South Farnham Educational Trust

The Continual Pursuit of Excellence

THE Raleigh SCHOOL

# CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

REVIEW: ANNUALLY LAST REVIEW DATE: SUMMER 2026

Contents


Introduction and Policy Aims ..... 2
Safeguarding Statement 2026 – "Safeguarding is Everyone's Business" ..... 3
Policy Aims ..... 3
Policy Principles and Values ..... 3
Supporting Children ..... 3
Definitions ..... 4
Key Personnel ..... 5
The Law (legislation and statutory guidance) ..... 6
Equalities Statement ..... 8
Roles and responsibilities ..... 8
Role of the school ..... 9
All Staff ..... 9
The Headteacher: ..... 11
The Designated Safeguarding Lead: ..... 12
The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) ..... 14
The Governing Body ..... 15
What to do if you have concerns about a child's welfare ..... 17
Dealing with safeguarding concerns ..... 18
How children can report concerns ..... 19
Early help ..... 20
If a child has experienced or is at risk of Female Genital Mutilation ..... 21
Concerns about nudes or semi-nudes ..... 21
Responding to Allegations of Child-on-Child Abuse ..... 23
Responding to Allegations of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence ..... 23
Concerns about mental health ..... 24
Concerns about Extremism and Radicalisation ..... 24
Racist Incidents ..... 25
Confidentiality, Sharing and Withholding Information ..... 25
Notifying Parents or Carers ..... 25
Record Keeping ..... 26
Concerns or Allegations Made About Adults in Our School ..... 26
Whistleblowing ..... 29
Online Safety ..... 29
Filtering and Monitoring ..... 31
Information Security and Access Systems ..... 31
Children potentially at greater risk of harm ..... 32
Children Who Have a Social Worker ..... 32
Children Looked After and Previously Looked After ..... 32
Returning Home from Care ..... 33
Children with Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Health Issues ..... 33
Children with Family Members in Prison ..... 33
Children and the Court System ..... 34
Lettings ..... 34
Extended School and Off-Site Arrangements ..... 35
Training ..... 35
Linked Policies ..... 37
Appendix 1: Types Of Abuse and Specific Safeguarding Concerns ..... 38
Types of Abuse ..... 38
Specific Safeguarding Concerns ..... 39
Appendix Two: DSL/DDSL Supervision Agenda ..... 57
Appendix Three: Staff Concern Form ..... 59


## Introduction and Policy Aims

Safeguarding Statement 2026 – “Safeguarding is Everyone’s Business”

The Raleigh has a duty to keep children safe. This includes how we protect children from experiencing harm and how we should respond when we suspect or confirm that a child is being harmed.

Children are at the centre of everything we do at The Raleigh. We are committed to providing our children with a sense of belonging and an environment that is welcoming, safe, valuable and respectful. Adults in our school know that keeping children safe is everybody’s responsibility and that all children, regardless of age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity, religion or lack of religion have equal rights to protection and opportunities.

Policy Aims

The aims of these procedures are:

- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school and ensure that safeguarding follows a whole school approach.
- Clarifying safeguarding expectations for members of the school’s community, staff, governors, children, and their families.
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient, and robust safeguarding culture in the school built on shared values; that children are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other and staff with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.
- Supporting contextual safeguarding practice recognising that the school’s site can be a location where harm can occur.
- Setting expectations for developing knowledge and skills within the school’s community (staff, children, parents/carers) to the signs and indicators of safeguarding issues and how to respond to them.
- Early identification of need for vulnerable learners and provision of proportionate interventions to promote their welfare and safety.
- Working in partnership with children, parents/carers, and other agencies in the Local Authorities Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Policy Principles and Values

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Maintain an attitude of “It could happen here”.
- Maintain a “zero-tolerance” approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Children have a right to feel safe and secure, they cannot learn effectively unless they do so.
- All children have a right to be protected from harm and abuse.
- All staff have a role in the prevention of harm and abuse and an equal responsibility to act immediately on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm, either in the school or in the community, taking into account contextual safeguarding, in accordance with statutory guidance.
- We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working to protect and safeguard children.
- Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, it reserves the right to contact Social Care or the Police, without notifying parents if this is believed to be in the child’s best interests.
- We will always act in the best interests of the child and ensure that our decisions around safeguarding take a child-centred and coordinated approach.

Supporting Children

Our school will support all children by:

- Providing a safe place and stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. The school recognises that a child who is abused or witnesses abuse and/or violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth. Research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Teaching young children the language of feelings, helping them to appropriately develop their emotional literacy.
- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum and through positive relationships within the school community.
- Ensuring children are taught to understand and manage risk through Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and Relationship, Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) through all aspects of school life, including staying safe online.
- Responding with clear boundaries about what is safe and acceptable for children and seeking to understand the triggers for their behaviour.
- Ensuring children are made aware of and have access to details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support.
- Liaising and working in partnership with support services and agencies involved in early help and the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying children's social care without delay if there is an immediate risk of significant harm.
- Ensuring children and learners feel secure and that they experience positive support from all staff knowing that they demonstrate their emotional security through the secure attachments they form with those who look after them and through their physical and emotional well-being.
- Providing continued support to children about whom they have concerns and those who leave the school by ensuring that information is shared confidentially with the child's new school. The school will ensure records are forwarded as a matter of priority and within statutory timescale.
- The designated safeguarding lead will consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.
- Providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.
- Establishing and maintaining an ethos where children feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Including regular consultations with children e.g. through questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying activity, asking children to report whether they feel safe in the school.
- Including safeguarding across the curriculum, including PSHE, PSED (EYFS) opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help. In particular, this will include anti-bullying work, online-safety, accessing emergency services and road safety. Also focused work in Year R to ensure they are ready for the transition to KS1 learning and Year 6 to prepare for transition to secondary school and more personal safety/independent travel. And in Key Stage 4 for transition into college. It is also recognised that effective education will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special education needs or disabilities.
- Providing preventative education by creating a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/ misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence and sexual harassment.

**Definitions**

KCSIE defines Safeguarding as the process for protecting children from harm and abuse, whether that is within or outside the home, as well as online. This includes:

- 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 the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Making sure 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 a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Child(ren)** includes everyone under the age of 18.

**Child looked after (CLA)** is another term for 'Looked After Child'.

**C-SPA** refers to the Surrey Children's Single Point of Access.

**DSL** where appropriate also refers to Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

**Early help** is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.

The local safeguarding partnership has three partners:
1. Chief Executive of Surrey County Council (Children's Services)
2. Chief Executives of Surrey Heartlands and Frimley Integrated Care Boards, and
3. The Chief Constable of Surrey Police

**MAP** refers to the Surrey Multi-Agency Partnership.

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

**School** means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent schools, including academies and free schools, non-maintained special schools, maintained special schools and alternative provision, including pupil referral units.

**Social Care** refers to Children's Services in the area in which the child is resident, unless a child is a Child Looked After then this will be the Children's Services in their home authority.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This includes, but is not limited to, employed staff, contractors, volunteers, governors/trustees, supply staff and self-employed staff.
Statutory means what has been decided or is controlled by the law.
Statutory guidance tells us what schools and local authorities must do to follow the law.

The Raleigh will publish our safeguarding and child protection policy on our website and hard copies will be available on request from the school office.

**Key Personnel**

| |
|---|
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: Elizabeth Carter-McQueen<br>Contact details: ecartermcqueen@sfet.org.uk<br><br>Deputy DSL(s) is/are:<br>Katharine Garcia kgarcia@sfet.org.uk<br>Reece Fitzgerald rfitzgerald@sfet.org.uk |

Phone number for all: 01483 282988

Safeguarding Governor Link: Giles Puckle
gpuckle@sfet.org.uk

The Headteacher is: Elizabeth Carter-McQueen

Designated Teacher for Children Looked After is Katharine Garcia
Contact details: kgarcia@sfet.org.uk

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) is Katharine Garcia
Contact details: kgarcia@sfet.org.uk

Designated Teacher for Young Carers is: Katharine Garcia
Contact details: kgarcia@sfet.org.uk

**Children's Services**

**Children's Single Point of Access (C-SPA)**

Anyone can contact the C-SPA about a child, young person or parent/carer who needs support in Surrey. This could be a concern about how the child is developing, issues that the parent or carer is experiencing, or you suspect a child is being neglected or subjected to physical, sexual, or emotional abuse.
Surrey's Child Protection Consultation Line for advice and support (0300 470 9100 option 3).

If a child is in immediate danger, the police should be contacted on 999.

If it is not an emergency, but there is a concern that a child is at risk, C-SPA should be contacted by phone on 0300 470 9100

Requests for support should be sent securely by email to cspa@surreycc.gov.uk using the Request for Support Form.

If you have children attending your school from other local authorities, you may wish to also include their contact details here - this government website will help identify which local council to report child abuse to and their contact details: Report child abuse to a local council - GOV.UK.

Emergency Duty Team (EDT)

Emergency Duty Team (EDT) provides an emergency social care service for urgent situations which are out of normal office hours. If your call is not answered, please do leave a message and your contact details for someone to get back to you.

EDT is available 5pm-9am, Monday – Friday, Weekends 24 hours a day.
Phone: 01483 517898
Email: edt.ssd@surreycc.gov.uk

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Every local authority has a legal responsibility to appoint a LADO who is responsible for organising the response to concerns/allegations that an adult who works with children may have caused them or could cause them harm. They will be informed within one working day of any allegations that come to our attention. The LADO will give advice and guidance to employers, such as the headteacher and the chair of governors/chair of trustees, to make sure that any allegation is dealt with fairly and quickly, ensuring that the child is protected effectively.

The LADO can be contacted by:
Email: LADO@surreycc.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300123 1650 option 3

Online: LADO Referral Form

The Law (legislation and statutory guidance)

In addition to Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership's, The Raleigh also follows the laws and statutory guidance below:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 which sets out the multi-agency working arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and protect them from harm; in addition, it sets out the statutory roles and responsibilities of schools.

- 'What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused' 2015 - Advice for Practitioners

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2026) is statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) which all schools and colleges must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework is statutory guidance which sets standards that school and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development, and care of children from birth to 5 years in Ofsted registered settings.

- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996

- Education Act 2002, section 175/The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014/Part 1 of the schedule to the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015 places a duty on maintained/independent schools (including academies)/non-maintained special schools and local authorities to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

- The Children Act 1989 is the main source of child safety law for England and Wales. The Act gives the basis for most of children's services' duties and responsibilities towards children and their families. It also provides the legal framework for the child protection system. The 2004 amendment is used alongside the Act.

- The Children Act 1989 Care Planning, Placement and Case Review sets out what responsibilities education settings have for children looked after by the local authority.

- The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the core rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and contains the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention) that apply in the UK. Experiencing harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights.

- The Equality Act 2010 states that schools and colleges must not unlawfully discriminate against children because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (called protected characteristics). Therefore, we can take positive action to deal with disadvantages affecting our children with protected characteristics to make sure their needs are met. The Equality Act 2010: advice for schools advises us further.

- Sport – The Equality Act 2010 contains an exception in relation to single-sex sport. As children get older, some sports are typically taught and played in single-sex groups. We can separate children according to their biological sex without unlawfully discriminating against them where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average boy (or vice versa), or where this is necessary to ensure safety. Where there are no safety concerns and a child makes a request relating to how they participate, we will consider the request in light of the advice on "considering requests for support with social transition" (see KCSIE page 65).

- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) states that we have to be mindful of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Some children may be more at risk of harm from specific issues such as sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic/transphobic bullying or racial discrimination. It is important that we foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and work to make sure children have equal opportunities.

- Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and the Childcare Act 2006 set out who is disqualified from working with children.

- More legislation is covered throughout this policy in their relevant sections.

**Equalities Statement**

With regards to safeguarding we will consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and our general and specific duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty. General duties include:

Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
Foster good relations across all protected characteristics between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Details of our specific duties are published in our Equality Policy found on our website.

Staff are aware of the additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This will be in line with our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (found on our website).

Our school also adheres to the principals of and promotes anti-oppressive practice in line of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Human Rights Act 1998.

**Regulations and safeguarding requirements relating to school premises**

Toilets -
We do not allow children into toilets designated for the opposite biological sex. Separate toilets are provided for boys and girls aged 8 and over. Should a child not want to use the toilet designated for their biological sex, we will consider whether we can provide an alternative toilet facility which will not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or of other children. All such requests will be recorded, communicated and reviewed regularly.

More legislation is covered throughout this policy in their relevant sections. Some government guidance is not statutory - instead it supports practitioners, like school staff, in the decisions we make to keep children safe. Where possible, links to non-statutory guidance have been included in the relevant sections.

**Roles and responsibilities**

Everybody in our school has a responsibility for safeguarding. Some members of our school have specific

safeguarding responsibilities.

Role of the school

The school will ensure that:

- Details of the DSL and DDSL are available on the school website, and in all rooms
- The school operates safer recruitment procedures in line with KCSIE 2026 which includes statutory checks on the suitability of staff to work with children.
- All staff receive information about the school safeguarding arrangements, the school's safeguarding statement, Staff Behaviour Policy (code of conduct), Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the role and names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2026), part 1. This applies to the Local Governing body in relation to part 2.
- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction in line with advice from SSCP Training is regularly updated as required, and at least annually to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- All members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates in online safety and reporting concerns.
- All members of staff maintain a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- All staff and governors have regular safeguarding and child protection awareness training, updated by the DSL as appropriate, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse.
- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is made available via the school website and a paper copy is available upon request for parents/carers.
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- We provide a coordinated offer of Early Help when additional needs of children are identified and contribute to early help arrangements and inter-agency working and plans.
- Our lettings policy (Appendix in SFET Financial Policy and Procedures Handbook) will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time and ensure that any groups who use the school premises have a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedure in place.
- Community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, guidelines and procedures.
- Within Primary, ensure at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate is always on the premises and available where EYFS children are present, and will accompany EYFS children on outings.
- Staffing arrangements will meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. We will ensure that children are adequately supervised, including whilst eating, and decide how to deploy staff to ensure children's needs are met.

All Staff

Have a key role to play in identifying concerns early and in providing help for children. To achieve this they will:

- Maintain an attitude of "It could happen here" with regards to safeguarding.
- Understand that safeguarding is "everyone's responsibility".
- Maintain a "zero-tolerance" approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Read and understand Part 1 of statutory guidance KCSIE (2026).
- Be aware of the systems in place which support safeguarding including reading this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; the Behaviour Policy; the Staff Behaviour Policy (code of conduct); safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and the role of the DSL.
- Know who and how to contact the DSL and DDSL, the Chair of Governors and the Governor responsible for safeguarding.

- Follow the school's procedures for identifying and reporting any concerns and issues about the school's online filtering and monitoring systems.
- Follow the school's safeguarding and child protection processes and procedures, sharing information quickly when they have a concern about a child's safety and wellbeing, even when they are unsure.
- Attend safeguarding training appropriate to their role and are familiar with key policies, including this policy and the staff behaviour policy (code of conduct).
- Be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
- Create a culture where children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or are questioning their gender feel safe, can speak out and share concerns.
- Be able to identify vulnerable learners and take action to keep them safe. Information or concerns about learners will be shared with the DSL where it includes those:
    - who may need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect
    - requiring mental health support
    - who may benefit from early help
    - where there is a radicalisation concern
    - where a crime may have been committed
- Provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or have concerns.
- Be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Ensure only appropriately trained professionals make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Take immediate action if they have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, following our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
- Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the DSL immediately using the school's Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS). If the DSL is not contactable immediately a DDSL should be informed.
- Be prepared to refer directly to the relevant Local Authority Children's Services and the Police if appropriate if there is a risk of significant harm and the DSL or their DDSL is not available.
- Follow the allegations procedures, as set out in this policy and KCSIE 2026, if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff, supply staff, volunteer or contactor.
- Report low-level concerns (as defined in KCSIE 2026) about any member of staff/supply staff/volunteer or contractor to the DSL (or deputy) and where a low-level concern is raised about the DSL it will be shared with the Chair of Governors.
- Follow procedures set out by the SSCP and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education to safeguard children.
- Provide support for children subject to Early Help, child in need or child protection and be involved where appropriate, in the implementation of individual plans to further safeguard vulnerable learners and understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- Notify the DSL or their DDSL of any child on a child protection plan or child in need plan who has unexplained absence.
- Be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise these experiences as harmful. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers.

- Understand Early Help and be prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early Help, liaising with the DSL in the first instance. Options may include managing support for the child internally via the school's pastoral support process or an Early Help Assessment. In some circumstances it may be appropriate for a member of school staff to act as the lead professional in Early Help cases.
- Be mindful that the Teacher's Standards states that teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- Assist the Governing Body and Headteacher in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities set out in legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensure children can be provided with a healthy snack and a balanced and nutritious lunch. We will also ensure we obtain information about any special dietary requirements and food allergies, along with any special health requirements ahead of the children starting in the school.
- Fresh drinking water will be available and accessible to children.

The Headteacher:

In addition to the role and responsibilities of all staff the Headteacher will ensure that:

- The school fully contributes to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) guidance.
- This policy and other safeguarding related policies and procedures (such as the staff behaviour policy, whistle blowing procedures) are shared at induction, understood by all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, and are being followed at all times.
- Staff receive safeguarding training that is updated regularly.
- Parents and carers are aware of this policy and where they can access a copy.
- That the school has appropriate policies in place that make it clear that sexual harassment, online sexual abuse, and sexual violence (including sexualised language) is unacceptable, with appropriate sanctions and support in place.
- That all children are supported to report concerns about harmful sexual behaviour freely. That concerns are taken seriously and dealt with swiftly and appropriately, and children are confident that this is case. And that comprehensive records of all allegations are kept.
- All staff are aware of the role of the DSL, including the identity of the DSL and any DDSLs.
- Sufficient time, training, support, funding, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL to carry out their role effectively, including the provision of advice and support to school staff on safeguarding and child protection matters, monitoring and responding to reports made using CPOMS, to take part in strategy discussions/meetings and other inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so; and to contribute to the assessment of children.
- DDSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL and the role is explicit in their job description.
- Adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements are in place for any out of hours/out of term activities.
- Opportunities are provided for a coordinated offer of Early Help when additional needs of children are identified.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- All staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle-blowing procedures.
- Allegations or concerns against staff and other adults are dealt with in accordance with guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and the relevant local authority.
- Support and advice will be available to individuals against whom allegations have been made.
- Statutory requirements are met to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service and additionally in the case of teaching staff the Teacher Regulation Agency where they think an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child; or if the person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.
- Low-level concerns in cases which concern a member of staff/supply staff/contractor or a volunteer are recorded. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that will be respected as far as reasonably

possible.

- Children are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online.
- Visitors are appropriately supervised or escorted, where necessary.
- Systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback, which are used to inform the whole school approach to safeguarding.
- They become the 'case manager' when an allegation is raised about a member of staff and make the final decision regarding all low-level concerns.
- Ensure all staff are well trained to recognise the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation, such that they understand what their responsibilities are and how they should respond when they identify a concern.
- Keep track of children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- Communicate well with all those involved when there is a concern about a child, including parents/carers, other children, staff and agencies. This includes sharing information quickly and appropriately with external agencies, such as the police and children's services, to get children the support and help they need in good time.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the appropriate use of mobile technology for taking and storing images of children.
- Ensure that each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is assigned a key person and that there are appropriate arrangements put in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families.
- Ensure that there are enough staff per child (staff ratios in EYFS), where relevant and applicable.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Duties are further outlined in KCSIE (2026, Annex B).

Details of the DSL and DDSLs are available on our website, reception area and in all rooms. In addition to the role and responsibilities of all staff the DSL will:

- Hold the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and checking the effectiveness of the school's filtering and monitoring systems and their reports) in the school, this responsibility is not able to be delegated.
- Liaise with the local authority and work in partnership with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026).
- Where necessary contact the local authorities Child Protection Consultation Line for advice.
- Manage and submit a Request for Support Form for a child if there are concerns about suspected harm or abuse.
- Understand and support the school delivery with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and provide advice and guidance to staff on protecting children from radicalisation.
- Report concerns that a child may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism:
- Surrey: use the Prevent referral form and email to preventreferrals@surrey.pnn.police.uk.
- If the matter is urgent dial 999; for advice from Police dial 101.
- The DfE has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise Prevent concerns: 020 7340 7264.
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NB: NPCC- When to call the police should help DSLs understand when they should consider calling the Police and what to expect when they do.
- Liaise with the "case manager" and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a member of staff/supply staff/contractor/parent or a volunteer; and refer cases where a person is dismissed or left service due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency, as required.
- Follow relevant DfE guidance and KCSIE 2026 on 'Child on Child abuse' when a concern is raised that there is an allegation of a child abusing another child within the school.
- Make an immediate risk and needs assessment when there has been a report of sexual violence. Additionally, where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be put in place as required.

- Be available during term time (during school hours) for staff in school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Appropriate and adequate cover arrangements will be arranged by the DSL and the school leadership for any out of hours/term activities.
- Ensuring there are cover arrangements in place when the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave, or other circumstances. This will include any Deputy DSLs accessing a shared mailbox or equivalent system to ensure that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored and acted upon without delay.
- Act as a source of support and expertise in carrying out safeguarding duties for the whole school community.
- Ensure that the names of the DSL and DDSL, are clearly advertised, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.
- Ensure there is adequate supervision for the DSL and DDSL team. Safeguarding supervision is a regular, planned, accountable two-way process which should offer emotional support and develop the knowledge, skills and values of the DSL or DDSL team. The DSL has this through the nominated safeguarding governor and DSL supervision meetings (once a term). The DDSL team has this through regular safeguarding supervision meetings and DSL network meetings. Minutes for supervision meetings are kept using the agenda in Appendix 1. See our Supervision Policy for further details.
- Encourage and promote a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, amongst all staff.
- Work together with all staff to understand the whole picture when there are safeguarding concerns, providing them with advice, support and expertise.
- Contribute to the assessment of children, including taking part and/or supporting staff to take part in strategy discussions, child protection conferences and meetings between multiple agencies.
- Work together with and supporting parents/carers and families who may be facing challenging circumstances and, when there are safeguarding concerns, making parents/carers aware of the school's role in making referrals about suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Understand the importance of sharing information, including making appropriate referrals to relevant agencies (for example, children's services, the police, the Channel Programme and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)) and supporting staff who make referrals directly.
- Be aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult, as described in PACE Code C 2019.
- Make sure that all staff have access to this policy (and the wider safeguarding procedures), the policy is available publicly and reviewed annually.
- Make sure that all adults who work in or for the school have an adequate and appropriate safeguarding induction, regularly updated safeguarding training and annually sign to say they have read the relevant part of KCSIE.
- Work alongside the governing board/board of trustees and headteacher to review and update procedures and how they are being implemented, including jointly completing and submitting local authority safeguarding submisisons.
- Promote the educational outcomes of children who have or had a social worker, by sharing appropriate child protection information with the teacher and leaders.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children, taking into account their wishes and feelings when any plans are put in place to protect them.
- Access training and support to ensure they have the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. DSL training should be updated at least every two years and their knowledge and skills refreshed at regular intervals but at least annually.
- Have a secure working knowledge of Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership's and understand the assessment process for providing Early Help and statutory intervention.
- Have a clear understanding of access and referral to the local Early Help offer and will support and advise members of staff where Early Help assessment is appropriate.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct an initial child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on the children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.

- Liaise with school staff (especially pastoral support, school health colleagues and the SENDCO) on matters of safety and safeguarding and liaison with relevant agencies.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and young carers.
- Understand the risks associated with online activity and be confident that they have the up-to-date knowledge and capability to keep children safe whilst they are online at school; in particular understand the additional risks that children with SEND face online and the associated and appropriate support they require.
- Work with the relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at the school.
- Maintain and monitor the keeping of detailed, accurate records (using CPOMS and appropriate, secure paper-based records, where necessary), that include all concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral and record the rationale for decisions made and action taken.
- Ensure that an indication of the existence of the additional safeguarding/child protection file is marked on the child's main file record.
- Ensure that when a child transfers school (including in-year), their safeguarding/child protection file is passed to the new school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.
- Ensure that where a child transfers school and is on a child protection plan or is a child looked after, their information is passed to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed. In addition, consideration should be given to a multi-agency schools transition meeting if the case is complex or on-going.
- If the transit method requires that a copy of the safeguarding/child protection file is retained until such a time that the new school acknowledges receipt of the original file, the copy should be securely destroyed on confirmation of receipt.
- Ensure that all appropriate staff members have a working knowledge and understanding of their role in case conferences, core groups and other multi-agency planning meetings, to ensure that they attend and are able to effectively contribute when required to do so; where a report is required, this should be shared with the parents prior to the meeting.
- Ensure that the case holding Social Worker is informed of any child currently with a child protection plan who is absent without explanation.
- Organise safeguarding and child protection induction, regularly updated training and a minimum of annual updates (including online safety) for all school staff, keep a record of attendance and address any absences.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy procedures, especially new and part-time staff.
- Ensure that in collaboration with the school leadership and governors, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure that the Child Protection Policy is available publicly and that parents are aware that referrals about suspected harm and abuse will be made and the role of the school in this.
- Establish and maintain links with local authorities to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest policies on local safeguarding arrangements.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and leadership staff.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)

In addition to the role and responsibilities of all staff the Deputy DSL will:

- Be trained to the same standard as the DSL and the role is explicit in their job description.
- Provide support and capacity to the DSL in carrying out delegated activities of the DSL; however, the lead responsibility of the DSL cannot be delegated.
- In the absence of the DSL, carries out the activities necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of children. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the DDSL will assume all of the functions of the DSL.
- Meet regularly with the DSL and other DDSLs.

The Governing Body

The Academy trust governance guide sets out the roles, responsibilities and legal duties for governing boards and boards of trustees.

All members of The Governing Body understand and fulfil their responsibilities to ensure that:

- There is a whole school approach to safeguarding, involving everyone in the school and ensuring that safeguarding, and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- A nominated governor for safeguarding is identified. They will:
    - Meet with the DSL and visit the school regularly asking questions that allow them to monitor how the school's safeguarding policies and procedures are being put into practice. Details on this arrangement are found in the Supervision Policy and the meeting agenda is found in Appendix 2 of this policy.
    - Be part of the local authority safeguarding audit, led by the DSL and headteacher.
    - Be the governing board's/board of trustee's safeguarding specialist, feeding back their findings following school visits and meetings with the DSL.
    - Attend appropriate training that guides them in how to monitor and progress any areas of weakness in the school's safeguarding arrangements.
    - Keep up to date with the SSCP's safeguarding arrangements and guidance.
- They all receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in the school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Training should be regularly updated.
- The child's wishes and feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- The school has effective safeguarding policies and procedures including a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, a Staff Behaviour Policy or Code of Conduct, a Behaviour Policy and a response to children who go missing from education.
- Policies are consistent with statutory requirements, are reviewed annually (as a minimum) and updated if needed, so that it is kept up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt and that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available on the school website.
- All staff including temporary staff/supply staff, volunteers and contractors are provided with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Staff Behaviour Policy.
- Recruitment, selection and induction follow safer recruitment practice including all appropriate checks. This includes online searches (procedure outlined in safer recruitment policy).
- The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations and by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training, if there is not a panel conducting interviews then the individual will have completed the safer recruitment training.
- At least one member of the governing body has completed safer recruitment training.
- Staff have been trained appropriately and this is updated in line with guidance and all staff have read the appropriate part of KCSIE. Additionally, there are mechanisms in place to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance.
- All staff undergo regular updated safeguarding training, including online safety and the requirement

to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, is integrated, aligned, and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning.

- Governing bodies have regard to the Teacher's Standards which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment and requires teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all children.
- A proportionate risk-based approach to the level of information that is provided to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors is taken.
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Headteacher), volunteers and against other children and that a referral is made to the DBS and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency (as applicable) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have had they not resigned.
- Policies and processes are in place to deal with concerns (including allegations) which do not meet the harm threshold or "low level concerns" as defined in KCSIE 2026.
- A member of the senior leadership team has been appointed by the local governing body as the DSL who will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that the role is explicit in the role holder's job description.
- That on appointment, the DSL and DDSL undertake interagency training undertake DSL 'New to Role' with 'Refresher' training every two years as well as attending DSL network events, to refresh knowledge and skills.
- Children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) and Relationships and Sex and Health Education (RSHE).
- Alongside the school they will ensure application filters and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard children online.
- Ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.
- The school will comply with DfE Policy Guidance for Safeguarding Children Missing Education and Education Other Than at School.
- Clear systems and processes are in place for identifying possible mental health concerns, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Ensure that safeguarding and child protection files are maintained as set out in KCSIE 2026.
- Enhanced DBS checks (without barred list checks unless the governor is also a volunteer at the school) are in place for all Governors.
- Ensure section 128 checks are undertaken as defined in KCSIE 2026.
- Ensure where Local Governing bodies hire or rent out school or college facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) they should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.
- Any weaknesses in safeguarding are remedied immediately.
- Safeguarding, and the child's best interests, wishes and feelings, are considered in everything the school does. Everyone at the school is involved in the whole school approach to safeguarding and online safety is a theme throughout.
- The school's policies, procedures and training follow the local safeguarding partnership arrangements and the law, including the school's duties under the Human Rights Act 1998, Data Protection Act 2018 and Equality Act 2010.
- The school's leadership team are held to account for the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda for Governing Body Committee meetings.
- The appointed designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support needed to carry out the role effectively.
- An experienced governor/trustee takes leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- There is an appointed Designated Teacher for Looked After Children who is appropriately trained.
- The governing body takes into account children who are more at risk of harm and any barriers that can make it difficult to recognise abuse and/or neglect, for example children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- The school adds to multi-agency working and shares information appropriately and in a timely

manner.

**What to do if you have concerns about a child's welfare**

The following procedures apply to all staff working in the school and will be covered by training to ensure staff fully understand their role and responsibilities in safeguarding.

The aim of these procedures is to provide a robust framework that enables staff to take appropriate action when they are concerned that a child is being harmed, abused, or is at risk of harm or abuse.

The prime concern at all stages must be the interests and safety of the child. Where there is a conflict of interest between the child and an adult, the interests of the child must always be paramount.

Staff recognise that it often takes significant courage for a child to disclose that they are being harmed. Children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone what is happening, or they may not realise it is wrong. They may feel ashamed, embarrassed, or fearful—especially if they are vulnerable due to disability, sexual orientation, or language barriers.

All staff are aware that children, particularly those with communication difficulties, disabilities, special needs, or language delay, may communicate concerns through behaviour rather than words. Staff are expected to be professionally curious and must not take things at face value—always exploring and trying to understand what is happening for the child. They should also question the cause of knocks or bumps, especially in children with limited mobility.

If a child is in immediate danger, or is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, staff must call the police on 999 without delay. Anyone can make a referral to children's services. Usually, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL (DDSL) will do this, but all staff have the right to refer directly to the C-SPA or the police if necessary.

If a member of staff suspects abuse, spots signs or indicators of abuse, or receives a disclosure, they must:

1. Listen carefully, stay calm and reassure the child. They must not ask leading questions or promise confidentiality, but they should acknowledge the child's courage and make them feel heard and believed.
2. Make an initial record of the information related to the concern.
3. Report it to the DSL immediately. If the DSL/DDSL is not available, staff must take appropriate action themselves, which may include contacting the C-SPA or police. Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.
4. Make an accurate written record on CPOMS as soon as possible and always within 24 hours. This may be used in court proceedings and should include:
    - Date, time, and place
    - Persons present or any linked children
    - Context and full details of the disclosure (using the child's own words where possible)
    - Child's demeanour and non-verbal behaviours
    - Any visible injuries (recorded on a body map)
    - The child's voice
    - Rationale for decisions made
    - Actions taken
5. Preserve original notes, scanning and uploading them to CPOMS if applicable.
6. Avoid sharing the disclosure with anyone not directly involved in the safeguarding process, unless instructed by the police, children's services, or another safeguarding agency.

Following a report, the DSL must:

- Using the Levels of Need document decide whether or not there are sufficient grounds for suspecting harm, in which case a request for support must be made to the C-SPA and the Police if it is appropriate.
- The school should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the parent/carer and where possible obtain their agreement before making a referral to the C-SPA/. However, this should only be done when:

- it will not place the child at increased risk
- sexual/organised abuse is not suspected
- where fabricated or induced illness is not suspected
- the discussion would not impede a Police investigation or Social Work enquiry

- Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with the C-SPA or the Police whether the parents/carers should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where the Police may need to conduct a criminal investigation. The child's views should also be considered.
- If it is suspected that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm or abuse the DSL must contact the C-SPA . If the DSL feels unsure about whether a referral is necessary, they can phone the C-SPA consultation line to discuss concerns.
- When a child needs urgent medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse the DSL should take the child to the accident and emergency unit at the nearest hospital, having first notified the C-SPA. The DSL should seek advice about what action the C-SPA will take and about informing the parents/carers, remembering that parents/carers should normally be informed that a child requires urgent hospital attention.
- In the instance of a report of historical abuse, the DSL will refer any information to the Police service.
- If there is not a risk of significant harm, the DSL will either actively monitor the situation or consider offering early help.
- The exception to this process will be in those cases of known Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) where there is a mandatory reporting duty for the teacher to report directly to the Police where they either:
- Are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observe 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 the purposes connected with labour or birth.
- If you have not had any feedback from children's services within 72 hours of making the referral, this must be followed up. If after a referral, the referrer is dissatisfied with the response from children's services and/or the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL (or whoever made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, the child's situation improves.

**Dealing with safeguarding concerns**

A member of staff who is approached by a child should listen positively and try to reassure them. They cannot promise complete confidentiality and should explain that they need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child and/or other children safe. The degree of confidentiality should always be governed by the need to protect the child.

Additional consideration needs to be given to children with communication difficulties and for those whose preferred language is not English. It is important to communicate with them in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference.

Guiding principles, the seven R's

Receive
- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is said and take it seriously
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as practicable

Reassure
- Reassure the child, but only so far as is honest and reliable
- Don't make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. 'I'll stay with you' or 'everything will be alright now' or 'I'll keep this confidential'
- Do reassure, for example, you could say: 'I believe you', 'I am glad you came to me', 'I am sorry this has happened', 'We are going to do something together to get help'

Respond

- Respond to the child only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details
- Do not ask ‘leading’ questions i.e. ‘did he touch your private parts?’ or ‘did she hurt you?’ Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child’s) in any later prosecution in court
- Do not ask the child why something has happened
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator; the child may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible
- Do not ask the child to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Reassure the child that it will be a senior member of staff

Report

- Share concerns with the DSL immediately
- If you are not able to contact your DSL or the Deputy DSL, and the child is at risk of immediate harm, contact the C-SPA or Police, as appropriate directly
- If you are dissatisfied with the level of response, you receive following your concerns, you should press for re-consideration
-

Record

- If possible, make some very brief notes at the time, and record them on CPOMS as soon as possible
- Upload a scanned copy of your original notes to the incident report where appropriate, along with any other supporting paper-based documents
- Record the date, time, place, person/s present and noticeable nonverbal behaviour, and the words used by the child. If the child uses sexual ‘pet’ words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into ‘proper’ words
- If appropriate, complete a body map to indicate the position of any noticeable bruising
- Record facts and observable things, rather than your ‘interpretations’ or ‘assumptions’

Remember

- Support the child: listen, reassure, and be available
- Complete confidentiality is essential. Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues
- Get some support for yourself if you need it

Review (led by DSL)

- Has the action taken provided good outcomes for the child?
- Did the procedure work?
- Were any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the procedure? Have these been remedied?
- Is further training required?

What happens next?

It is important that concerns are followed up and it is everyone’s responsibility to ensure that they are. The member of staff should be informed by the DSL what has happened following a report being made. If they do not receive this information, they should seek it out.

If they have concerns that the disclosure has not been acted upon appropriately, they must inform the Headteacher or Safeguarding Governor of the school and/or may contact the C-SPA .

Receiving a disclosure can be upsetting for the member of staff and schools should have a procedure for supporting them after the disclosure. This might include reassurance that they have followed procedure correctly and that their swift actions will enable the allegations to be handled appropriately.

In some cases, additional support might be needed, and staff should be encouraged to recognise that disclosures can have an impact on their own emotions.

**How children can report concerns**

In our school, it is essential that children can tell us how they are feeling and know we will take it seriously. We aim to create an environment full of 'reachable moments' which encourages children to feel safe enough to open up about their concerns. Children can confidently report any worries they have about their lives, both in and out of school, by speaking to a trusted adult. This is discussed with children at the start of each academic year and at regular points throughout.

We know children try to get their voice heard not just through what they say but how they behave, as pointed out in the NSPCC's voice of the child briefing. When there are behavioural issues or changes in a child's behaviour we take a safeguarding first approach, including considering if the child is communicating an unmet need and/or abuse. For children who are pre-verbal or non-verbal, observing behaviour and presentation is even more important for understanding the child's lived experience.

**Early help**

Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. We are keen to provide support to families as soon as a problem becomes visible. If an early help assessment is appropriate, the DSL or a deputy will lead on working together with other agencies and set up an inter-agency assessment, as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

In Surrey, our DSL and/or deputy use the Helping Families Early – Surrey County Council information to explore emerging needs and – with consent from the child or family – complete an Early Help Assessment to ensure all identified needs are supported by the appropriate agencies. The partnership's Early-Help-Strategy-2024-2027 sets out their aims for how professionals work effectively together to provide early help.

If early help support is appropriate, it will be kept under constant review. A referral to children's services may be required if the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving. The DSL is aware of the local escalation policy and procedures.

We are aware any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention, including from universal services and community-based Early Help, or the targeted early help level of Family Help. Staff who work directly with children will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for children listed under Part 1, paragraph 17 of KCSIE.

**Referral to Children's Services**

Concerns about a child or a disclosure should be discussed with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to children's services is appropriate. The DSL and deputy are aware of the Continuum of Support for Children and Families in Surrey and Continuum of Support Indicators which will be used to inform their response to any safeguarding concern. If a referral is needed, then the DSL should make it. However, anyone, including children, can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made, they can and should consider making a referral themselves. Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

The school should try to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with the parent/carer and where possible obtain their consent before making a referral to the C-SPA. However, the school should not discuss concerns with parents/carers when:

- it would place the child at increased risk
- or sexual/organised abuse is suspected
- or the fabrication of an illness is suspected
- or it could impede a Police investigation or Social Work enquiry

Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with the C-SPA or the Police whether the parents/carers should be told about the referral and, if so, when and by whom. This is important in cases where the Police may need to conduct a criminal investigation. The child's views should also be considered.

If it is suspected that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm or abuse the DSL must contact the C-SPA. If the DSL feels unsure about whether a referral is necessary, they can phone the C-SPA consultation line to discuss concerns.

When a child needs urgent medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse the DSL should take the child to the accident and emergency unit at the nearest hospital, having first notified the C-SPAThe DSL should seek advice about what action the C-SPA will take and about informing the parents/carers, remembering that parents/carers should normally be informed that a child requires urgent hospital attention.

If you have not had any feedback from children's services within 72 hours of making the referral, this must be followed up. If after a referral, the referrer is dissatisfied with the response from children's services and/or the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL (or whoever made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, the child's situation improves. The local escalation policy (Finding a Solution Together (FaST) resolving professional differences procedure will be used, where necessary.

**If a child has experienced or is at risk of Female Genital Mutilation**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England. It involves removal, part removal or injury to the female genital internal or external organs for non-medical reasons. It is sometimes known as 'cutting' or female 'circumcision'.

For this section only, teachers means qualified teachers or persons who are employed or engaged to carry out teaching work in schools and other institutions. All staff should speak to the DSL (or a deputy) when a concern about female genital mutilation (FGM) arises. If a teacher suspects that FGM has been carried out on a child or believes that the child is at risk of FGM, they will follow their internal safeguarding procedures.

Teachers who come to know, in the course of their work, that FGM has been carried out on a child must directly report this to the police. The teacher should tell the DSL or a deputy who will support them in making a direct report to the police. The teacher may need to support a referral to children's services. Staff will never examine children.

Other members of staff who establish that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a child or suspect a child is at risk of FGM, will follow the same procedures as with any other concern, i.e. will speak to the DSL or a deputy and follow local safeguarding procedures.

**Concerns about nudes or semi-nudes**

Responding to any incident that comes to your attention:

- **Report** it to your designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or equivalent immediately, using the school's reporting procedures set out in this policy.
- **Never** view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – this is illegal.
- **If you have already viewed the imagery** by accident (e.g. if a young person has shown it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL (or equivalent) and seek support.
- **Do not delete** the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- **Do not** ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL or a deputy.
- **Do not** share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- **Do not** say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- **Do** explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL or a deputy.

Staff reserve the right to confiscate a device in the possession of a child if they have concerns about sharing nudes or semi-nudes in relation to the device. This is consistent with the Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools guidance.

The DSL will follow the government's Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people guidance. Once they are aware of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This may include the staff member(s) who heard the disclosure and the safeguarding or leadership team who deal with safeguarding concerns.

The initial review meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to establish:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to any child or young person.
- If a referral should 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 child or 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 and via what services and/or platforms. This may be unknown.
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services.
- Any relevant facts about the children or young people involved that would influence risk assessment.
- If there is a need to contact another education school or individual.
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the children or young people involved – in most cases they should be involved.

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

- The incident involves an adult.
- There is reason to believe that a child or young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs).
- What they know about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts that are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent.
- The images involves sexual acts and any child in the images or videos is under 13.
- They have reason to believe a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, for example if they are presenting as suicidal or self-harming.
- They become aware of the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes.

If none of the above applies, we can decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's services. We may escalate the incident at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date. First, the DSL will be confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to any child involved and the risks can be managed within our school's pastoral support, behaviour procedures and, if appropriate, the local network of support.

The DSL or a deputy will contact children's services if any child or young person involved is already known to them. If, because of the investigation, the DSL (or equivalent) believes there are wider issues that meet the threshold for children's services' involvement, they will make a referral in line with this policy and local safeguarding procedures.

**Viewing the imagery**

The decision to view any imagery will be based on the professional judgement of the DSL or a deputy and will comply with this policy. Imagery will never be viewed if the act of viewing will cause significant distress or harm to a child. If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL will be satisfied that viewing:
Is the only way to make a decision about whether to involve other agencies because it is not possible to establish the facts from any child or young person involved.
Is necessary to report it to a website, app or suitable reporting agency (such as the IWF) to have it taken down or support the child or parent/carer in making a report.
Is unavoidable because a child or young person has presented it directly to a staff member or nudes or semi-nudes have been found on a school device or network.

**Deletion of images**

If the school has decided that other agencies do not need to be involved, then consideration will be given to deleting imagery from devices and online to limit any further sharing. This decision will be based on the DSL's or a deputy's judgement in line with the guidance. There is further information in the Sharing nudes and semi-nudes section of this policy.

**Responding to Allegations of Child-on-Child Abuse**

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

We respond to allegations of Child-on-Child Abuse by:

- Follow the 'handling a disclosure' procedure set out above. You must make a record of the allegation and inform the DSL or a deputy.
- If the DSL and a deputy are not available due to emergency circumstances, the staff member will speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or contact the relevant children's services.

The DSL or a deputy will make a decision from the following options depending on the level of risk or harm:

1. Manage the concern internally providing pastoral support to all those involved.
2. Complete an early help assessment.
3. Make a referral to children's services and/or, where necessary, the police. The DSL may choose to consult children's services to assist them with making a decision.
4. The police will still be informed of any criminal offences. If the child is aged under the criminal age of responsibility, the police will take a welfare approach.

The DSL or a deputy will contact the parents or carers of the children involved at the earliest opportunity and where appropriate. Records will be kept of all concerns, discussions had, decisions made and any outcomes reached. If a criminal offence has been committed or is being investigated, the DSL will work closely with the police to avoid impacting the criminal process while protecting children or following disciplinary procedures.

Where the DSL, children's services or the police decide the concern should be handled by the school internally, we will thoroughly investigate the concern using our behaviour policy and processes. A risk assessment and prevention plan will be completed when a safeguarding risk has been identified. The plan will be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned. We will support all children involved in the incident, including the child/ren who displayed the behaviour and the children who experienced it.

**Responding to Allegations of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence**

Using the DSL's or a deputy's professional judgement, the school will make decisions about and address the incident. We will request the support of other agencies, such as children's services and the police, if necessary.

We follow the local safeguarding arrangements below when an allegation of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment has been made.

The management of children with sexually harmful behaviour is complex. We will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole school community. Where appropriate, immediate measures will be put in place to support and protect the person impacted by the behaviours, any witnesses and the alleged instigator of the behaviours. A written record will be made and next steps discussed, taking into account the views of those impacted by the behaviour.

A risk and needs assessment will be completed for all reports of sexual violence and on a case-by-case basis for reports of sexual harassment. The assessment, which will be kept under review, will consider:

- Whether there may have been other people impacted by the behaviour.
- The person known to be impacted by the behaviour, especially their protection and support.
- The alleged instigator of the behaviour.
- All children (and, if appropriate, staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged instigator or future harm.
- The time and location of the incident and any action that can make the school safer.

If a report is found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help, or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's services may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate according to our Behaviour Policy.

If the child does not give consent to share information, the DSL or a deputy will balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect them and other children on a case-by-case basis. If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed, a referral should be made to children's services, and as assault by penetration (for example rape or penetration with an object) are crimes, reports should be referred to the police. As stated above, a police referral will still be made for children under the age of criminal responsibility.

We will do all we reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report, including weighing up what staff need to know and any support that will be put in place. Further, we will take into account the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing the child's identity.

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, our DSL and a deputy will be aware of anonymity, witness support, and the criminal process in general so they can offer support and act appropriately. They will be guided by the CPS: Safeguarding Children as Victims and Witnesses advice.

**Concerns about mental health**

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, you will speak to the DSL or a deputy immediately, unless the child is in immediate danger, in which case you will call the police first.

Although you may be well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one, only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to diagnose a mental health illness. Where necessary, the DSL or a deputy will make a referral to C-SPA.

**Concerns about Extremism and Radicalisation**

The school is clear that exploitation of vulnerable children and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and follows the Department for Education guidance for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism. Details of procedures and protocols with regards to Radicalisation can be found in the school's PREVENT Policy.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values. Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence. See radicalisation and extremism in Appendix 1 for more information.

It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may need help or protection.

If you have a concern that a child may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism and they are in **immediate danger**, contact the police on 999. If the child is not in immediate danger, speak with the DSL or a deputy as a first point of call.

**The DSL** may decide to discuss their concerns with children's services and will make referrals to the police Prevent team and/or the Channel programme, where necessary. The DSL will need to seek the individual's consent when referring to the Channel programme.

**Staff and governors/trustees** can also raise concerns by emailing counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk, but this is not to be used in emergency situations. If you believe you have information relating to terrorism, you can call the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. To report extremism in education, including allegations against staff and institutions, use this link

School staff receive training to help identify early signs of radicalisation and extremism.

Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable children to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the Promoting fundamental British values through SMSC.

**Racist Incidents**

Our policy on racist incidents is set out separately and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. We keep a record of racist incidents.

**Confidentiality, Sharing and Withholding Information**

We take our responsibility to protect and look after the data (information) we hold about children and our families seriously. The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 guide us in how to do so. Under the DPA 2018, we will share information without consent if 'the safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is our reason for doing so, and

- it is not possible to gain consent
- it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner (for example, teacher) gains consent, or
- to gain consent would place a child at risk

The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. Staff are aware they can look at the data protection in schools toolkit or speak to a member of the safeguarding team if they are unsure about sharing information. Government guidance emphasises that: "The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 do not prevent, or limit, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. 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."

To keep children safe, we will share information in a timely manner including sharing information with agencies and professionals in line with the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 guidance. We respect that safeguarding matters are personal to families, so the DSL, deputy and headteacher will only share information about a child to members of staff and professionals on a need to know basis.

All staff are aware that they cannot make a promise to a child to keep secrets that might impact on the child's safety or wellbeing. Instead, staff should tell the child that they may need to pass information on to others who can help and protect them.

**Notifying Parents or Carers**

Working alongside and supporting families is a key priority. This involves being open and transparent with parents and carers when we have concerns about their child's welfare, and/or we need to request support from other services to make sure the child's situation improves. If we believe notifying parents or carers

could increase the risk to the child or cause further harm, we will seek advice from children's services about how and when parents or carers should be updated. It is legitimate to share concerns without a parent's or carer's consent when there is good reason to do so and that sharing the information would improve the safeguarding of the child in a timely manner.

**Record Keeping**

Each child has a safeguarding file where all safeguarding concerns and referrals are stored. The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for keeping written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions, including the rationale for those decisions. Records reflect the reason why referrals are or are not made to another agency, such as children's services or the Prevent program. Safeguarding files will be stored securely, and access will be limited to those who need it.

When a child leaves the school, the DSL will make sure that their safeguarding file is transferred to the new education school or college within 5 days of an in-year transfer or within 5 days of the start of a new term. This will be securely transferred separately from their main file and a confirmation of receipt will be requested and kept. Where appropriate, the DSL will share information in advance of the child transferring particularly where the information would support an assessment of risk to others in the school as well as the individual pupil, so support can be put in place ready for when the child starts. When a child starts our school, we will make sure key staff are aware of the safeguarding file as soon as possible.

If this is the last school that the child attends, their safeguarding file will be securely stored by the school until their 25th birthday is reached, when it will be securely disposed of.

**Concerns or Allegations Made About Adults in Our School**

Local authority procedures will be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors or another adult who works with children 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.

The last bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of the school, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk.

Where the allegation is in relation to a member of supply staff or trainee teacher, the school will inform the agency/teacher training provider of the process for managing allegations and ensure they are fully involved in enquiries.

The school may also receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations or service providers that run extra-curricular activities).

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult, staff must without delay:

Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff, volunteer or other adult to the Headteacher immediately. The Headteacher will ask the staff member to complete a staff concern form (see appendix 3). They will consider whether an onward referral to the LADO is required.

If an allegation is made against the Headteacher, the concerns need to be raised with the Chair of Governor as soon as possible. If the Chair of Governor's is not available, then the LADO should be contacted directly.

There may be situations when the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will want to involve the Police immediately if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence.

Once an allegation has been received by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors they will contact the LADO immediately and before taking any action or investigation.

Following consultation with the LADO inform the parents of the allegation unless there is a good reason not to.

In liaison with the LADO, the school will determine how to proceed and if necessary, the LADO will refer the matter to Social Care and/or the Police.

If the matter is investigated internally, the LADO will advise the school to seek guidance in following procedures set out in part 4 of KCSIE (2026).

We have procedures in place to deal with the outcomes of allegations, such as:

- Having alternatives to suspending a member of staff, such as moving the child to a different class (if appropriate)
- Not sharing information about the member of staff involved with other staff or parents not directly involved
- Referring unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations to the DSL to decide next steps
- Considering disciplinary action in line with our behaviour policy for reports found to be deliberately invented or malicious

Low-level concerns

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
- Manging situations in appropriately and in an emotive manner.

Sharing low-level concerns

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 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

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher (or delegated senior member of staff ) 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 / senior leader will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's staff behaviour policy / code of conduct. The headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may collaborate with the DSL.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing [Please see Appendix 3] 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:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the 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 that would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

**Whistleblowing**

A whistleblower is a worker who reports certain types of wrongdoing. All staff have a duty to do so. We aim to create an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in how we manage safeguarding. Any concerns should be raised with the senior leadership team and will be taken seriously. We have a separate whistleblowing policy, which lists the procedures for raising concerns.

Whistleblowing regarding the Headteacher/Principal should be made to the Chair of governors whose contact details should be available to staff.

If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the Area Schools Officer or LADO in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy.

Staff are encouraged to use an external, independent and confidential service provided by Navex Global, who can be contacted on their freephone helpline number 0800 069 8180 and through the Navex Global web pages

Where staff feel unable to raise a concern with our senior leadership team or feel that their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed, there are other options available to them (see below).

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line:
0800 028 0285 | help@nspcc.org.uk

Ofsted's Whistleblowing hotline:
0300 123 3155 | whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

**Online Safety**

The school has an Online Safety Policy which empowers us to protect and educate pupils, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. The school also has a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology (including wearable technology).

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk: content, contact, conduct and commerce.

The 4Cs

Being online can be a great source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. Some people's online behaviour places others at risk. The number of issues covered under online safety is large and constantly growing. They are categorised into these four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or

physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: 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: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images including those generated using AI and online bullying.
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams. If children or members of staff report any issues, we will report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (https://apwg.org/).

In relation to potentially harmful online content, the school recognises the emerging concerns regarding misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories. Where necessary the Department of Education's Generative AI: product safety expectations will be used by the school to support the use generative artificial intelligence safely, and explains how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in education.

Children are taught about online safety throughout the curriculum and all staff receive online safety training which is regularly updated. The school's online safety co-ordinator is the Reece Fitzgerald.

The school will follow the guidance around harmful online challenges and online hoaxes when supporting children and sharing information with parents/carers.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL will consider a referral into the Cyber Choices programme.

This programme aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Children increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet, share and view content and images via social media sites such as Facebook, X, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok and for online gaming.

Some adults and other children use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts or emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in extremist or sexual behaviour involving webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.

Children may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate material such as pornographic websites or those which promote extremist behaviour, criminal activity, suicide or eating disorders.

Mobile phones and smart technology (including smart watches and glasses)

Many children have access to the internet and online communication through mobile phones and other smart technology. Such devices can expose children to online harm and can also be used to harm others, including through bullying, sexual harassment and the taking or sharing of nude or semi-nude images. To minimise these risks, our school is a mobile phone-free environment throughout the school day.

The following arrangements apply:

- Mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality, including smart watches and smart glasses, must not be used by pupils at any point during the school day, including before and after lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Where parents or carers consider it necessary for their child to bring a mobile phone to school, they must notify the school and provide permission in advance. The device must be switched off and handed into the school office on arrival, where it will be stored securely until the end of the school day.
- Pupils must not keep mobile phones or other personal smart devices in classrooms, cloakrooms,

bags or on their person during the school day.
- Smart watches or other wearable technology capable of sending or receiving messages or notifications, accessing the internet, or recording audio, photographs or video must not be used by pupils during the school day.
- Smart glasses or any other wearable device capable of recording images, video or audio are not permitted for use by pupils on the school site.
- If a pupil needs to contact a parent or carer during the school day, this will be facilitated through the school office. Parents and carers should contact the school office if they need to communicate with their child during the school day rather than contacting the child directly through a personal device.
- Personal devices must not be used by pupils to photograph, film or make audio recordings of other children, staff or visitors on the school site or during school activities, including educational visits.
- Any unauthorised use of a mobile phone or smart device will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Staff must only use school-authorised equipment to photograph or record pupils. Personal mobile phones and devices must not be used to take photographs, video or audio recordings of children, including during educational visits and off-site activities.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging or sharing capabilities are managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and online safety procedures. Only school-authorised devices may be used to capture or store images of children.
- Any exception to these arrangements will only be made where there is a specific and agreed need, such as a medical or accessibility requirement, and must be authorised by the school.

These arrangements form part of the school's wider approach to safeguarding, online safety and behaviour.

**Media recordings, audio, image and video (including digital files)**

When we make media recordings of children, such as taking videos or photos, we will get the child's and their parents'/carers' consent, make sure the child is appropriately dressed and encourage the child to tell us if they are worried about any media that has been taken of them. See our staff code of conduct and online safety policy, which cover our school's expectations for staff making media recordings.

**Filtering and Monitoring**

To limit children's exposure to online risks from our IT systems, we have strong and effective filtering and monitoring systems, following the government's Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges guidance. We will also follow the government's Plan technology for your school guidance to self-assess against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them. We will make sure that:
- Specific staff have assigned roles and responsibilities to manage systems.
- Staff know about the systems in place and how to escalate concerns.
- There are regular reviews of the systems.
- Our governing body reviews the systems with the DSL, IT staff and service providers, to find out what more can be done to keep children safe.
- The systems are effective for the age range of children and consider children potentially at greater risk of harm.
- When we block online content, it does not impact teaching and learning.
- Filtering works across all devices

Information Security and Access Systems

We have procedures in place to protect our IT systems and staff and learners from cybercrime, i.e. when criminals seek to exploit human or security vulnerabilities online to steal passwords, data or money directly. We will follow the government's Cyber security standards for schools and colleges guidance which were developed to help us improve our resilience against cyber-attacks. Our procedures and systems are reviewed regularly to keep up with the constant changes to cyber-crime technologies.

Children are taught about online safety throughout the curriculum and all staff receive online safety training

which is regularly updated.
The school will follow the guidance around harmful online challenges and online hoaxes when supporting children and sharing information with parents/carers.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL will consider a referral into the Cyber Choices programme.

This programme aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

**Children potentially at greater risk of harm**

We know that all children need to be protected from harm. In addition, we recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm. The information below highlights some of the groups of children this applies to, however there are several other groups not listed.

**Children Who Have a Social Worker**

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need help due to abuse, neglect and/or complex family circumstances. We recognises that a child's difficult experiences and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as disadvantaging them educationally.

Children's services share with us which children have a social worker. Once we are aware of this information, we will use it to make decisions in the child's best interest, i.e. their safety, welfare and educational outcomes. When a child has a social worker, safeguarding is at the heart of every decision we make, such as how we react to unauthorised absence or children missing education, which themselves carry additional risks. When necessary, we offer extra in-school support to our children who have a social worker.

The Virtual School is a statutory service that exists to provide advice and support for children who have a social worker, children placed in care and previously looked after, such that they have the opportunity to meet their full educational potential. Where needed, our school works with the Virtual School to support these children.

**Children Looked After and Previously Looked After**

These children are particularly vulnerable. The most common reasons for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Staff will have the skills and knowledge to keep children looked after and previously looked after safe. Appropriate staff will have the information they need in relation to a looked-after child's legal status. For example, who has parental responsibility, who is not permitted to have contact and who is not permitted to know where the child is being educated, and the level of decision-making power the local authority has given the carer. The designated teacher for children looked after and the designated governor/trustee for children looked after are listed at the start of this policy.

The statutory guidance Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked after children contains further information on the role and responsibilities of the designated teacher. The designated teacher ensures that the school has the up-to-date details of the allocated social worker and the Virtual School headteacher in the local authority that looks after the child. The Virtual School has an additional role of managing extra funding which is used to support children looked after. The designated teacher will work with the Virtual School Head to discuss how the funding can be used to best support the child.

**Young Carers**

Our school is alert to the needs of young carers and recognise that caring responsibilities can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing.  Early identification of these children is essential. We will liaise with appropriate services including additional support from external partners or the local authority and health services, to ensure young carers receive the right support at the right time.

**Returning Home from Care**

When children are taken into care, consideration may be given in the future to those children being returned to the care of their parents, or one of their parents. Other children are placed in care on a voluntary basis by the parents and they can remove their voluntary consent.
While this is a positive experience for many children who have returned to their families, for some there are different challenges and stresses in this process.

As a school, if we are aware of one of our children who is looked after is returning to their home, we will consider what support we can offer and ensure as a minimum that the child has a person, that they trust, who they can talk to or share their concerns with.

**Children with Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Health Issues**

Our SENCO and DSL work closely together to safeguard and support children who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), in particular when there are any reports of abuse. Our safeguarding curriculum, i.e. the ways we teach children to keep themselves and others safe, is adapted to meet the needs of children with SEND.

We are aware that children with SEND or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline, such as:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying), than other children.
- The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs, and the communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools, or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse will require close liaison with the DSL and the SENCO. The school will consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

**Children with Family Members in Prison**

Children who have a family member in prison are at greater risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health.

This school aims to:

- Understand and respect the child's wishes. We will respect the child's wishes about sharing information. If other children become aware, the school will be vigilant to potential bullying or harassment.
- Keep as much contact as possible with the parent/caregiver. We will maintain good links with the remaining caregiver to foresee and manage any developing problems. Following discussions, we will develop appropriate systems for keeping the imprisoned caregiver updates about their child's education.
- Be sensitive in lessons. This school will consider the needs of any child with an imprisoned parent/caregiver during lesson planning.
- Provide extra support. We recognise that having a parent in prison can attach a real stigma to a child, particularly if the crime is known and serious. We will provide support and mentoring to help a child work through their feelings on the issue.

Alongside pastoral care the school will use the resources provided by the National Information Centre on Children of Offender to support and mentor children in these circumstances.

**Safeguarding children with medical conditions**

Incidents relating to the management of a pupil's medical condition (including allergies) will not normally require a safeguarding referral. However, we will consider a referral where concerns indicate that a child may be at risk of neglect, abuse, or exploitation because of their medical condition. This may include situations where important medical information is withheld from the school or where a child is repeatedly sent to school without essential medication, placing them at risk. Staff will follow the school's procedures for supporting pupils with medical conditions and report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where safeguarding concerns arise.

**Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual**

Staff know that a child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm but they can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. We will take steps to prevent discriminatory bullying and put appropriate sanctions in place where this has been reported.

**Children who are questioning their gender**

We recognise that some children and young people may question their gender and may require support, understanding and careful consideration. The welfare, wellbeing and safeguarding of the child will always be the primary consideration in any decision-making. Responses will be individualised and based on the child's age, needs, wishes, circumstances and best interests. Staff will listen respectfully, respond sensitively and avoid making assumptions, while remaining alert to any safeguarding concerns, vulnerabilities, mental health needs, bullying, online harms or other risks that may affect the child.

We will normally work in partnership with parents/carers when supporting a child who is questioning their gender. However, where involving parents/carers could place a child at risk of significant harm, appropriate safeguarding procedures will be followed, and advice will be sought from the DSL. Any requests relating to social transition or other significant changes will be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis, with decisions informed by safeguarding considerations, professional judgement and, where appropriate, advice from relevant agencies. The school will take all reasonable steps to protect children who are questioning their gender from bullying, harassment, discrimination, abuse and victimisation and will maintain appropriate records of concerns, decisions and support arrangements.

**Children and the Court System**

We recognise that children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. We know that this can be a stressful experience and therefore the school will aim to support children through this process.

Along with pastoral support, the school will use age-appropriate materials published by HM Courts and Tribunals Services (2017) that explain to children what it means to be a witness, how to give evidence and the help they can access. Improving support for children going to court as well as witnesses

We recognise that making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. This school will support children going through this process.

Alongside pastoral support this school will use online materials published by The Ministry of Justice (2018) which offers children information & advice on the dispute resolution service.

These materials will also be offered to parents and carers if appropriate.

**Lettings**

When services or activities are provided by the governing body/board of trustees, under the direct supervision or management of our school staff, the safeguarding procedures listed in this policy will apply.

This may not be the case when we hire or rent out our school to other organisations or individuals, such as community groups, sport associations and extra-curricular activities providers. We will make sure there are arrangements in place to keep children safe, regardless of whether they are children at our school.

To make sure the provider has the appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place, we will follow the government's Keeping children safe during community activities, after-school clubs and tuition non-statutory guidance. This includes checking that the provider has completed the essential pre-employment checks on their staff and that their staff are suitable to be around children. Where appropriate, we will seek assurance and check their safeguarding policies and procedures, as well as establish what the arrangements are for the provider to liaise with our school on safeguarding matters. We will terminate our agreement with the provider if they do not follow the safeguarding requirements listed in the agreement.

**Extended School and Off-Site Arrangements**

Where extended school activities are provided and managed by the school, our own safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures apply. When our children attend off-site activities, we will ensure that effective child protection arrangements, informed by thorough risk assessments, are in place.

When our children attend an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for their safety and wellbeing. We will satisfy ourselves that the placement can meet the child's needs and obtain written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. checks that we would otherwise perform on our own staff. This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform us of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that we can ensure ourselves that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff. We will always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having a record of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. We will regularly review the alternative provision placements we make. Reviews will be at least half termly to provide assurance that the child is regularly attending, and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement will be immediately reviewed, and terminated, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed. We follow the statutory guidance for alternative provision.

Where a parent/carer expresses their intention to educate their child at home (also known as elective home education), we will work together with the parent/carer and other professionals to ensure that this decision has been made in the best interests of the child. We recognise that this is particularly relevant for children who have SEND, are vulnerable and/or have a social worker.

**Training**

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The designated safeguarding lead will attend regular training to prepare and assist them in leading the school's safeguarding response and approach. Additional training or research may be required as local or school specific safeguarding issues arise. Minimally, the designated safeguarding lead will:

- That on appointment, the DSL and DDSL initially undertake DSL 'New to Role' with 'Refresher' training at least every two years as well as attending DSL network events, to refresh knowledge and skills.
- Stay up to date with safeguarding knowledge, resources and changes.
- Attend harmful sexual behaviour and Prevent awareness training.
- Receive and share safeguarding (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings) with staff.
- Make sure staff have regularly updated safeguarding training, updating staff who miss training at the earliest opportunity.
- Gain an understanding of how the school's filtering and monitoring systems work and how they can be best used to keep children safe

Governors/Trustees

All governors receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction, which prepares them for testing and challenging the school's procedures and policies, making sure they are working as they should. The training will be regularly updated. Further:

- The governing body/board of trustees will make sure the designated safeguarding lead has the time and resources to attend training.
- The chair of governors/chair of trustees will receive training about managing allegations against the headteacher to assist them in the eventuality that an allegation is made.
- The governing body/board of trustees will make sure that online safety is a theme in all staff training.
- Senior members of the board will make sure that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.
- The link safeguarding governor/trustee will make sure that staff and governors/trustees attend safeguarding training at induction and regularly after that. The link safeguarding governor/trustee will attend regular training and receive e-bulletins or equivalent to stay up to date with the latest statutory guidance.

All Staff

Governors recognize the expertise that staff build up by managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis and, as a result, have the opportunity to contribute to and shape staff training and this policy. All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training is regularly updated and reflects the whole school approach to keeping children safe. In addition, staff receive regular, at least annual, safeguarding updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings) to provide them with what they need to keep children safe.

Our training ensures that staff:

- Can spot the signs of possible abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Know the school's safeguarding procedures and their role in carrying them out.
- Have awareness of and understand their role in the early help process and the process for making a referral to the local authority's children's services, including what may follow after a referral.
- Know what to do if a child tells them they are being harmed, including how to manage this information confidentially.
- Understand the reasons why children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being harmed.
- Receive Prevent training, which will prepare them for identifying children at risk of being radicalized into terrorism and how to challenge extremist ideas.
- Understand what cyber security the school has in place to keep children and staff safe when online at school and how to report any issues.
- Understand what ineffective filtering and monitoring systems look like and how to report any concerns or issues.
- Know that children who identify as or are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender can be targeted by other children.
- Know what to do if they have concerns about a member of staff (including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors) posing a risk of harm to children.

We make sure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, for example supply teachers and contracted staff (such as catering staff) are aware of this policy, our school's safeguarding procedures, and have received appropriate safeguarding training.

The headteacher will receive training about managing allegations against staff to assist them in the eventuality that an allegation is made.

The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After (CLA)

We follow the Role and responsibilities of the designated teacher's statutory government guidance. The designated teacher will have training to make sure they understand the needs of children looked after/previously looked after and how they can best be supported to have the same opportunities as their peers.

**Teaching and learning**

At out school, safeguarding is embedded throughout teaching and learning. Children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe through PSHE and RSHE, Online Safety, assemblies and the wider curriculum, with teaching adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. Any disclosures or concerns arising during lessons are managed in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and reported to the DSL. Where specific safeguarding issues arise, the Headteacher will ensure the curriculum is adapted appropriately.

Linked Policies

This policy is one of a range of documents that set out what our responsibilities are and how we should carry them out. Other relevant documents include the below policies.

- Behaviour
- Physical Intervention
- Staff Behaviour
- Whistleblowing
- Health & Safety
- Attendance
- Curriculum (such as PSHE and RSHE)
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs
- Online Safety
- Intimate Care
- Equality Policy

**Appendix 1: Types Of Abuse and Specific Safeguarding Concerns**

These appendices are based on the Department for Education's KCSIE guidance.

Types of Abuse

**Abuse**: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

**Physical abuse**: a form of abuse which 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**: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It 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. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature 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 from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the illtreatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse**: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving 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 penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

**Neglect**: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, 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); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**Indicators of Abuse**

The following list, provided by the NSPCC, covers some common indicators of abuse and neglect.

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious

- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which completely cover their body
- patterns of repeated lateness or absence

It is important that staff report all of their concerns, however minor or insignificant they may think they are – they do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

Specific Safeguarding Concerns

This section is based on Annex B of KCSIE. Annex B includes further information about other safeguarding issues to be aware of. All concerns under this section should be addressed in line with the What to do if you have concerns about a child's welfare section of this document, unless stated otherwise.

**Children Absent from Education**

All children are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any SEND they may have.

All staff will be aware that children missing from education or persistently absent, without explanation and/or for prolonged periods can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. Further, it may also indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. We are also aware that absence can increase any existing safeguarding risks.

Attendance is closely monitored at this school to support us in identifying abuse and acting early. Our staff will be aware of our school's unauthorised absence and children missing education procedures. We notify children's services if a child who has a social worker is absent from school without a suitable explanation. To support the school's procedure for addressing children missing or absent from education, we make sure we have more than one emergency contact number for each child. We work in partnership with the local authority when patterns of absence give rise to concern, including notifying them when a child leaves our school without a new school being named.

Our attendance policy and procedures are set out in a separate document, which can be found on our website. The school follows the government's Working together to improve school attendance statutory guidance which sets out how schools must work with the local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns. This might include the school making reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of a child jointly with the Local Authority, before deleting the child's name from the school register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f) (iii) and (h) (iii)of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) 2006 (amended 2016).

When removing a child's name, the school will notify the Local Authority of: (a) the full name of the child, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the child normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the child's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the child's name is to be removed from the school register.

Where parents notify the school, in writing, of their intention to Electively Home Educate (EHE) the school will forward a copy of the letter to the Local Authority Education Inclusion Team.

Where parents orally indicate that they intend to withdraw their child to EHE and no letter has been received, the school will not remove the child from roll and will notify the Education Inclusion Team at the earliest opportunity.

DSL's and staff should consider:

Missing lessons: Are there patterns in the lessons that are being missed? Is this more than avoidance of a subject or a teacher? Does the child remain on the school site or are they absent from the site?

- Is the child being exploited during this time?
- Are they late because of a caring responsibility?
- Have they been directly or indirectly affected by substance misuse?
- Are other pupils routinely missing the same lessons and does this raise other risks or concerns such as SVSH between pupils, exploitation, gang behaviour or substance misuse?
- Is the lesson being missed one that would cause bruising or injuries to become visible?

Single missing days: Is there a pattern in the day missed? Is it before or after the weekend suggesting the child is away from the area? Are there specific lessons or members of staff on these days? Is the parent informing the school of the absence on the day? Are missing days reported back to parents to confirm their awareness?

- Is the child being sexually exploited during this day?
- Is the child avoiding abusive behaviour from peers or staff on this day?
- Do the parents appear to be aware and are they condoning the behaviour?
- Are the pupil's peers making comments or suggestions as to where the pupil is?
- Can the parent be contacted and made aware?

Continuous missing days: Has the school been able to make contact with the parent(s)? Is medical evidence being provided? Are siblings attending school (either our or local schools)?

- Did we have any concerns about radicalisation, FGM, forced marriage, honour- based violence, sexual exploitation?
- Have we had any concerns about physical or sexual abuse?
- Does the parent have any known medical needs? Is the child safe?

The school will view absence as both a safeguarding issue and an educational outcomes issue. The school may take steps that could result in legal action for attendance, or a referral to children's social care, or both.

**Pupils Missing Out On Education (PMOOE)**

Most children engage positively with school and attend regularly. However, to flourish, some children require an alternative education provision or may require a modified timetable to support a return to full time education provision. It is recognised that children accessing alternative provision, or a reduced/modified timetable may have additional vulnerabilities. Ofsted refer to these as PMOOE because they are not accessing their education in a school in the 'usual way'.

The school will gain consent (if required in statute) from parents to put in place alternative provision and/or a reduced or modified timetable.

The school will ensure that and parents (and the Local Authority where the child has an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)) are given clear information about alternative provision placements and reduced/modified timetables: why, when, where, and how they will be reviewed.

The school will keep the placement and timetable under review and involve parents in the review. Reviews will be frequent enough to provide assurance that the off-site education and/or modified timetable is achieving its objectives and that the child is benefitting from it.

The school will monitor and track children attending alternative provision to ensure that the provision meets the needs of the child. The school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil. The school will obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment,

The school will comply with regular data returns requested by the Local Authority, regarding all children, of statutory school age, attending alternative provision and/or on a reduced/modified timetable.

The school leadership will report to the local governors information regarding the use and effectiveness of

alternative provision and modified/reduced timetables. The school will also report to Governors any formal direction of a child to alternative provision to improve behaviour.

**Children Missing from Home or Care**

It is known that children who go missing are at risk of suffering significant harm, and there are specific risks around children running away and the risk of sexual exploitation.

The police definition of 'missing' is: “Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established will be considered as missing until located, and their well-being or otherwise confirmed."

Local authorities have safeguarding duties in relation to children missing from home and should work with the police to risk assess and analyse data for patterns that indicate particular concerns and risks.

The police will prioritise all incidents of missing children as medium or high risk. Where a child is recorded as being absent, the details will be recorded by the police, who will also agree review times and any on-going actions with person reporting.

A missing child incident would be prioritised as ‘high risk’ where:

- the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child is in danger through their own vulnerability; or
- the child may have been the victim of a serious crime; or
- the risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.

The high-risk category requires the immediate deployment of police resources.

Authorities need to be alert to the risk of sexual exploitation or involvement in drugs, gangs or criminal activity, trafficking and to be aware of local “hot spots”, as well as concerns about any individuals with whom children might runaway.

Child protection procedures must be initiated in collaboration with children's social care services whenever there are concerns that a child who is missing may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Within any case of children who are missing both push and pull factors will need to be considered.

Push factors include:

- Conflict with parents/carers
- Feeling powerless
- Being bullied/abused
- Being unhappy/not being listened to
- The Trigger Trio (domestic abuse, parental mental ill health and parental substance misuse)

Pull factors include:

- Wanting to be with family/friends
- Drugs, money and any exchangeable item
- Peer pressure
- For those who have been trafficked into the United Kingdom as unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, there will be pressure to make contact with their trafficker.

We will inform all parents of children who are absent (unless the parent has informed us). If the parent is also unaware of the location of their child, and the definition of missing is met, we will either support the parent to contact the police to inform them or do so ourselves with urgency.

We recognise that children who run away, go missing or are absent from education and their normal residence are potentially vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, offending and placing themselves in situations where they may suffer physical harm. The statutory guidance Children Who Run Away or go Missing from Home or Care requires that every child or young person who runs away or goes missing must be offered a

return home interview (RHI) within 72 hours of their return.

**Anti-Bullying**

Our setting's policy on anti-bullying is set out in our Behaviour Policy (available on our website) which includes measures to prevent bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).

We keep a record of known bullying incidents which is shared with and analysed by the Governing body. All staff are aware that children with SEND and/or children who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or questioning their gender, those from minority ethnic backgrounds, children open to children's services and children from low-income families are more susceptible to being bullied/victims of child abuse.

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

LGBT inclusion is part of the statutory RSHE curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse. PSHE education regularly provides opportunities for children to understand bullying is wrong, its impact and how to deal with it.

Risks can be compounded where children who have additional vulnerabilities lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

**Physical Intervention**

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Physical Intervention Policy.

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is at immediate risk of harming themselves or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Such events should be fully recorded and signed by a witness.

Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained in Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) techniques.

Staff understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection and/or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that sometimes touch is appropriate in the context or working with children, and all staff have been given safe practice guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundaries.

When applying disciplinary measures such as physical intervention or isolation for children with SEND the setting will consider the risks, given the additional vulnerabilities of these children.

**Contextual Safeguarding**

Contextual safeguarding, also known as 'risk outside the home', is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

We will maintain records of concerns about contextual safeguarding in accordance with our safeguarding procedures. We know the importance of information sharing, therefore if we identify contextual safeguarding concerns about the local area we will share this information with relevant partners. If there is a specific concern about a child, we will consult with children's services.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including financial exploitation and county lines) and sexual exploitation. In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

Both can occur online. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals, an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. CCE and CSE can affect children both male and female and can include children who have been moved (trafficked). This may constitute modern slavery. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation. Where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim. Our staff will be aware of a range of factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation. We will provide additional support to children who have been exploited to help keep them in education.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse alcohol and other drugs
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse which can affect any child. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse, including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. This can be committed by an individual or an organised network. Most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, for example believing they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

CSE can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:
have older boyfriends or girlfriends
suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development become pregnant

Any concerns that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually exploited should be passed immediately to the DSL. In all cases if the DSL identifies any level of concern the DSL should contact the C-SPA consider a child to be at potential CSE risk in the case of regular non-attendance at and make reasonable enquiries with the child and parents/carers to assess this risk.

All staff are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the DSL will consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including

(but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

**Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Here we recognise children involved in CCE are victims, despite their engagement in crime. A child may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be consensual. Staff will be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too, and that both boys and girls who are being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. CCE can include children being forced and/or manipulated:

- to work in cannabis factories.
- into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines).
- to shoplift or pickpocket.
- to threaten serious violence to others.
- into committing vehicle crime.

A child who is affected by gang activity or serious youth violence may have suffered, or may be likely to suffer, significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect. Children can be vulnerable to recruitment into gangs and involvement in gang violence. This vulnerability may be exacerbated by risk factors in an individual's background, including violence in the family, involvement of siblings in gangs, poor educational attainment, or poverty or mental health problems.

Any concerns that a child is being or is at risk of being criminally exploited will be passed without delay to the DSL. The DSL will then contact the C-SPA and if there is concern about a child's immediate safety, the Police will be contacted on 999.

The school is aware there is a clear link between regular non-attendance at school and exploitation. Staff will consider a child to be at potential risk in the case of regular non-attendance at school and make reasonable enquiries with the child and parents/carers to assess this risk.

**Serious Violence**

Staff will be aware that serious violence may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying and can also be associated with criminal exploitation.

Staff will report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the DSL or DDSL.

Staff will be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved in serious violence.

These may include:

- increased absence from school.
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups.
- a 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 (could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation).

All staff are aware of the range of risk factors increasing the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as:

- being male.

- having been suspended, spent time in Alternative Provision or permanently excluded from school.
- having experienced child maltreatment.
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.
- Being the victim of, carrying out or allegedly carrying out serious violence (e.g. knife crime) may indicate that a child is involved in county lines.

**Mental Health**

Teachers see their pupils day in, day out. They know them well and are well placed to spot changes in behaviour that might indicate an emerging problem with the mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils. All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

The balance between the risk and protective factors is most likely to be disrupted when difficult events happen in pupils' lives. These include:

- **Loss or separation** – resulting from death, parental separation, divorce, hospitalisation, loss of friendships (especially in adolescence), family conflict or breakdown that results in the child having to live elsewhere, being taken into care or adopted
- **Life changes** – such as the birth of a sibling, moving house or changing schools or during transition from primary to secondary school, or secondary school to sixth form
- **Traumatic events** such as abuse, domestic violence, bullying, violence, accidents, injuries or natural disaster.

Staff will be trained to recognise the signs of a child who may be experiencing a mental health problem. If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs. These could include:

- significant changes in behaviour
- ongoing difficulty sleeping
- withdrawing from social situations
- not wanting to do things they usually like
- physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

We aim to promote positive mental health for all staff and children. To do so, we take into account the government's Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance. We will ensure early targeted support is provided and liaise with/refer to specialist services where needed. The DSL will consider whether to inform parents/carers to support the child's wellbeing, where doing so would not place the child at additional risk.

When concerns are identified, school staff will provide opportunities for the child to talk or receive support within the school environment. Parents will be informed of the concerns and a shared way to support the child will be discussed.

Where the needs require additional professional support, referrals will be made to the appropriate team or service with the appropriate agreement.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they will take immediate action, raising the issue with the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

**Parental Mental Health**

The term 'mental ill health' is used to cover a wide range of conditions, from eating disorders, mild depression and anxiety to psychotic illnesses such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. Parental mental illness does not necessarily have an adverse impact on a child's developmental needs, but it is essential to always assess its implications for each child in the family. It is essential that the diagnosis of a parent's/carer's mental health is not seen as defining the level of risk. Similarly, the absence of a diagnosis does not equate to there being little or no risk.

For children, the impact of poor parental mental health can include:

- The parent's/carer's needs or illnesses taking precedence over the child's needs
- The child's physical and emotional needs being neglected
- The child acting as a young carer for a parent or a sibling
- The child having restricted social and recreational activities
- The child finding it difficult to concentrate, potentially having an impact on educational achievement
- The child missing school regularly as (s)he is being kept home as a companion for a parent/carer
- The child adopting paranoid or suspicious behaviour as they believe their parent's delusions
- Witnessing self-harming behaviour and suicide attempts (including attempts that involve the child)
- Obsessional compulsive behaviours involving the child.

If staff become aware of any of the above indicators, or others that suggest a child is suffering due to parental mental health, the information will be shared with the DSL to consider a referral to children's social care.

**Parental Substance Misuse**

Substance misuse applies to the misuse of alcohol as well as 'problem drug use', defined by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs as drug use which has: 'serious negative consequences of a physical, psychological, social and interpersonal, financial or legal nature for users and those around them.

Parental substance misuse of drugs or alcohol becomes relevant to child protection when substance misuse and personal circumstances indicate that their parenting capacity is likely to be seriously impaired or that undue caring responsibilities are likely to be falling on a child in the family.

For children, the impact of parental substance misuse can include:

- Inadequate food, heat and clothing for children (family finances used to fund adult's dependency)
- Lack of engagement or interest from parents in their development, education or wellbeing
- Behavioural difficulties- inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour
- Bullying (including due to poor physical appearance)
- Isolation – finding it hard to socialise, make friends or invite them home
- Tiredness or lack of concentration
- Child talking of or bringing into school drugs or related paraphernalia
- Injuries /accidents (due to inadequate adult supervision)
- Taking on a caring role
- Continued poor academic performance including difficulties completing homework on time
- Poor attendance or late arrival.

These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child's parent is misusing substances but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case.

If staff believe that a child is living with parental substance misuse, this will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead for referral to children's social care to be considered.

**Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. It occurs regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, religion, mental or physical ability. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse including physical, sexual, emotional abuse and stalking).

These experiences can have a serious and long-term impact on a child's health, well-being, development and ability to learn. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. The Act states that domestic abuse occurs between at least two people over the age of 16. Therefore, legally, some older children can also commit domestic abuse either in their own

intimate relationships or against their parents/carers.

The school is enrolled onto the Operation Encompass scheme, a joint project between local police and schools. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the DSL in the school before the child or children arrive at the school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs.

**Homelessness**

We recognise that being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL is aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include: household debt, including new poverty induced by the pandemic; rent arrears; domestic abuse and antisocial behaviour; and/or the family being asked to leave a property. If a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral to children's social care will be made.

**Child-on-Child Abuse (including harassment and violence)**

We recognise that children can abuse other children, often referred to as child-on-child abuse. It can happen inside and outside school and online. This can include, but is not limited to:

- bullying (including online bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- abuse between children in an intimate relationship.
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (including when a child encourages or threatens physical abuse online).
- physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (including when a child encourages or threatens this online).
- harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment – which may include misogyny/misandry.
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, jokes and online sexual harassment.
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including those generated using AI.
- 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.
- upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Older children may use any type of child-on-child abuse to 'recruit' younger children into gangs, especially in areas where gangs are prevalent. Young people experiencing child sexual exploitation first hand may be forced to 'recruit' other young people using types of child-on-child abuse. We are aware that boys are more likely to carry out child-on-child abuse and girls are more likely to impacted by it, but all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

We do not tolerate child-on-child abuse. We know that even when there are no reported cases, it could still be happening but yet to be reported. We do not downplay child-on-child abuse, especially sexual violence and sexual harassment, as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny and an unsafe environment for children. For children to feel safe at our school, we make sure they know child-on-child abuse is not acceptable behaviour and how to report it to a trusted adult if they are experiencing or witnessing it.

All staff are aware that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and alleged perpetrator. Child-on-child abuse is preventable, and staff know how to recognise behaviours and indicators of risk early and that timely, evidence-based support can be key to preventing children from going on to commit abuse or violence.

It is our duty to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse. We do this in the following ways:

- Our staff read this policy.
- Our staff are trained to spot the signs that a child is, or may be experiencing, child-on-child abuse and how to report it. They maintain an attitude that 'it could happen here'.
- Our staff challenge any inappropriate behaviour between children, including the use of derogatory language.
- The behaviour policy, which includes our whole school response to abuse, makes sure everyone knows how to behave and how to respond consistently when children show unacceptable or abusive behaviour.
- Providing a clear set of values and standards, underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support; and by a planned programme of evidence-based content delivered through the curriculum.
- In all areas of school life, such as lessons, assemblies and in the playground, we teach children how to act and to treat other people, including when they are online.
- We have effective systems in place for children to report child-on-child incidents.
- Making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. We believe that failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalizes abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
- Recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
- Challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. As we believe that dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Taking a whole school approach to safeguarding and child protection
- Engaging with specialist support and interventions.

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are extremely complex to manage. It is essential that victims are protected, offered appropriate support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted. It is also important that other children, adults, and school and college staff are supported and protected as appropriate.

**Child-on-Child Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence**

Our school is aware of Ofsted's Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges. The review was carried out as a result of the large amount of testimonies shared on the Everyone's Invited website, which highlighted the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

We take a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence.

We know that harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual harassment and sexual violence can happen between two children of any age or sex, from a group of children to a single child or group of children, online and face to face. It is more likely that girls will be impacted by sexual harassment and sexual violence and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence. They are never acceptable, and we will not tolerate them. National and local research has made us aware of the prevalence and normalisation of harassment and abuse in school-aged children. No reports does not mean it is not happening here.

Alongside girls, these groups are at higher risk of sexual harassment and sexual violence:

- children with SEND.
- children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender or who are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender by their peers.

Children who are victims of sexual harassment and sexual violence will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, negatively affect their educational attainment and be worsened if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school. If a child reports an incident, they will be reassured that they have done the right thing by telling a trusted adult, will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe.

We will further reassure those affected that the law is there to protect them, not criminalise them.

We are aware that when a child reports sexual violence or harassment, this may only be the start of a larger disclosure that could transpire over time. When there are reports, we will always consider the effectiveness of our policies and procedures and whether any changes are necessary to reduce the risk of it happening again. This will be in line with the school maintaining a culture of safeguarding. We follow Part 5 of KCSIE when considering our response to sexual violence and sexual harassment. To further support DSL's in identifying and responding to Sexual violence and harassment, the DSL is trained to use the 'Brooks Traffic Light Tool

**Teenage Relationship Abuse**

Relationship abuse can take place at any age and describes unacceptable behaviour between two people who are in a relationship.

Research has shown that teenagers do not always understand what may constitute abusive and controlling behaviours, e.g. checking someone's 'phone, telling them what to wear, who they can/can't see or speak to or coercing them to engage in activities they are not comfortable with. The government campaign "disrespect nobody" provides other examples of abusive behaviour within a relationship.

This lack of understanding can lead to these abusive behaviours feeling 'normal' and therefore left unchallenged, as they are not recognised as being abusive.

In response to these research findings, the school will provide education (through the MyWorld programme) to help prevent teenagers from becoming victims and perpetrators of abusive relationships, by encouraging them to rethink their views of violence, abuse and controlling behaviours, and understand what consent means within their relationships. This will form part of the school's curriculum content in respect of Relationship Education.

If the school has concerns about a child in respect of relationship abuse, it will report those concerns in line with procedures to the appropriate authorities as a safeguarding concern, a crime or both.

**Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)**

Children's sexual behaviours exist on a continuum. HSB refers to problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours that are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. HSB can occur online or face-to-face. We will always consider HSB in a child protection context. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma and they will be offered appropriate support.

When considering HSB, we will take into account the ages and the stages of development of the children. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age, or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

Our DSL and deputy will:

- have a good understanding of HSB.
- assist in planning the curriculum aimed at preventing HSB.
- ensure staff spot and report inappropriate behaviour to prevent an escalation.
- incorporate our approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence into the whole school approach to safeguarding.

Our curriculum addresses these issues via the following topics according to the age and stage of development of our children:

- healthy and respectful relationships
- what respectful behaviour looks like
- gender roles, stereotyping, equality

- body confidence and self-esteem
- consent

**Sexism and stereotyping**

The new RSHE Guidance (July 2025) Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance outlines the importance of developing positive concepts and masculinity and femininity.

Both within and beyond the classroom, staff should be conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes, and should take action to build a culture where prejudice is identified and tackled. Staff have an important role in modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes. Pupils should understand the importance of challenging harmful beliefs and attitudes and should understand the links between sexism and misogyny and violence against women and girls. Where misogynistic ideas are expressed at school, staff should challenge the ideas, rather than the person expressing them.

Pupils may be exposed to online content which normalises harmful or violent sexual behaviours, which might include sexist and misogynistic influencers who normalise sexual harassment and abuse. Young people may be more vulnerable to this content when they have low self-esteem, are being bullied, or have other challenges in their lives. Teachers should encourage pupils to consider how this content may be harmful to both men and women, while avoiding stigmatising or perpetuating harmful stereotypes about boys, and avoiding directly signposting to specific content and content producers.

**Upskirting**

We will ensure that all staff and children are aware that ‘upskirting’ is a criminal offence and will not be tolerated. The Criminal Prosecution Service (CPS) defines 'upskirting' as: “a colloquial term referring to the action of placing equipment such as a camera or mobile phone beneath a person’s clothing to take a voyeuristic photograph without their permission”.

We will decide each incident on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL or a deputy taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children’s social care and the police, as required.

**Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes**

This is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18 (UKCIS, 2024). It is a form of child sexual abuse. All incidents will be dealt with as safeguarding concerns. The primary concern at all times will be the welfare and protection of the children involved. While sharing nudes and semi-nudes of themselves or their peers breaks the law, we know it is important to avoid criminalising young people unnecessarily.

Children might share nudes because of threats and/or pressures from relationships. They might also want to send nudes, but this is usually because they believe they will get something in return. Sextortion is when someone threatens to share or distribute nude or semi-nude images of another person if they don’t do what is asked. It can happen to anybody, but a large amount of cases involve teenage boys. The explicit imagery may be used to blackmail the young person into sending more images, money, or in some cases, into recruiting more victims. Images can be both real or generated by artificial intelligence.

We are aware of the alert guidance and support provided by the National Crime Agency and CEOP, and will use it to respond to incidents.

**So-called ‘Honour’-Based Abuse, Including FGM and Forced Marriage**

So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA) means incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing. We are aware this abuse often involves a wider network of

family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. Therefore, we will consult with children's services before taking any form of action to reduce the dynamic and additional risk factors that might be present as a result.

HBA might be committed against people who:

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion.
- want to get out of an arranged marriage; become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion.
- want to get out of an arranged marriage.
- want to get out of a forced marriage
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) means all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. The DSL will make sure that staff have appropriate training to prepare them for spotting signs that a child has been affected by FGM or is at risk of FGM.

FGM is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. A mandatory reporting duty, requires teachers to report directly and immediately to the Police 101 where they either:

- Are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observe 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 the purposes connected with labour or birth.

What to do if you have concerns about a child's welfare section of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM has been carried out or suspects that a child is at risk of FGM.

Signs that FGM might happen:

- A relative or someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad.
- A special occasion or ceremony takes place where a girl 'becomes a woman' or is 'prepared for marriage'.
- A female relative, like a mother, sister or aunt has undergone FGM.
- A family arranges a long holiday overseas or visits a family abroad during the summer holidays.
- A girl has an unexpected or long absence from school.
- A girl struggles to keep up in school.
- A girl runs away – or plans to run away - from home (NSPCC).

Signs FGM might have taken place:

- having difficulty walking, standing or sitting.
- spending longer in the bathroom or toilet.
- appearing quiet, anxious or depressed.
- acting differently after an absence from school or college.
- reluctance to go to the doctors or have routine medical examinations.
- asking for help – though they might not be explicit about the problem because they're scared or embarrassed (NSPCC).

**Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is non-consensual. Either person could be forced/pressured in several ways, including physically, psychologically, financially, sexually and emotionally. It is a criminal offence in England and Wales.

An arranged marriage is different. The families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage, but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with those who are considered for marriage.

We are aware that the legal age for marriage in the UK has risen to 18, regardless of parental consent. School staff should never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Contact should be made with the C-SPA and/or the Forced Marriage Unit 020 7008 0151.

**Virginity testing and hymenoplasty**:

Staff should be aware that virginity testing and hymenoplasty became illegal in 2022 and that it is a criminal offence for anyone to perform or assist in the performance of FGM, virginity testing or hymenoplasty, in the UK or abroad, or to fail to protect a person under 16 for whom they are responsible. For cases where it is believed that a girl may be vulnerable to virginity testing or hymenoplasty, the staff will inform the DSL who will report it as with any other child protection concern.

Virginity testing is any examination (with or without contact) of the female genitalia intended to establish if vaginal intercourse has taken place. This is irrespective of whether consent has been given.

Hymenoplasty is a procedure undertaken to reconstruct a hymen. The aim of the procedure is to ensure that a woman bleeds the next time she has intercourse to give the impression that she has no history of vaginal intercourse.

**One Chance Rule**

All staff are aware of the 'One Chance' Rule' in relation to forced marriage, FGM and HBA. Staff recognise they may only have one chance' to speak to a child who is a potential victim and have just one chance to save a life.

The school is aware that if the victim is not offered support following disclosure that the 'One Chance' opportunity may be lost. Therefore, all staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they become aware of potential forced marriage, FGM and HBA cases.

**Modern Slavery**

Modern slavery is a crime whereby a person uses another person, by means of deception or coercion, as a possession for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. We are aware modern slavery exists in the UK and that some victims are children.
Common places modern slavery occurs includes:

- The sex industry, including brothels.
- Retail: nail bars, hand car washes.
- Factories: food packing.
- Hospitality: fast-food outlets.
- Agriculture: fruit picking.
- Domestic labour: cooking, cleaning and childminding.

Victims can be forced into criminal activities such as cannabis production, theft or begging.

The DSL will seek advice and support from children's services who may in turn make a referral to the National Crime Agency via the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Further advice can be provided directly by the modern slavery helpline on 0800 012 1700.

Human trafficking is defined by the UNHCR in respect of children as a process that is a combination of:

- Movement (including within the UK)
- Control, through harm / threat of harm or fraud
- For the purpose of exploitation

Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim.

There is significant evidence that children (both of UK and other citizenship) are being trafficked internally within the UK and this is regarded as a more common form of trafficking in the UK.

There are a number of indicators which suggest that a child may have been trafficked into the UK, and may still be controlled by the traffickers or receiving adults. These are as follows:

- Shows signs of physical or sexual abuse, and/or has contracted a sexually transmitted infection or has an unwanted pregnancy
- Has a history of going missing and unexplained moves
- Is required to earn a minimum amount of money every day
- Works in various locations
- Has limited freedom of movement
- Appears to be missing for periods
- Is known to beg for money
- Is being cared for by adult/s who are not their parents and the quality of the relationship between the child and their adult carers is not good
- Is one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
- Has not been registered with or attended a GP practice
- Is excessively afraid of being deported.

For those children who are internally trafficked within the UK indicators include:

- Physical symptoms (bruising indicating either physical or sexual assault)
- Prevalence of a sexually transmitted infection or unwanted pregnancy
- Reports from reliable sources suggesting the likelihood of involvement in sexual exploitation/the child has been seen in places known to be used for sexual exploitation
- Evidence of drug, alcohol or substance misuse
- Being in the community in clothing unusual for a child i.e. inappropriate for age, or borrowing clothing from older people
- Relationship with a significantly older partner
- Accounts of social activities, expensive clothes, mobile phones or other possessions with no plausible explanation of the source of necessary funding
- Persistently missing, staying out overnight or returning late with no plausible explanation
- Returning after having been missing, looking well cared for despite having not been at home
- Having keys to premises other than those known about
- Low self- image, low self-esteem, self-harming behaviour including cutting, overdosing, eating disorder, promiscuity
- Truancy / disengagement with education
- Entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- Going missing and being found in areas where the child or young person has no known links; and/or
- Possible inappropriate use of the internet and forming on-line relationships, particularly with adults.

These behaviours themselves do not indicate that a child is being trafficked but should be considered as indicators that this may be the case.

When considering modern slavery, there is a perception that this is taking place overseas. The government estimates that tens of thousands of slaves are in the UK today.

If staff believe that a child is being trafficked or is a slave, this will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead for referral to be considered to children's social care.

**Child Abduction**

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by

strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org.

When we consider who is abducted and who abducts:

- Nearly three-quarters of children abducted abroad by a parent are aged between 0 and 6 years-old
- Roughly equal numbers are boys and girls
- Two-thirds of children are from minority ethnic groups.
- 70% of abductors are mothers. The vast majority have primary care or joint primary care for the child abducted.
- Many abductions occur during school holidays when a child is not returned following a visit to the parent's home country (so-called 'wrongful retentions')

If we are made aware of a potential risk of abduction, we will seek advice and support from police and children's social care to confirm that they are aware and seek clarity on what actions we are able to take.

Private Fostering

A privately fostered child is a child under 16 (or 18 if disabled) who is cared for by an adult who is not a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, step parent (including civil partnerships), sister or brother where the child is to be cared for in that person's home for 28 days or more.

A child who is looked after or placed in any residential home, hospital or school (where they are receiving full-time education) is excluded from the definition. In a private fostering arrangement, the parent retains parental responsibility.

However, children under 16 who spend more than 2 weeks in residence during holiday time in a school, become privately fostered children for the purposes of the legislation during that holiday period. See also Schedule 8 (para 9) Children Act 1989.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures and children may be privately fostered at any age.

The school recognises that most privately fostered children remain safe and well but are aware that safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases. Therefore, all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that the child has been trafficked into the country.

We are aware that, by law, a parent or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible. We have a duty to inform children's services of this arrangement if they have not been notified, but we will encourage parents and private foster carers to do so in the first instance. Where a member of staff becomes aware that a child may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL and the DSL will notify the C-SPA immediately.

**Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism**

While some children are more susceptible, any child can be radicalised into terrorism. We take our statutory duty to prevent children from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism seriously.

**Radicalisation** is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence. It can occur over a period of time or quickly.

**Extremism** is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

**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.

To prevent children from being radicalised into terrorism, we make sure:

- Our filtering and monitoring systems will prevent and protect children from accessing extremist material.
- Children are taught about British Values and staying safe online via the curriculum.
- Children are provided with a safe space to discuss controversial issues and the skills they need to challenge extremist views.
- Staff are trained to spot the indicators of radicalisation and extremism and how to report concerns as soon as possible.
- The DSL attends Prevent awareness training and is aware of the latest guidance.
- We perform a risk assessment assessing how our learners or staff may be at risk of being radicalised into terrorism (including online) using the counter terrorism local profile and updates from the local partnership.

The Educate against hate government website lists signs that could indicate that a child is being radicalised:

- becoming increasingly argumentative
- refusing to listen to different points of view
- unwilling to engage with children who are different
- becoming abusive to children who are different
- embracing conspiracy theories
- feeling persecuted
- changing friends and appearance
- distancing themselves from old friends
- no longer doing things they used to enjoy
- converting to a new religion
- being secretive and reluctant to discuss their whereabouts
- changing online identity
- having more than one online identity
- spending a lot of time online or on the phone
- accessing extremist online content
- joining or trying to join an extremist organisation

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Indicators of vulnerability include:
**Identity Crisis** – the child is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
**Personal Crisis** – the child may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
**Personal Circumstances** – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the child’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
**Unmet Aspirations** – the child may have perceptions of injustice or a feeling of failure,
**Experiences of Criminality** – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration;
**Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)** – children may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism. The Department of Education guidance The

Prevent Duty should be referred to.

If you have concerns that a child may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, go to 'Concerns about extremism and radicalisation' section of this policy.

**Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief**

This type of abuse can happen anywhere across any community and/or religion. There are a variety of definitions associated with abuse linked to faith or belief. It can include, but is not limited to, the concept of belief in:

- Witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs).
- The evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context).
- Ritual or multi-murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies.
- use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.

If you suspect a case of child abuse linked to faith or belief, follow the safeguarding procedures in this policy. In addition, the Metropolitan Police's Project Violet team can be contacted on the non-emergency, 24/7 number: 101.

**Fabricated or Induced Illnesses**

Staff are alert to the issues surrounding fabricated or induced illnesses. Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It happens when a parent or carer, usually the child's biological mother, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child. Our supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy details our procedure for ensuring reported medical needs are evidenced by medical professionals.

It is important to highlight any potential discrepancies between reports, presentations of the child and independent observations of the child. What is key to note are implausible descriptions and/or unexplained findings and/or parental behaviour. The term Perplexing Presentations (PP) has been introduced to describe a situation when there are early indicating signs of possible FII, but when the actual state of the child's physical or mental health, and/or neurodevelopment state is not yet clear. Often at this early stage, there is no perceived risk of immediate serious harm to the child's physical health or life. If Perplexing Presentations do emerge for a student, the school will work with local medical professionals and the student's parents to prevent the risk of a case of FII developing.

There are three main ways that a parent/carer could fabricate or induce illness in a child. These are not mutually exclusive and include:

- fabrication of signs and symptoms. This may include fabrication of past medical history
- fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts and records, and specimens of bodily fluids. This may also include falsification of letters and documents
- induction of illness by a variety of means.

If we are concerned that a child may be suffering from fabricated or induced illness, we will inform children's social care.

**Appendix Two: DSL/DDSL Supervision Agenda**

DSL and DDSL Safeguarding Supervision Meeting Agenda

Date, Time

Attendees:

1. Information sharing on individual pupils

2. Whole school safeguarding practice matters

3. Analysis – celebrate success and consider what could be improved

Success:

What could be improved?

4. Filtering and Monitoring check

5. Support for DDSLs (CPD and access to resources)
Example questions (minutes to be recorded with sensitivity):
How has your workload been recently?
Is there anything I can do to support you in your role?
Are there any cases you're currently managing that you'd like to discuss?
Are there any areas where you would benefit from additional training or guidance?

6. Hot topic

7. Date of next supervision

8. AOB

DSL and Governor Safeguarding Supervision Meeting Agenda

Date, Time

Attendees:

1. Information sharing on individual pupils

2. Whole school safeguarding practice matters

3. Analysis – celebrate success and consider what could be improved

   Success:

   What could be improved?

4. Single Central Record (SCR)
   View SCR and record check has been completed with any actions recorded

5. Filtering and Monitoring check
   Complete filtering and monitoring: review proforma
   View SENSO

6. CPD and support
   Example questions (minutes to be recorded with sensitivity):
   How has your workload been recently?
   Is there anything I can do to support you in your role?
   Are there any cases you're currently managing that you'd like to discuss?
   Are there any areas where you would benefit from additional training or guidance?

7. Date of next supervision

8. AOB

Appendix Three: Staff Concern Form

Staff Concern Form

South Farnham Educational Trust
The Continual Pursuit of Excellence

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of adult writing the concern: | |
| Name of adult whom this concern is about: | |
| Date and time written: | |
| Signature: | |

Please write your concerns below. You should provide a concise record – including brief context in which the concern arose, and details which are chronological, and as precise and accurate as possible – of any such concern and relevant incident(s). Please use a separate sheet if necessary. Consider any contextual information that may be appropriate to know.

Outcome (only to be completed by HT or delegated Senior Leader):

Signed by Senior Staff member completing: Date: