.

- Be aware of the school's filtering and monitoring systems and processes and understand their role in safeguarding children online.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct], the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the online safety policy, online safety expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, and the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education or missing education.
- The Family Help assessment process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific safeguarding issues such as FGM, child-on-child abuse, exploitation and online harm and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines and knife crimes)
- New and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm including the misuse of AI-generated content and imagery.
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online.
- The fact that children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning, or who are perceived to be, can be targeted by other children.
- That a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time, and that safeguarding concerns may overlap.
- That mental health concerns can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

Section 15 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) (KCSIE 2026 Part Two pages 37-38)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSLs are Miss Sheryl Nicklin (Assistant Head/SENDCo/ CiC Lead), Mrs Marie Fellows (Head Teacher) and Mr Matt Allen (Deputy Head). The DSL's take the lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

During term time, the DSL's will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The DSLs can be contacted outside school hours by email or phone where safeguarding concerns arise.

When the DSLs are absent, the deputies – Miss Hannah Didlock (SLT), Mrs Rebecca Taylor (SLT) and Mrs Stacey Waterworth (EY Lead) – will act as cover.

School also has a dedicated DSL email address for concerns from the community. The email address is: dsl@brook.dudley.sch.uk

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour.
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school which the head and business manager regularly review their effectiveness.
- Promote educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced.

The DSL's will also:

- Keep the headteacher informed of any issues
- Work with the safeguarding team and those responsible for filtering and monitoring to ensure systems are effective and reviewed regularly.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes, feelings and lived experiences when determining what action to take.
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies.
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment and be confident as to how to access this support.
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job description.

5.3 The governing board (KCSIE 2026 Part Two pages 35-50)

The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, including ensuring that children's wishes, views and feelings are considered when developing safeguarding policies and procedures. ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a safeguarding link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.
- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

- Ensure appropriate systems are in place to identify, monitor and respond to children who are absent from education, persistently absent or missing education.
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes:
- Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training including emerging online risks and technologies.
- Reviewing the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards
- The governing board will ensure that filtering and monitoring systems are reviewed, and their effectiveness evaluated and recorded at least annually.

  Make sure:

    - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support.
    - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.
    - The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure and ensure low-level concerns are recorded, reviewed and responded to appropriately.
- That this policy reflects that children with SEND, children with a social worker, or certain medical or physical health conditions.

Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):

- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place and inspect them if needed.
    - Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
    - Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

Governors will receive safeguarding training and should read and understand Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 relevant to their role.

Section 15 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

5.4 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.

- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training, resources and support, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns and ensuring they are recorded, reviewed and responded to appropriately, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.
- Ensuring that safeguarding, child protection, online safety and attendance remain key priorities across the school.
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person.
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones and cameras in the setting. This includes smart watches, AI-enabled devices, photo-sharing technology, camera-enabled glasses and other emerging technologies.
- Ensuring appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and regularly reviewed to safeguard pupils online.

5.5 Virtual school heads

Virtual school heads (VSHs) have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight and promotion of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of pupils with a social worker.

VSHs also have a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children in kinship care (children who live with a relative or close family friend).

They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, special educational needs co-ordinators (SENDCos), social workers, mental health leads and other relevant professionals involved in supporting children and families.

6: Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. All staff have a duty to share safeguarding and child protection concerns with the DSLs and relevant professionals.
This should normally be recorded promptly via the school's electronic safeguarding recording system, CPOMS.

We note that:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children. Information sharing may be particularly important when concerns relate to attendance, children missing education, exploitation or other safeguarding risks.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

- The DSL will consider the wishes, feelings and lived experiences of the child when making decisions about information sharing.
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests
- If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
- There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
- The DSL should consider that:
- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains
- Regarding anonymity, all staff will:
    - Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities
- Be aware that online platforms, emerging technologies and AI-generated content can increase safeguarding risks and may affect the sharing and protection of information.
- The governments information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners include 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to one of the DSL's (or deputies)
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

All staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and shall be alert to the potential need for Family Help for a child who:

- Has a disability
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education Health and Care Plan (EHC plan)
- Is a young carer.
- Has, or has previously had, a social worker.
- Is bereaved.
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime.

- Is absent from education, missing education, care or home.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online or is at risk from online abuse, exploitation or harmful online influences.
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Is suffering from mental ill health which may indicate an underlying safeguarding concern.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage.
- Is a privately fostered child.
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of or has been permanently excluded.
- Is, or is perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning.

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

We actively seek to understand and consider pupil's wishes and feelings in all aspects of safeguarding. We ensure children's voices are considered when making decisions that affect their safety, wellbeing and support in line with statutory guidance. Where appropriate, these views will be used to inform referrals, plans and interventions, whilst always maintaining a focus on their best interests and welfare.

Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean "the DSL (or deputy DSL)".

7.1 If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police immediately if you believe a child is suffering, is likely to suffer significant harm, or is in immediate danger. Anyone can make a referral. A referral can be made without parental consent where seeking consent may place a child at increased risk of harm or prejudice a child protection investigation.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or take advice from Local Authority Children's Social Care. Referrals should be made by completing a Request for Advice and Support Form on the Children's Services Portal or by contacting 0300 555 0050 or if a child is in immediate danger, call 999 and request the police.

Tell the DSL's (see section 5.2) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

Wherever possible, the child's wishes, feelings and lived experiences will be considered when making decisions, while ensuring their safety and welfare remain paramount.

Advice is also available at any time from the NSPCC helpline.

If it is appropriate to refer the case to Local Authority Children's Social Care or the Police, the DSL will make the referral or support others to do so. If you make a referral directly you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

Children's Social Care should make a decision about the type of response required within one working day of receiving a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the

outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the Local Authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

Child abuse can also be reported via the GOV.UK webpage:
https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions. Ensure they feel listened to, taken seriously and supported.
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset.
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Write up your conversation promptly, using the child's own words wherever possible. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process. Record the concern on CPOMS as soon as possible in accordance with school procedures.

Bear in mind that some children may:

- Not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated, frightened or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, SEND, age, language barriers, culture, race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity.

None of this should prevent staff from maintaining professional curiosity, speaking to the DSL and taking action if they have concerns about a child.

7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4 of this policy.

Any teacher who, in the course of their work, either:

- Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. This should be done as soon as possible and normally by the end of the working day.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 they should also inform the DSL as soon as possible and follow local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures. All concerns relating to FGM, including concerns that a child may be at risk, should be recorded in accordance with school safeguarding procedures.

7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Figure 1 below, before section 7.7, illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

Family Help assessment

Family Help should be provided as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. School staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in a Family Help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. The child's wishes, feelings and lived experiences will be considered as part of any assessment and support provided.

We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.

Family Help may be appropriate where concerns relate to attendance, wellbeing, behaviour, family circumstances or emerging safeguarding concerns.

Dudley's procedure for Family Help assessments is available on the Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership website at: dudleysafeguarding.org.uk.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so. Staff should not assume that someone else will take action and should follow up concerns if they believe appropriate action has not been taken.

If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

Children's Social Care should acknowledge and make a decision about the type of response required within one working day of receiving a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded. All actions, decisions and outcomes should be recorded in accordance with school safeguarding procedures.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

Resolution and Escalation Protocol:

When working with children and their families, professional challenge can be positive as challenge allows for review and can foster creative ways of working, however, disagreements can impact negatively on positive working relationships and consequently on the ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Disagreements always require resolution. The child's welfare, wishes and best interests must remain central throughout any escalation process.

Escalation is a process of formally challenging a decision made by another professional, group or organisation. Escalation procedures ensure that all professionals have a quick and straightforward means of resolving professional differences in order to safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

When any professional considers a child is at risk of significant harm, and they believe appropriate action has not been taken, then the individual must ensure their concerns are escalated on the same working day using the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

When a practice dispute pertaining to safeguarding arise, the concerned staff member should raise and attempt to resolve any issues directly. If the concern is not resolved, then Dudley's Resolution and Escalation Protocol must be followed.

Dudley's Resolution and Escalation Protocol can be found at: dudleysafeguarding.org.uk.

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism (KCSIE Part One)

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral. All concerns and actions should be recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. The child's wishes, feelings and individual circumstances will be considered when determining the most appropriate support and intervention.

Radicalisation is a safeguarding issue and should be treated in the same way as other forms of harm or abuse.

This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team. Channel is a voluntary, confidential programme which provides support for individuals who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger.
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group.
- See or hear something that may be terrorist related.

7.6 If you have a concern about mental health (KCSIE Part One, paras 44-47)

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.

Staff should be aware that mental health concerns can be both a safeguarding concern in their own right and an indicator that a child has experienced, or is at risk of experiencing, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Staff should not attempt to diagnose mental health conditions but should identify concerns and share them with the DSL and appropriate professionals.

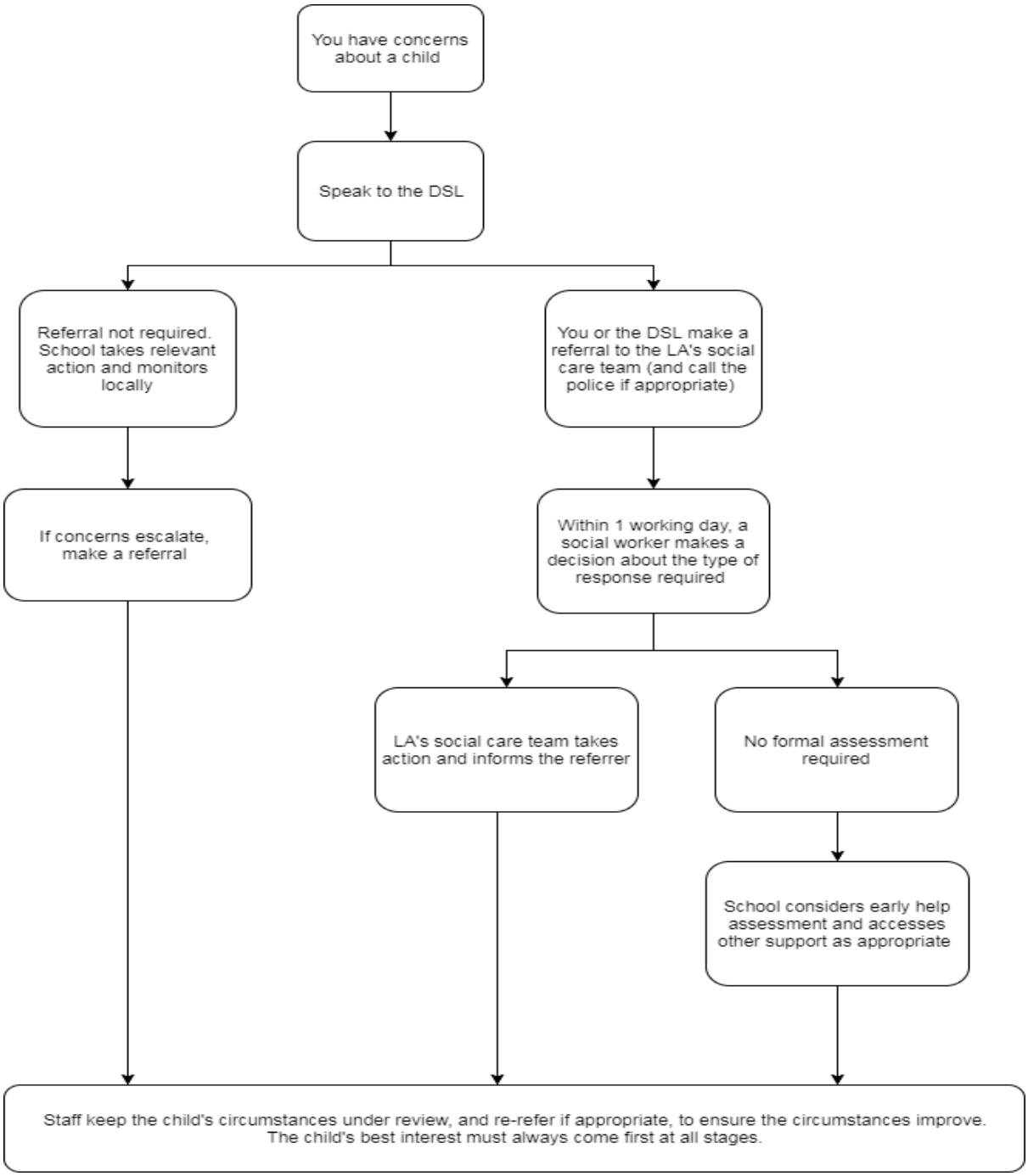
If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4.

If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action. Concerns should be recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding and wellbeing procedures.

Mental Health Lead: Miss Sheryl Nicklin (Senior Mental Health Lead Qualification)

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See section 7.4 for what to do.)



7.7 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor

(KCSIE Part 4)

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), this includes concerns that meet the harm threshold and concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level

concerns), posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. Staff should feel able to raise concerns and know that concerns will be taken seriously and managed appropriately.
If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.
The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO). Where staff feel unable to raise concerns internally, they should follow the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, appropriate safeguarding information will be shared with the organisation and relevant agencies where necessary and follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

Where required, the school will inform Ofsted and other relevant regulatory bodies of the allegation and actions taken. (see appendix 3 for more detail).

All concerns, allegations, actions and outcomes will be recorded in accordance with school safeguarding procedures

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils (Child-on Child) (KCSIE Part Two)

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up", as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils.

All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously, will be supported and kept safe.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school's behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence.
- Could put pupils in the school at risk.
- Is violent.
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol.
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, up skirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, online abuse and technology-facilitated harmful sexual behaviour.

See appendix 4 for more information about child-on-child abuse.

Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse.

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence

- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected and recognising that the alleged perpetrator may also require support and intervention) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

Contact will be made with the Local Authority children's social care team and advice followed. Risk assessments and support plan will be put into place for all children involved – both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed. In addition, contact will be made with the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) if appropriate.

Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images.
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about respectful relationships, consent, online safety and appropriate behaviour.
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 7.10 below)
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously.
- The wishes, feelings and lived experiences of the children involved will be considered when planning support.
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
- How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".
- That if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
- Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
- A friend may make a report.
- A member of staff may overhear a conversation.
- A child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong.

- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, SEND, disability, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, language barriers or other vulnerabilities.
- That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
- That social media, online platforms and emerging technologies may play a role in the fall-out from any incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side.

The headteacher / DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children's social care to determine this.
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing.

7.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting') (KCSIE 2026 Part Five)

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident.

If staff are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if the imagery has been viewed by accident, it must be reported to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.

Explain the need to report the incident and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL. Reassure the pupil that they are being taken seriously, supported and kept safe.

Determine (Initial review meeting)

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care
- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)

- What further information is required to decide on the best response.
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely, including via online platforms, social media, messaging services or other technologies.
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment.
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual.
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)
- The wishes, feelings and lived experiences of the child will be considered when determining support and next steps.

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult. Where an adult poses as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person, the incident may first present as a child-on-child incident. See appendix 4 for more information on assessing adult-involved incidents
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to SEND, age or vulnerability)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13.
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents/carers

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialling 101.

Recording incidents

All incidents, actions taken, decisions and outcomes will be recorded in accordance with school safeguarding procedures.

Curriculum coverage

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our computing, PSHE and RSE curriculum. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered, including through social media, messaging platforms and emerging technologies.
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment.
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images.
- The receipt of such images

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

Teaching follows best practice in delivering safe and effective education, including:

- Putting safeguarding first
- Approaching from the perspective of the child
- Promoting dialogue and understanding
- Empowering and enabling children and young people
- Never frightening or scare-mongering.
- Challenging victim-blaming attitudes

7.10 Reporting systems for our pupils

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise that some children may find it difficult to report concerns because of their age, SEND, disability, language, culture, previous experiences or personal circumstances.

We recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse, neglect, exploitation and any other safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils.
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, that they will be listened to and supported, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- Safeguarding concerns and reports are recorded promptly on CPOMS.
- Ensure pupils know who they can speak to in school if they have a concern about themselves or another child.

8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology (KCSIE 2026 Part Two, paragraphs 157-169)

We recognise that online safety is an integral part of safeguarding and that many safeguarding incidents may involve the use of technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors.
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community.
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate
- AI-generated content, deepfakes and manipulated images.

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

We recognise that some children, particularly those with SEND or other vulnerabilities, may be more susceptible to online risks.

To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will:

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology including misinformation; disinformation; and conspiracy theories
- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim. How to seek help and report concerns about online abuse, exploitation or harmful content.
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, misinformation; disinformation; and conspiracy theories, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year
- Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring and know how to report concerns identified through these systems.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them, so they know how to raise concerns about online safety.
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
- Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present.
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.

- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology.
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones.
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation Searches will be carried out in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and the DfE's Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance.
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems as set out by the DFE https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-technology-for-your-school. **School has a computing policy and uses the 'Classroom Cloud' filtering system.**
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community and considers emerging technologies and risks faced by our school community.
- Provide regular safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively, including emerging online risks and developments in technology.
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
- To ensure the safety of all pupils and staff and the safety of any devices, MOBILE PHONES ARE NOT PERMITTED in school. Year 5 and 6 pupils are allowed to walk to and from school with a phone, but phones will be handed in and securely stored throughout the school day. This is only in agreement with parents through signed consent. Any children found to have a mobile phone in school, will be asked to hand it in to be securely stored until the end of the day.
- To ensure the safety of all pupils and staff and the safety of any devices, SMART WATCHES ARE NOT PERMITTED to be worn by children in school (regardless of any restrictions). Any children found wearing a smart watch in school will be asked to remove it and it will be stored securely by the class teacher until the end of the day. Pupils are permitted to use a traditional analogue or digital watch / children's Fitbit (tracking health only). If they chose to do so at their own personal risk of property.

8.1 Artificial intelligence (AI) (KCSIE 2026 Part Two pages 46-50)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini.

School recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. We also recognise that online safety, including the use of AI, is an integral part of safeguarding. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying, harassment, exploitation and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful, misleading or inappropriate content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real. AI may also be used to create sexually explicit images, fake imagery or other content designed to cause harm, distress or reputational damage.

School will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our behaviour policy.

Staff will ensure that personal, confidential, or safeguarding information is not entered into AI platforms unless approved and compliant with data protection requirements. Appropriate risk assessments should be completed before introducing new AI tools within school.

Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-ai-product-safety-expectations/generative-ai-product-safety-expectations
Useful information to support safe use of AI can be found:

- https://chartered.college/safe-and-effective-use-of-ai-in-education/
- https://my.chartered.college/themes/safe-and-effective-use-of-ai-in-education/
- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education/generative-artificial-intelligence-ai-in-education
- https://www.iwf.org.uk/resources/ai-generated-child-sexual-abuse-material-professionals-resource/

9. Notifying parents or carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure. We will always consider the wishes, feelings and best interests of the child when deciding whether and how to involve parents or carers.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, this may include situations where there are concerns about abuse within the family, honour-based abuse, forced marriage, FGM, exploitation or where informing parents could place a child at greater risk of harm, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.
In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will take account of data protection requirements, confidentiality and the welfare of all children involved. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.
The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, ensuring the victim feels listened to, supported and kept safe, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed.
- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, recognising that children displaying harmful behaviour may themselves require safeguarding support and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

10. Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more vulnerable to abuse and neglect than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils.
- The potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- Difficulties in understanding, recognising or communicating that abuse, neglect or exploitation has occurred.

We offer extra pastoral support for these pupils. This includes:

- Support from the school SENDCo/Deputy SENDCo.
- Support from the Learning Mentor
- Support through the Caterpillar Hub and targeted SEMH provision.
- Any abuse involving pupils with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputy) and the SENDCo. Staff will consider the child's communication needs, wishes and feelings when assessing concerns and planning support.

11. Pupils with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

We recognise that children with a social worker may benefit from additional support to help improve their safety, wellbeing and educational outcomes.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children. The school will work closely with social workers and other relevant professionals to share information appropriately and ensure support is coordinated.

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support
- Decisions relating to safeguarding, wellbeing, attendance and additional support.

The wishes, feelings and lived experiences of the child will be considered when making decisions about support and intervention.

12. Looked-after, previously looked-after children, children who have a social worker (KCSIE 2026 Part Two pages 65-68)

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children looked-after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements.
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads. Appropriate staff understand the particular safeguarding, attendance, emotional wellbeing and educational challenges that looked-after and previously looked-after children may face.

We have appointed a designated teacher, Miss Sheryl Nicklin (Assistant Head and DSL) who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to. The wishes, feelings and lived experiences of the child will be taken into account when planning support and responding to concerns.
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement and support positive educational outcomes of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans.

13. Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (KCSIE 2026 Part One)

(The section of KCSIE 2025 on gender questioning children remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published).

We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children. Such behaviour will never be tolerated and will be addressed in line with the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies.

We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL. Staff should be alert to signs of distress, isolation, bullying or discrimination and respond in accordance with this policy.

When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning pupils, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children.

When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases neurodiversity and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs. the child's wishes, feelings and lived experiences will be taken into account when considering support and any safeguarding response, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

14. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

14.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints, concerns or allegations against staff that may indicate a safeguarding or child protection concern will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

14.1 Other Complaints

Other complaints will be handled in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedure.

14.2 Whistleblowing

If staff have concerns about the conduct of a colleague, volunteer, governor, contractor or any aspect of safeguarding practice, they should follow the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

If an allegation is made against any governor, including the Chair of Governors, the Headteacher will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

If the allegation is against the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors, Deputy Head will contact the LADO.

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff within our school, who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 0280285. The email address is: help@nspcc.org.uk

All staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice and should know that such concerns will be taken seriously and managed appropriately.

15. Record-keeping (KCSIE 2026 Part Two, paragraphs 151-156)

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the rationale for those decisions, must be recorded in writing via CPOMS. Records should include the child's wishes, feelings and lived experiences where these are known and relevant to the safeguarding concern. The reasons for decisions taken should be clearly recorded. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme, etc. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely in accordance with data protection legislation and the school's records management procedures and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main pupil file. Receipt of the file should be obtained and recorded.

To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- **5 days** for an in-year transfer, or within
- **The first 5 days** of the start of a new term

In line with statutory guidance, a copy of the child's child protection file will be retained by the school until confirmation of receipt has been received from the receiving school.

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

In addition:

- Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-appointment checks.

- Appendix 3 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

16. Training

16.1 All staff (KCSIE 2026 Part Two, paragraphs 146-150)

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning.
- Be in line with local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring and awareness of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI).
- Include child-on-child abuse, online safety (including filtering and monitoring), and emerging safeguarding risks.
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
- Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment.
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety updates, throughout the academic year and at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).
Volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding information, training and supervision appropriate to their role.

16.2 The DSL and Deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. The training will equip them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role and understand local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, and at least annually, to keep up with developments relevant to their role (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments). This will include maintaining an understanding of online safety, filtering and monitoring systems, and emerging technologies and risks.

They, or any other designated Prevent lead, will also undertake more in-depth Prevent awareness training, including understanding the risks of radicalisation, extremism and terrorism.

16.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge and promoting a strong safeguarding culture throughout the school.
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding, including online safety and the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems.

As the Chair of Governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation or safeguarding concern is raised about the Headteacher, they will receive appropriate training in managing allegations and liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
Governors will understand the importance of attendance, children missing education and persistent absence as safeguarding issues.

16.4 Recruitment – interview panels (KCSIE Part 3)

At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education and safer recruitment requirements and will be in line with local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Interview panels will explore candidates' suitability to work with children and their commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

See appendix 2 of this policy for more information about our safer recruitment procedures.

16.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families.

All staff who have contact with children and families will have supervisions which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues. These arrangements support effective safeguarding practice, staff wellbeing and professional development.

17. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSLs. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board. The policy will be reviewed and updated sooner if there are changes to statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements or school procedures.

18. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Computing and Online Safety Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy

- Equality Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Curriculum Policies
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Privacy Notices
- Supporting Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Policy

These appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Appendix 1: types of abuse (KCSIE Part 1 para 18-27)

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by 1 definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another including domestic abuse.

- Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including online, through the internet, social media and other technologies)

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Neglect can occur both inside and outside the home.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 2: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

(KCSIE 2026 Part Three)

Recruitment and selection process

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

Staff involved in recruitment should be alert to applicants who may seek to harm children and ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are explored throughout the recruitment process.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-a-teachers-record

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/individuals-prohibited-from-managing-or-governing-schools

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken.
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children.

- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account.

Application forms

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders.

Shortlisting

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them.
- Explore all potential concerns.

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
    - If they have a criminal history
    - Whether they are included on the barred list
    - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
    - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
- Any relevant overseas information
- If they are known to the police and children's social care and if they have been disqualified from providing childcare
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true.

We will carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of our due diligence process to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations.
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed.

- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children.
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate.
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed.

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently and ask candidates to explain this.
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made.

Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity.
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed, we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken.
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available.
- Verify that they have the health and physical capacity to carry out the role, with reasonable adjustments where required.
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards.
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate.
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher.
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
    - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
    - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out work regularly in a school or college that meets the legal definition of regulated activity, including teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children. For volunteers, supervision alone does not remove the activity from the scope of regulated activity, or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.

Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left.

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity.
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment.
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.
- Volunteers will receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role.
- Supervision alone does not remove a volunteer from regulated activity.

Governors

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008). [Section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have retained or been delegated any management responsibilities.]
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Staff working in alternative provision settings.

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform, as well as written information about any arrangements that may put the child at risk. The Provider must notify the school of any changes - risk/ staff changes. We will review placements regularly (at least half termly) to ensure suitability and safeguarding. Accurate records will be kept of where the child is including all sites attended. We will always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. School will immediately review or end placement if safeguarding concerns arise.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Pupils staying with host families.

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff (KCSIE Part 4)

Section 1: allegations that may meet the harm threshold.

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school.

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult out Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors [in independent schools: proprietor] where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

If we receive an allegation of an incident happening while an individual or organisation was using the school premises to run activities for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures and inform our LADO.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold will be managed in accordance with Section 2 of this appendix.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved.

Suspension of the accused will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned.
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children.
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children.
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted.
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the Dudley Local Authority

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded**: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

The welfare, wishes and feelings of the child will remain central to all decision-making.

Procedure for dealing with allegations.

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below.
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies.
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate.

- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care.
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details.
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate.
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate such as, medical support, counselling.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice.
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the school will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome.
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation.
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required.

- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)
- The school will work closely with the employer or agency to ensure safeguarding concerns are managed appropriately, and information is shared where required.

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week.
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days.
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days.

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution.

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated.

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension.

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared.
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality.
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved.
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

We will retain all records at least until the accused individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious.
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff.
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold.

The section is based on 'Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school.
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils

Sharing low-level concerns

Low-level concerns should be reported as soon as possible to the Headteacher.

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others.
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section 7.7 of this policy.
- Empowering staff to self-refer.
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system.
- Have an open-door policy.
- Have a culture of trust, respect and without fear of reprimand or judgment.

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously.
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's code of conduct. The headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken. Records will be reviewed periodically to identify any patterns of concerning behaviour.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harm threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority.
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance.

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

This appendix is based on the safeguarding issues described in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. It includes information on specific safeguarding issues that staff should be aware of when identifying children who may need help or protection.

These issues include, but are not limited to, child abduction and community safety incidents, children and the court system, children with family members in prison, county lines, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), modern slavery, trafficking, cybercrime, serious violence, radicalisation and other safeguarding concerns identified within KCSIE 2026.

Assessing adult-involved nude and semi-nude sharing incidents

This section is based on annex A of the UK Council of Internet Safety's advice for education settings.

All adult-involved nude and semi-nude image sharing incidents are child sexual abuse offences and must immediately be referred to police/social care. However, as adult-involved incidents can present as child-on-child nude/semi-nude sharing, it may be difficult to initially assess adult involvement.

There are two types of common adult-involved incidents: sexually motivated incidents and financially motivated incidents.

Sexually motivated incidents

In this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nude and semi-nudes directly from a child or young person using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present themselves or use a false identity on the platform, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender often grooms the child or young person on social media, in chatrooms or on gaming platforms, and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made. To encourage the child or young person to create and share nude or semi-nude, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material (images of other young people), including AI-generated material.

Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, an offender may blackmail the child or young person into sending more images by threatening to release them online and/or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person.

- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images.
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform.
- Coerced/pressured into doing sexual things, including creating nudes and semi-nudes.
- Offered something of value such as money or gaming credits.
- Threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing the image or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person to extort 'real' images.

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often known as 'sextortion') is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender (or offenders) threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else to benefit them.

Unlike other adult-involved incidents, financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by offenders working in sophisticated organised crime groups (OCGs) overseas and are only motivated by profit. Adults are usually targeted by these groups too.

Offenders will often use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or hack another young person's account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- Groom or coerce the child or young person into sending nudes or semi-nudes and financially blackmail them.
- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person taken through hacking their account
- Use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child or young person

The offender may demand payment or the use of the victim's bank account for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person. They may be contacted by a hacked account of a child or young person.
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing an image first
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform.
- Pressured into taking nudes or semi-nudes.
- Told they have been hacked, and they have access to their images, personal information and contacts.
- Blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated images of the child or young person.

Children Missing Education (CME)

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect.
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM.
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families.
- Come from the families of service personnel.

- Go missing or run away from home or care.
- Are supervised by the youth justice system.
- Cease to attend a school.
- Come from new migrant families.
- Persistent absence
- Severe absence

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being absent, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

The school recognises that children missing education are at significant risk of underachievement, safeguarding concerns, exploitation, neglect, abuse, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. Staff will follow attendance and safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

Alternative Provision:

When the school places a pupil with an Alternative Provision (AP) provider, the school retains overall responsibility for the pupil's safeguarding and welfare. The school must be satisfied that the placement is suitable and able to meet the pupil's educational, social, emotional, behavioural, and safeguarding needs.

Prior to placement, the school will obtain written confirmation from the provider that all appropriate safeguarding and safer recruitment checks have been completed on staff and other adults working with pupils, in line with statutory requirements. The provider must also provide written information regarding any safeguarding arrangements, risks, or circumstances that may impact the pupil's safety and wellbeing and must notify the school immediately of any significant changes, including staffing changes, safeguarding concerns, or emerging risks.

Where a pupil is dually registered, each setting is responsible for safeguarding the pupil while they are attending that provision. Both settings will work collaboratively, sharing relevant information and maintaining effective communication to ensure the pupil's safety and wellbeing at all times.

The school will monitor and review all Alternative Provision placements regularly, and at least half-termly, to ensure that placements remain appropriate, effective, and safe. Accurate records will be maintained of the pupil's attendance, whereabouts, and all sites attended. The school will always know where a pupil is based during school hours and will hold up-to-date details of the provider's address, together with any subcontracted provision or satellite sites used. If safeguarding concerns arise, the school will take immediate action to review the placement and, where necessary, end the arrangement to protect the pupil's welfare.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

While many children who are electively home educated receive a positive and effective learning experience, Elective Home Education (EHE) can, in some cases, result in children being less visible to the services that help to safeguard and support them. There is also a risk that some children may not receive a suitable education that meets their needs.

The school will work closely with parents/carers and relevant agencies to ensure that any decision to electively educate has been carefully considered and is in the child's best interests. Where a decision is made to remove

a child from school roll for EHE, the school will ensure that all appropriate procedures are followed and that relevant professionals and agencies are informed, in line with local authority and safeguarding requirements.

Child criminal exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a child:

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online and can occur simultaneously between the 2.

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are there no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is 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)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Up skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma and will offer them appropriate support.

Domestic abuse

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others – for example, the impact of all forms of domestic abuse on children.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is the procedure where police forces are part of Operation Encompass

The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

The DSL and deputies will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place.
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out.
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
    - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
    - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
    - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
    - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
    - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
- Being repeatedly absent from school or absent for a prolonged period.
    - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
    - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
    - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
    - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin.

- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out.
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.
- A girl:
    - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM.
    - Having limited level of integration within UK society
    - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman".
    - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period.
    - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM.
    - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
    - Being unexpectedly absent from school
    - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced marriage.

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 1 or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

It is also illegal to cause a child under the age of 18 to marry, even if violence, threats or coercion are not involved.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the '1 chance' rule, i.e. we may only have 1 chance to speak to the potential victim and only 1 chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place.
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate.

Preventing radicalisation

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.
- **Extremism** is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to**:**
    - Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
    - Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
    - Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results outlined in either of the above points.

- **Terrorism** is an action that:
    - Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people.
    - Causes serious damage to property; or
    - Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system.

  The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website Educate Against Hate and charity NSPCC say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities, they used to enjoy.
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views.
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

Further information on the school's measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in other school policies and procedures, including computing and online safety, PSHE and RSE

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they 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 any form of abuse or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

- Reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them
- Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt.
- Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns.
- Consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again.
- Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence and show sensitivity to their needs.

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

Serious violence

Indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups.
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above))

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- Being male
- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school.
- Having experienced child maltreatment
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign in and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate)

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will:

- Bring the child(ren) to the school office and call the first contact.
- If unsuccessful, we will call the second and third contact for the child(ren)
- While waiting collection, the child(ren) will wait with an adult in school or be moved to the afterschool club (Buddies)
- If in the event of no contact being made, two members of staff will attempt to take the child home.
- In the event of no one home and no collection by school closure, children's services will be called.

Missing pupils

See attendance policy.

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will:

- Parents / carers will contact school as soon as possible on the first day of absence through the school absence line.
- If no contact made, on the first day of absence school will call.
- Home visits or home collection will be undertaken if needed.
- Invite parents/ carers to discuss absence(s) with our Attendance Support Office and/ or a member of the SLT if absence persists.
- If necessary, referrals will be made to the Local Authority Absent from Education

Children Requiring Mental Health Support

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse childhood experiences.

All staff should be alert to behavioural changes, emotional wellbeing concerns, attendance issues, friendship difficulties, self-harm, low mood, anxiety or other indicators that a child may be experiencing mental health difficulties.

Staff should be aware that only appropriately trained professionals can diagnose mental health conditions. However, all staff have a responsibility to identify concerns, provide support where appropriate and share concerns with the DSL.

If a member of staff has a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they must follow the child protection procedures set out in this policy. Where appropriate, the school will work in partnership with parents/carers, health professionals and external agencies to ensure that children receive the support they need.

Children with a Social Worker

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding, welfare or family needs. Children with a social worker may be vulnerable to further harm, educational disadvantage and poor outcomes.

The school recognises that experiences such as abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, parental mental ill health, substance misuse and family breakdown can impact upon a child's safety, wellbeing and educational progress.

Where the school is aware that a pupil has a social worker, this information will be taken into account when making decisions about safeguarding, wellbeing, attendance, behaviour and support. Staff will work closely with social workers and other professionals to help safeguard and promote the welfare of these children and improve their educational outcomes.

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement occurs when a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if they have a disability) lives with someone who is not their parent, stepparent, grandparent, sibling, aunt, uncle or legal guardian for 28 days or more.

Private fostering is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer. The local authority must be informed of all private fostering arrangements so that appropriate checks and support can be provided.

Staff should report any concerns or awareness of a private fostering arrangement to the DSL immediately. The DSL will make the necessary enquiries and notify Children's Social Care where appropriate.

Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent, carer or any person with lawful responsibility for the child. It can occur within families, between acquaintances or by strangers.

Community safety incidents can occur both inside and outside school and may include serious violence, terrorism, public disorder, local critical incidents or other events that may affect the safety and wellbeing of pupils.

Where the school becomes aware of a community safety incident that may impact pupils, appropriate support will be provided, safeguarding risks assessed and information shared with pupils, staff and families where necessary and appropriate.

Children and the Court System

Some children may be required to participate in the criminal or family court system either as witnesses, victims or through family proceedings. This can be a stressful and confusing experience for children and young people.

Staff should be aware that support is available for children involved in court proceedings and should inform the DSL if they become aware of any child who may require additional support or safeguarding consideration as a result of their involvement in the court system.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers, digital devices or networks. It can include unauthorised access to computer systems, online fraud, hacking, denial-of-service attacks and the creation or distribution of malicious software.

Children may be vulnerable to involvement in cybercrime through online communities, gaming platforms, social media or through contact with individuals who encourage illegal online activity.

Indicators may include excessive interest in hacking, attempts to bypass school security systems, unexplained access to multiple online accounts, or discussions relating to illegal online activity.

If staff have concerns that a pupil may be involved in, or at risk of involvement in, cybercrime, they should report their concerns to the DSL, who will consider whether further support, intervention or referral is required.

Online Safety and Harmful Online Challenges

The school recognises that online safety is an integral part of safeguarding and that many safeguarding concerns now involve the use of technology. Children and young people may be exposed to risks online from other people, harmful content, their own online behaviour, or commercial activity. These risks can occur both at school and at home.

All staff should be aware that online abuse can take place between children, between children and adults, and through the use of social media, gaming platforms, messaging services, livestreaming platforms, websites and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI).

Staff will remain vigilant to signs that a child may be at risk online, including:

- Excessive secrecy about online activity or device use.
- Sudden changes in behaviour, mood or wellbeing linked to online interactions.
- Receiving gifts, money, gaming credits or other items from unknown sources.
- Being upset or distressed after going online.
- Experiencing online bullying, harassment or abuse.
- Being involved in sharing nude or semi-nude images.
- Having contact with unknown individuals online.
- Accessing age-inappropriate, harmful or extremist content.

- Being pressured to take part in harmful online challenges, dares or trends.

Harmful Online Challenges

Online challenges and trends can spread rapidly through social media, video-sharing platforms and gaming communities. Whilst many online challenges are harmless, some may encourage risky, dangerous or illegal behaviour that places children at risk of significant physical or emotional harm.

Examples may include challenges involving:

- Self-harm or dangerous physical activity.
- Strangulation, choking or breath-holding activities.
- Risk-taking behaviour in public places.
- Consumption of harmful substances.
- Encouraging violence, criminal activity or abuse.
- Coercion, humiliation or exploitation of others.

Staff should be alert to pupils discussing, participating in or sharing content relating to harmful online challenges and should report concerns to the DSL immediately.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Emerging Technologies

Staff should be aware that AI-generated content may be used to create convincing fake images, videos and audio recordings (commonly known as deepfakes). AI may also be used to facilitate bullying, harassment, exploitation, grooming or the creation and sharing of inappropriate images.

Any misuse of technology, including AI-generated imagery or content that places a child at risk of harm, will be managed in accordance with this policy and the school's Online Safety and Behaviour Policies.

Responding to Concerns

If staff identify concerns that a child may be at risk from online harm, harmful online challenges, online exploitation or inappropriate use of technology, they should:

- Record the concern promptly using the school's safeguarding recording system.
- Report the concern to the DSL without delay.
- Follow the procedures outlined within this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where appropriate, the school will work in partnership with parents/carers, external agencies, social care and the police to ensure children receive appropriate support and protection.

Online safety is taught through the curriculum, including Computing, PSHE and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), helping pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and resilience needed to stay safe in an increasingly digital world.