

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Staffordshire



Policy Owner	Jo Howell
Version	1.1
Approved Date	23 rd October 2025
Approving Body	Main Trust Board
Next Review Date	September 2026 (at least annually)
<p>N.B.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) This policy is fully tailored to the procedures followed in each Staffordshire CAT school. Further information on contextual safeguarding approaches for specific settings, in addition to those contained in this policy, is available as a separate appendix (Appendix 11) and can be found on individual schools' websites or by request from the school. 2) Full contact details for all schools designated safeguarding members of staff can be found at the end of this policy in Appendix 10. 	

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1. Policy Context, Consultation & Review

This school recognises its responsibility to have a clear and secure framework in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This policy provides guidance to all adults working within the school, whether paid or unpaid and whether directly employed by the school or by a third party and should be read in conjunction with *Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025 (KCSiE)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023*.

This policy is available on our website via a link to Community Academies Trust website and on request from the school office. We also inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our school and through our school newsletter/mailings.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary/supply staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our *Staff Code of Conduct* and our *Behaviour Policy*. In addition, all staff are provided with and have read at least Part One and Annex B of the statutory guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025](#)

The policy sets out how the School Standards Committee discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at this school. Our policy applies to all staff; paid and unpaid, working in the school, including Governors and Trustees.

Our School Standards Committee, working with the Strategic Leadership Team and especially our Designated Safeguarding Lead, ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children read either Part 1 or Annex A (a condensed version of Part 1) of the *KCSiE 2025* guidance. All staff who work directly with children, are provided with and read at least Part One and Annex B of *KCSiE*.

The policy will be reviewed in full, annually, or sooner, should legislation/guidance change. The policy is due for review in September 2026.

The school follows the [Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#) policies and procedures.

2. Purpose and Aims

The purpose of this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is to ensure that we:

- **Are committed** to developing a robust safeguarding culture of vigilance and challenge;
- **Build resilience** by raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues, and equipping children with the language and skills to keep themselves safe;
- **Establish a safe environment** in which children can learn and develop within an ethos of openness and where children are taught to treat each other with respect, to feel safe, to have a voice and know that they will be listened to;
- **Support vulnerable pupils** who have been abused, who have witnessed violence towards others or who may be vulnerable to abuse;
- **Prevent unsuitable people from working with children** by ensuring we practise safer recruitment in checking the suitability of all school staff, including supply staff and volunteers, to work with children and maintain an active ongoing vigilance thereafter, in line with our safeguarding culture.

We will follow the procedures set out by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership, *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023* and *KCSiE 2025* by knowing and understanding that:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and the voice of the child is evident;
- Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play;
- Everyone should ensure that their approach is child-centred considering, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child;
- By establishing a safe environment, we enable our children to learn and develop within an ethos of openness;
- No single practitioner can have the full picture of a child's needs and circumstances;
- If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action so as to enable our children and young people to have the best outcomes;
- It is important to provide children with a balanced curriculum, including PSHE and healthy relationship education which covers online safety, sexting, child on child abuse, as well as abuse outside the home, County Lines, contextualised safeguarding issues and Child Criminal Exploitation, including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). In addition, it is important to support this with online activities, which enable children to enhance their safeguarding skills and knowledge whilst understanding the risks;
- We must have awareness of our staff's knowledge and understanding, and we must embed safeguarding through clear systems of communication and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so that safeguarding is a robust element of our school practice.

As a school community our role is to:

- provide help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protect children and young people from maltreatment, whether this is inside or outside the home, including online;
- prevent impairment of their mental and physical health or development;
- ensure that our children and young people grow up in circumstances consistent with the provisions of safe and effective care;
- take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

3. Ethos and Culture

Our children's welfare is of paramount importance to us; we are a child-centred school. Our children are reassured that they have a voice, will be listened to and what they say will be taken seriously. They know that they will be supported and kept safe. They will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse.

Children are encouraged to talk freely with staff if they are worried or concerned about something and our staff understand that a victim of any type of abuse should never feel ashamed for making a report. Their views and wishes will inform any assessment and provision for them. We make every effort to listen to and capture the voice of children to enable us to have a clear understanding of their daily lived experiences. This includes understanding that the child's presenting behaviours and observations by staff also form part of the child's voice.

We are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. They may feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This does not prevent staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child and our staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children which facilitate this communication.

We understand our statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and we maintain a professional attitude of *'it could happen here'* where safeguarding is concerned. We expect all staff, governors, volunteers, and visitors to share our commitment, maintaining a safe environment and a culture of vigilance.

Everyone has a responsibility to **act without delay** to protect children by reporting anything that might suggest a child is being abused, neglected or exploited. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours that underpins this commitment. We work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children who are vulnerable or in need.

We have a culture of vigilance and staff are confident and competent in the timely challenge of unacceptable behaviours and these are dealt with appropriately and robustly. Staff do not accept these behaviours as 'banter', 'having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

All staff know that they must report any concerns that they have and not to see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident, such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. However, concerns can accumulate over time and are evidenced by building a picture of harm, particularly true in cases of abuse or neglect.

We know that it is crucial that our staff record and pass on any concerns in a timely manner and in accordance with this policy, to allow the DSL/DDSL to build up a picture and access support at the earliest opportunity.

When dealing with safeguarding matters, we are conscious of the language and terminology that we use, especially in front of children. Sometimes reference is made to a child who has been subjected to abuse as a victim. However, not all children will consider themselves a victim nor will they want to be referred to in this way. We are conscious of this and when managing any incident, we will be prepared to use terminology with which children are most comfortable.

KCSiE guidance uses the terms 'alleged perpetrator' and 'perpetrator' as these are widely used terms. However, as we know that in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the instigator as well, in this policy we will instead refer to children and young people who have 'displayed' or instigated' particular behaviours. Our intention is to ensure that **all** children involved receive support.

We work closely with our safeguarding partners, sharing the same goals, learning with and from each other, gaining what we need to help families, acknowledging and appreciating difference as well as having the confidence to challenge decisions and practice where appropriate.

We acknowledge the four principles that as professionals we should follow when working with parents and carers:

- effective partnership and the importance of building strong, positive, trusting and co-operative relationships
- respectful, non-blaming, clear and inclusive verbal and non-verbal communication that is adapted to the needs of parents and carers
- empowering parents and carers to participate in decision making by equipping them with information, keeping them updated and directing them to further resources
- involving parents and carers in the design of processes and services that affect them.

We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of safeguarding and child protection work and support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to signpost and seek further support as appropriate, such as in the form of clinical supervision if appropriate. The following resource is also highlighted to staff who may prefer external support: [Education Support helpline - Free and confidential emotional support for teachers and education staff](#)

4. Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance

Academies, free schools, independent schools, alternative providers of education - Section 157 of the *Education Act 2002* and the *Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, (Amendment) 2021*, require proprietors of independent schools (including academies) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. Community Academies Trust (CAT) fulfils this requirement by ensuring all due regard to the following legislation and guidance when devising this policy:

Statutory Guidance

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) DfE (Dec 2023)
- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance, DfE \(2024\)](#)
- [Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings](#) (Feb 2022)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) DfE (March 2015)
- [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#) DfE (May 2024)
- [The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers](#) DfE (Sept 2023)
- [The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation \(September 2023\)](#)
- [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation- procedural information](#) Home Office (Jan 2020)
- [Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm](#)
- [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners DfE \(February 2017\)](#)
- [Teaching online safety in school DfE \(January 2023\)](#)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools DfE \(November 2018\)](#)
- [Data protection: toolkit for schools DfE \(June 2025\)](#)
- [Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in Kinship Care](#) (July 2025)
- [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement](#)
- [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines](#)
- [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#) (For introduction September 2026)
- [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation \(2020\)](#)
- [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) Statutory Framework](#) (DfE September 2025)
- [Domestic Abuse - Statutory Guidance](#) (Home Office April 2023)

- [Teachers' Standards](#) (July 2021)

Legislation

- *The Children Act 1989* and *The Children Act (2004)*
- Section 5B (11) of the *Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003)*, as inserted by section 74 of the *Serious Crime Act (2015)*
- *The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)*
- *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)*
- *Counterterrorism and Security Act (2015)* (and the *Prevent Duty* guidance)
- *The Education Act (2002)*
- *Education (Independent Academy Standards) (England) Regulations (2014)*
- *The Academy Staffing (England) Regulations (2009)*
- Part 1 of the schedule to the *Non-Maintained Special Academies (England) Regulations (2015)*
- *The Equality Act (2010)*
- *The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009* (and 2018 amendment)
- *The Childcare Act (2006)*
- *Public Sector Equality Duty (2012)*
- *Care Act (2014)*
- *Mental Capacity Act (2005)*
- *Domestic Abuse Act (2021)*

Guidance from the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:

- [Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures](#)

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of all staff in keeping children safe

All staff have read and have a good understanding of **at least part 1 and Annex B** of *KCSiE 2025* and are aware of the safeguarding link to other policies relating to their daily practice. These include but are not limited to the *Staff Code of Conduct*, *Behaviour Policy*, *Online Safety Policy* and the *Whistleblowing Policy*.

All staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, which includes, amongst other things, an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. (See *KCSiE*, para. 142 for further information and [filtering and monitoring standards for schools](#).) This training takes place at induction and is regularly updated. In addition, **all** staff receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff know who the DSL and DDSLs are and understand that as well as being the expert in this field, they are there to support staff, volunteers, and governors.

All staff are aware of their responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff are aware of indicators of abuse and neglect and understand that children can be at risk of harm, including extra-familial harm, both inside and outside of school or home and online. Staff are confident in exercising **professional curiosity** and understand that knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation, to identify cases of children who may be in need of our help or protection. They are aware that abuse, neglect, and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

All staff, but especially the DSL/DSLs 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 abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and that children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. They know that disinformation, misinformation and conspiracy theories can be an online safety risk/concern and are aware that in many cases, abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online; this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, including AI-generated child sexual abuse material¹. to those who do not want to receive such content.

All staff know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality by only involving those who need to be involved, such as the DSL/DSL and local authority children's social care. Staff never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. They are aware of their statutory reporting responsibilities in relation to FGM.

¹ Guidance: [Internet Watch Foundation - AI Guidance](#)

All staff know how to reassure children that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A child should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a child ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

All staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in it and are confident to identify and support children who may benefit from early help, effectively giving children and their families the right help at the right time.

All staff are aware of how to make a referral to children's social care, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with their potential role in such assessments.

All staff understand their responsibility to report concerns about the behaviour of any adult in our school and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

All staff understand their responsibility to escalate concerns and 'press for reconsideration' if they believe a child's needs remain unmet, if the child is failing to thrive and in need, or if the child is at risk of harm. This means escalating internally if outcomes for the child are not improving or externally using the [SSCP Escalation Policy](#) if the situation remains a concern to the staff member. All staff are made aware of the [NSPCC's Whistleblowing Advice Line](#) and know they can access the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy via the CAT website.

The roles and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL (DDSL)

For full details of the DSL/DDSL roles and responsibilities, please refer to Part 2 and Annex C of *KCSiE 2025*.

Our DSL and DDSLs carry out their roles in accordance with the above guidance. They have received appropriate safeguarding training to provide them with an understanding of their role and the knowledge and skills to carry it out. Our DDSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL. Training received also supports their knowledge of the processes, procedures, and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, in line with [Working together to safeguard children, 2023](#). This training is updated at least every two years, in line with Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board requirements. In addition to the formal training, their knowledge and skills are refreshed and updated at regular intervals, at least annually, and through termly Education Safeguarding DSL briefings, CAT DSL support meetings, meetings with other DSLs, emails and reading statutory guidance. The training provides DSL/DDSLs with a good understanding of their own role and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care.

Our DSL takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety, as well as an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place, including requirements relating to the safe use and filtering of generative AI²; this is explicit in their job description.

As part of online safety, we are aware of our responsibility for information security and access management and we will ensure that we have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard our systems, staff and learners. We will review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies, taking appropriate action to meet the [cyber security standards for schools and colleges](#) in order to improve our resilience to cyber-attacks.

² Guidance:

- [Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges](#)
- [Generative AI expectations](#)
- [Plan technology for your school - DfE guidance](#)

During term time, the DSL/DDSL is available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSL can delegate activities to the DDSL(s); however, the ultimate responsibility remains with them, and this lead responsibility is not delegated. In the absence of the DSL, the DDSL(s) will take a lead on safeguarding with clear direction from the Strategic Leadership Team.

The DSL acts as a source of support, advice, and expertise for staff. Risk assessments/safety plans will be completed as required and should, where appropriate, involve other agencies; these are reviewed regularly and shared appropriately.

The DSL maintains robust systems to monitor and record training of all staff and update and refresher time scales are evident within the training record. Training is delivered in line with Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (StaffsSCP) training strategy and *KCSiE 2025* recommendations. This will include bulletins, newsletters, briefings and in-school staff training, as well as external events attended, as applicable to role. Regular updates are shared with staff and a system to record these communications is in place.

The DSL ensures that all staff and regular visitors have appropriate safeguarding training to equip them for their role in school. This includes training on how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information accurately. The DSL ensures that systems are in place to induct new staff/governors, that these are robust and monitored and that any non-compliance is shared with SLT/School Standards Committee.

The DSL monitors the safeguarding management systems set up to report and record concerns about children, ensuring that the quality of information is accurate, proportionate, timely and that assessments/referrals are made appropriately. The recording and storing of information is in line with the [Data Protection Act, 2018](#) and General Data Protection.

Safeguarding and child protection records are kept in a secure location, away from academic records. There is a robust recording process for the transfer of records, both in and out, which, for paper file transfer, uses the transfer of records form which is signed by the sending and receiving settings and copies of these forms are kept securely.

Where a parent chooses to remove their child/ren from school to receive Elective Home Education (EHE), the school will pass on any safeguarding concerns and the safeguarding file if there is one, to the EHE Team within Staffordshire County Council. The EHE team can be contacted at electivehomeeducation@staffordshire.gov.uk. The school will also inform other professionals who are involved with that child.

All paper safeguarding files have a front sheet chronology. All other safeguarding paperwork is in chronological order, the most recent being at the front of the file. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, are recorded in the safeguarding file including:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of any concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- the rationale for any actions taken and decisions reached;
- a note on the outcome.

The DSL monitors the quality of safeguarding files and the recording on electronic systems through the regular audit of case files. Appropriate and regular case supervision takes place with the DSL and may be extended to other members of staff if deemed appropriate.

The DSL has a clear system in place for Child Protection (section 47), Child in Need (section 17) and Early Help Assessment (EHA) files being removed from school and returned for the purposes of case review meetings, Rapid Reviews, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR).

The DSL/DDSL will refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care, as required, and support other staff to make these referrals. They understand the importance of and need for attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences (both Initial and Review) and core group meetings as well as Child in Need meetings. The DSL/DDSL will represent education at these meetings and, whether attending or not, **MUST** complete the Education Report prior to the conference.

The DSL will liaise with all relevant staff (e.g. pastoral and attendance staff, school nurses, SEN staff and Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding when deciding whether to make a referral.

The DSL/DDSL will represent school at child protection conferences and core group meetings and will be the expert within our setting to support staff in liaising with other agencies. However, any staff member may be required to be part of strategy discussions at interagency meetings and to contribute to the assessment of children.

The DSL/DDSL will notify children's social care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation.

The DSL helps to promote educational outcomes by sharing appropriate information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with or those who have previously had a Social Worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school leaders. Their role could include ensuring that the schools and their staff know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.

The DSL has a good understanding of the community the school serves, the risks and its resilience. The DSL liaises closely and regularly with local agencies to ensure appropriate support is available for those in need at the earliest opportunity.

The trust and the school recognise the pressures inherent within the role of DSLs and DDSLs, and the demands placed upon them. To preserve staff wellbeing, DSLs or DDSLs are not expected to monitor emails, phonelines or online recording software outside of working hours, except during periods of planned school trips or activities. All members of the school community (staff, parents, and pupils) will be made aware of this expectation. Where staff are not contracted to work outside of term time, an emergency rota will be in place covering normal working hours during holiday periods but excluding bank holidays and weekends. To promote the safety of children during these times, the school will regularly share contact details for statutory and non-statutory support services, including police and children social care, with all members of the school community, including via the school's website.

The School Standards Committee (SSC)

The School Standards Committee (SSC) has a strategic leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements and they must ensure that we comply with our duties under legislation. They must have regard to this guidance in ensuring policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law at all times in line with Part 2 of *KCSiE 2025*. The Headteacher ensures that the policies and procedures, adopted by the SSC and proprietors (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood, and followed by all staff. These policies are transparent, clear, and easy to understand for staff, children and their parents/carers.

The SSC and proprietors ensure that **all** staff, including governors and trustees, receive appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, including online safety, at induction. The online safety training should, amongst other things, provide an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. This training should include content on the safe use and filtering of generative AI. It should be regularly updated and in line with any advice from the Safeguarding Partners.

Governor and Trustee training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. This training is regularly updated, at least annually and whenever updates occur. Governor training is recorded on the safeguarding training log and reported half-termly to the SSC and the Trust.

In considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, the SSC will ensure that our school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. They ensure that SLT and other relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

The SSC will review the following standards and explore with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support our setting in meeting this standard:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems;
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually;
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning;
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

The SSC are also aware of their responsibility to ensure that an appropriate level of security protection procedures is in place in order to safeguard systems, staff and learners and that there is a need to review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.

The SSC and proprietors are aware of their obligations under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#), the [Equality Act 2010](#), (including the [Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty](#)), and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Further guidance can be found in [KCSiE 2025](#) and [Equality Act 2010 - Advice for schools](#).

The SSC facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding involving everyone in school, ensuring that safeguarding is at the forefront and underpins all relevant aspects of process and policy development. These systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of our children at the heart of what we do.

The SSC has appointed the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety, which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. This is explicit in their job description. The SSC ensure that the DSL understands their responsibility in leading safeguarding across the school. They also ensure that the DSL is given additional time, funding, training, resources, and support needed to carry out the role effectively. See Annex C of [KCSiE 2025](#). The SSC has also identified Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs), who are trained to the same safeguarding standard as the DSL.

The SSC and proprietors ensure that children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. It is 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 educational needs or disabilities. There is an expectation that all teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils and manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment is maintained.

The SSC ensures that the school contributes to inter-agency practice in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*. It also ensures compliance with the completion of the Section 175/157 safeguarding audit return, via the Phew electronic system, to the Local Authority and that any safeguarding concerns are identified and a safeguarding action plan is developed. This is in line with the [Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements-SSCP](#). Our school engages in a trust wide safeguarding audit; this audit complements and does not replace the statutory return to the local safeguarding partnership.

The SSC ensures that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received safer recruitment training and are compliant with safer recruitment procedures, not least the requirement for appropriate checks to be carried out in line with *KCSiE 2025, Part 3 - Safer Recruitment* and including ensuring that all shortlisted candidates are made aware that online searches will be carried out as part of the selection process.

There is a current trust-wide whistleblowing policy; staff are aware of this policy and understand its content. We have a culture where staff can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed professionally and sensitively in accordance with agreed whistleblowing procedures.

Further guidance on [whistleblowing](#) is available here and the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding safeguarding failures internally. Staff can call on 0800 028 0285 and the line is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday. Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

When the SSC hires out school facilities/premises³ to organisations or individuals (e.g. community groups, sports associations, and service providers) to run community or extra-curricular activities, they will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

When services or activities are provided by the SSC, under the direct supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply. However, where services or activities are provided separately by another body, this is not necessarily the case. In these circumstances, the SSC will seek assurance that the provider concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed and ensuring that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school on these matters, where appropriate. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are on the school roll.

The SSC will ensure that safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement. Lettings will not be made to anyone under the age of 18 or to any organisation or group with an unlawful or extremist background.

The Designated Lead Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

The School Standards Committee has appointed a designated teacher who works with local authorities and parents/carers to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils in our school who are looked after and previously looked after.

Our Designated Teacher works across the school to promote and improve educational outcomes for children in care using evidence-based interventions. This includes children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care, outside of England and Wales. The Designated Teacher is appropriately trained and has relevant qualifications and experience.

The [Designated Teacher](#) works with the Virtual School, to provide the most appropriate support, utilising Pupil Premium Plus funding, to ensure that they meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan (PEP). They also work with the Virtual School Headteacher, to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children.

With regard to care leavers, the Designated Teacher has the details of the Local Authority Personal Advisor, appointed to guide and support care leavers, and should liaise with them as necessary on issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

Our staff are attachment aware and trauma informed and take a relational-based approach to supporting our most vulnerable children. We work restoratively with children to improve their outcomes.

³ Guidance: [After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers](#)

We are aware of the additional duties of the [Virtual School Headteacher](#) to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker. We understand the role that we play in improving outcomes for children with a social worker.

6. Working with Parents and Carers

This school is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of their children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

When new pupils join our school, parents and carers will be informed that we have a *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy* and that we are an Operation Encompass setting. A copy of the *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy* will be provided to parents on request and is available via a link on our website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our safeguarding colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to the relevant local authority or other agencies.

We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission, or if it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm.

We will seek to share with parents/carers any concerns we may have about their child before making a referral, unless to do so may place a child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns the school has about a child will not prevent the DSL from making a referral to the relevant local authority in those circumstances and where it is appropriate to do so.

In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the school requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives;
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- Emergency contact details (if different from above) and at least two contacts;
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from school (if different from the above);
- Any legal or criminal changes which affect parental responsibility e.g. Bail conditions, court orders, Special Guardianship orders, Child Arrangement orders etc.

The school will retain this information in pupils' files; we will only share information about pupils with adults who have parental responsibility for that pupil or where a parent has given permission and the school has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing.

We recognise that we are likely to be in regular contact with parents and carers. We will use these communications to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and parents/carers are likely to find it helpful to understand what systems schools use to filter and monitor online use. It will be especially important for parents/carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they are asked to access and to be clear who from the school, if anyone, their child is going to be interacting with online.

As a minimum, parents/carers are regularly updated about safeguarding through newsletters and via our website.

7. Early Help⁴

Any child may benefit from earliest or early help, but all staff are particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)⁵;
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care;
- has experienced multiple suspensions or is at risk of being permanently excluded from school or college and is in alternative provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending;
- is in a family circumstance which presents challenges for the child, such as drug or alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing alcohol or other drugs themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is at risk of ‘honour-based’ abuse such as female genital mutilation or forced marriage;
- is a privately fostered child;
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

The DSL ensures that all staff are aware of the Early Help process and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL/DDSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an Early Help Assessment.

The DSL/ DDSL will consider how the needs of different family members impact each other. This includes needs relating to education, mental and physical health, financial stability, housing, substance abuse and crime. We will also consider specific needs such as disabilities, those whose first language is not English and parents who identify as LGBTQ.

8. What happens if it is necessary to escalate beyond Early Help?

Child in Need (Section 17)

If the DSL considers that the welfare concerns indicate that a ‘Child in Need’ (CIN) referral is appropriate, they will speak with the parents/child and obtain their consent for referral to the appropriate local authority children’s social care team to request an assessment. If parents refuse to give consent, but the child’s needs are still not being met, the DSL may feel that a referral is still appropriate and will discuss these concerns with the local authority children’s social care. Appropriate school staff will attend Child in Need meetings convened by Children’s Social Care when children are deemed to require Section 17 services.

Child Protection (Section 47)

⁴ Guidance documents: [SSCP Early Help](#); [SSCP Threshold Framework](#)

⁵ See [KCSiE 2025](#) re. additional information/guidance for children with SEND.

If the Local Authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, they have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the *Children Act 1989* to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. This duty also applies if a child is subject to an emergency protection order (under section 44 of the *Children Act 1989*) or is in police protective custody under section 46 of the *Children Act 1989*.

Child Protection Conferences can be upsetting for parents. We recognise that we are likely to have more contact with parents than other professionals involved and will work in an open, honest and transparent way with any parent whose child has been referred to children's social care or whose child is subject to a Child Protection Plan. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents/carers, wherever possible.

9. Escalation Procedures

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership expects staff working directly with families to share information appropriately and work to plans agreed in all relevant forums. Good practice includes the expectation that constructive challenge amongst colleagues within agencies and between agencies provides a healthy approach to the work.

The process will be kept as simple as possible and the aim is to resolve difficulties at a professional practitioner level, wherever possible and always in a restorative way. We recognise that differences in status and experience may affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this course of action and support should be sought from the school's DSL/DDSL.

If we believe that concerns regarding a child are not being addressed and their outcomes are not improving, we will escalate our concerns in line with the SSCP Escalation Policy.

Where local authority children's social care has concluded that an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) is **not** required but professionals in other agencies remain seriously concerned about the safety of a child, these professionals should seek further discussion with the local authority children's social worker, their manager and/or the DSL. The concerns, discussion and any agreements made should be recorded in each agency's files.

If concerns remain, the professional should discuss with their DSL and/or the Trust's Director of Safeguarding. If concerns remain professionals may formally request that local authority children's social care convene an ICPC.

Local authority children's social care should convene a conference where one or more professionals, supported by a senior manager/named or designated professional requests one. If disagreement continues, Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership's escalation procedures should be followed.

10. A Safer School Culture

Safer Recruitment and Selection

The school pays full regard to the safer recruitment expectations detailed in *KCSiE 2025*. Our Safer Recruitment and selection practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity, checking academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and appropriate checks including criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks, prohibition checks, whether they are known to the police and/or social care, if they

have been disqualified from providing childcare and any relevant overseas information. Evidence of these checks is recorded on our Single Central Record (SCR). The SCR is checked termly by the Safeguarding Governor and these checks are recorded and reported in the half-termly to the School Standards Committee via the *Ensuring Excellence Reporting* document.

Staff who have lived or worked outside the UK **will** undergo the same checks as all other staff, even if they have never been to the UK. We will ensure that any other appropriate checks are carried out so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. These checks could include criminal records checks for overseas applicants and for teaching positions, obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and/or that they are not aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach.⁶

Separate barred list checks will only be carried out in the following circumstances:

- for newly appointed staff who are engaging in regulated activity, pending the receipt of an Enhanced Certificate with Barred List information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (and where all other relevant checks have been carried out); or,
- where an individual has worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than three months prior to that person's appointment to the organisation (and where all other relevant checks as above have been carried out).

All recruitment materials include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of pupils.

Appropriate training in safer recruitment has been completed by members of SLT and others who are involved in recruitment. The school ensures that there is always at least one such trained colleague involved in all staff and volunteer recruitment processes and sitting on the recruitment panel. At least one member of the School Standards Committee has also completed Safer Recruitment training.

Induction

All staff must be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding and these are explained to them as part of staff induction. This includes reading and understanding:

- At least Part One or Annex A and Annex B of *KCSiE 2025*;
- The *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy*;
- The *Behaviour Policy*;
- The *Child-on-Child Abuse Policy*.
- The *Staff Code of Conduct*;
- The safeguarding response to children who are absent from or go missing from education;
- The role and identities of the DSL and their deputies.

Copies of all safeguarding-related policies and a copy of *KCSiE 2025*, Part One and Annex B, are provided to staff at induction.

If staff, including supply staff, visitors, volunteers or parent helpers are working with children alone they will, wherever possible, be visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to:

- inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with and for how long.
- Doors, ideally, should have a clear glass panel in them and where possible, be left open.

⁶ Guidance: [Application process for criminal records checks overseas](#)
[Regulated professions database](#)

- No visitors, volunteers or parent helpers will be left unsupervised with children or out of sight of the teacher or member of staff in charge, unless there is evidence that they have had the required checks and are logged on our SCR. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure this is the case.

Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all staff and volunteers during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

Staff support

We recognise the stressful and traumatic nature of safeguarding and child protection work. We will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and by signposting them to seek further support as appropriate.

Regular supervision is provided for the Lead DSL within school, usually half-termly and is extended to other members of staff as deemed appropriate by the school.

Use of Reasonable Force

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in school to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involves a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom. DfE advice for schools is available [here](#).

When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children, including any with SEND, or with medical conditions, staff should consider the risks carefully.

Our school uses positive and proactive behaviour support, for instance through drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children, and agreeing them with parents and carers, we will reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force. All of these incidents are appropriately recorded.

11. *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 - Specific Safeguarding Issues*

All staff in our school have an awareness of the following safeguarding issues, through regular training and briefings. Staff are aware that behaviours linked to these issues can make children vulnerable and put them in danger and that these issues often overlap. Please refer to [Appendix 2](#) for additional information and guidance on the topics below.

- Abuse - including physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect (See [Appendix 1](#))
- Behaviours linked to safeguarding issues
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Child on child abuse - including sexual violence and sexual harassment, the sharing of nude/semi-nude images (sexting), harmful sexual behaviour and upskirting
- Children and the court system, including those with family members in custody
- Children missing from education, home or care
- Children who are absent from education

- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- County Lines
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Homelessness
- Mental health
- Online safety
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Prevent Duty and Channel
- Serious violence
- Trafficking

12. Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

All children should be protected. However, our staff and Governors recognise that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others. This list is not exhaustive but highlights some of these groups:

- Children who need a social worker (Child in Need & Child Protection);
- Children missing from or absent from education;
- Children who are Electively Home Educated (EHE);
- Children requiring mental health support;
- Looked after children, previously looked after children and care leavers;
- Children with special educational needs & disabilities or health needs;
- Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or gender questioning (LGBT);
- Children who are young carers;
- Children who are affected by parental conflict and/or domestic abuse;
- Children who are refugees or asylum seekers;
- Children vulnerable to the risk of/involved in CSE/CCE.

We support these groups by having:

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them;
- **Understanding and action:** to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon;
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them;
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not;
- **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans;
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and how they have been reached, positive or negative;
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family;
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy, to assist them in putting forward their views.

Alternative provision⁷

School staff know that some pupils have complex needs, which cannot always be met in-house. In some circumstances the Headteacher may decide to access alternative provision for a pupil to support their ongoing education.

KCSiE 2025 clarifies that where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil. Schools should obtain **written** confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff. Schools should also know where the child will be based during school hours.

The DSL will maintain an overview of all pupils accessing any part of their learning from an alternative provider or via delivery online or offsite provided by any organisation or individual not employed by the school. The DSL will ensure that robust arrangements are in place for timely and effective two-way sharing of safeguarding information - including records of all safeguarding concerns - between the school and alternative/external providers.

The DSL will also take responsibility for ensuring that robust procedures are in place to confirm attendance and to enable the swift reporting of non-attendance and children going missing from alternative/external providers at any time when they should be with that provider.

The DSL will ensure that regular reviews of the provision take place at least half termly to ensure 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.

13. Educational Visitors to School

For educational visitors who are attending our setting in a professional capacity we will check ID and assure ourselves, if appropriate, that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks).

We recognise that external organisations can provide a varied and useful range of information, resources and speakers that can help schools enrich children's education and will carefully consider the suitability of any external organisations.

We will ensure that where individuals come onto our premises that we consider the following:

- assessing the education value;
- the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered; and
- whether relevant checks will be required.

This will form part of the risk assessment including our professional judgement and we will consider whether to seek an enhanced DBS for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity. In doing so, we will consider:

- what we know about the individual/company, including formal and informal information offered by staff, parents, other establishments, or volunteers;
- whether the individual/company has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where references can be advised, and suitability recorded;

⁷ DfE Guidance:

- [Alternative provision](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)

- whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check.

We will have decided the level of supervision required through risk assessment - the supervision will be “reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children” as stipulated in *KCSiE 2025*. We have clear visitors’ procedures that enable us to offer pupils experiences of meeting other professionals to extend knowledge and the curriculum. This clearly states whether they will be supervised or unsupervised within the school.

14. Managing Allegations Against/Concerns About Staff, including Supply Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for the young people at our school. We take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults who work with them are safe to do so. However, we do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

The School Standards Committee ensures there are procedures in place to manage allegations against staff members, including supply staff, contractors and volunteers. This is the case for both when an allegation meets the harm threshold and also when an allegation/concern does not meet the harm threshold but is a ‘low level concern’.

Allegations which may meet the harm threshold

We have a good understanding and give due regard to Part 4 of *KCSiE 2025* and [Allegations of Abuse - SSCP](#) where it is alleged that anyone working in the school, providing education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, contractors and volunteers 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 he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

This relates to members of staff, supply staff, contractors and volunteers who are currently working in any education setting regardless of whether that school or college is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and/or historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

We understand that if we are not the employer of an individual, we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately. In no circumstances will our school decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. In these circumstances, the Headteacher will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst the school carries out an investigation.

If an allegation is made or information is received about an adult who works in our school which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Headteacher immediately. Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher, this will be reported to the Chair of the School Standards Committee. In the event that neither the Headteacher nor the Chair of the School Standards Committee is contactable on that day, the information must be passed to a Director of Community Academies Trust, as stated in the *Whistleblowing Policy*.

The Headteacher or Chair of the School Standards Committee will seek advice from the LADO within one working day. No member of staff or the School Standards Committee will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO.

Learning Lessons

It is important that lessons are learnt when managing all levels and types of allegations.

The Headteacher/case manager will review the circumstances of all substantiated cases with Staffordshire's LADO to determine whether improvements can be made to the school's procedures to help prevent similar events in the future. This will be done throughout the entirety of the process and at conclusion.

Lessons may also be learnt from the use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. The LADO and case manager will consider how future investigations of a similar nature might be carried out without suspending the individual.

Where an allegation is concluded and found to be either unfounded, false, malicious or unsubstantiated the headteacher/case manager, and LADO if involved, will consider the facts of each case and determine whether any lessons can be learned, and improvements made.

Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold (referred to for the purposes of this guidance as 'low level concerns')

Our school promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Creating this culture enables us to identify inappropriate, problematic, or concerning behaviour early, minimising the risk of abuse and ensuring that adults who work in, or on behalf of, our school are clear about professional boundaries and act within them in accordance with our ethos and values.

What is a low-level concern?

A 'low level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. It is any concern, no matter how small - and even if it causes no more than a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - 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 harm threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to refer to the LADO.

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

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- humiliating pupils.

All staff have a good understanding of what constitutes a low-level concern, and our SSC ensure that these low-level concerns are included as part of our *Staff Code of Conduct* and safeguarding procedures.

Sharing low-level concerns

We understand how crucial it is that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the correct person and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively will also protect those working in or on behalf of our school from potential false allegations or misunderstandings. If we are in

any doubt as to whether information shared about a member of our staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, we will consult with the LADO.

Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors knows to contact the LADO directly via the [LADO Referral form](#).

The school has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences. A DBS referral must be made if the member of staff concerned has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed, had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual, in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or HR. The DSL has a responsibility to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service.

15. Information Sharing

We work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with [Working together to safeguard children, 2023](#) and [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#).

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

As part of meeting a child's needs our School Standards Committee recognises the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This includes ensuring arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within the school and with children's social care, the safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies and practitioners as required.

We are proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the Local Authority children's social care.

Our School Standards Committee and Trust are aware that among other obligations, the *Data Protection Act 2018* and the GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

Our School Standards Committee and Trust ensure that relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the *Data Protection Act 2018* and the GDPR.

Where pupils leave our school, the DSL will ensure that any relevant child protection file is transferred to the new setting as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit, with confirmation of receipt.

In addition to the child protection file, our DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school/college in advance of the pupil leaving. For example, information that would allow the new setting to continue supporting those who have experienced abuse and have that support in place for when the pupil arrives.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.⁸ Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

16. Managing Complaints

In line with our school's ethos and culture, we encourage children and parents/carers to talk with us if they are unhappy with anything to do with school. We have a robust internal investigation process which we use to resolve matters.

The *CAT Complaints Policy* states clearly the various stages of complaints and where to escalate concerns following the completion of the complaints process. Our *Complaints Policy* can be accessed via a link on our website and is also available on request from the school.

Safeguarding concerns should be raised with school immediately. If a concern means a child is at immediate risk, the school will contact the local authority children's social care based on where the child resides. Upon arrival in school, all visitors are given safeguarding information which outlines how to share concerns and also outlines the code of conduct expected of all visitors/contractors.

17. Site Security⁹

We provide a secure site which is controlled by precise management directives, but the site is only as secure as the people who use it. All people on our site must adhere to the rules which govern it to avoid potential safeguarding issues. Therefore:

- wherever possible, gates are kept closed during the school day;
- visitors, volunteers and pupils must only enter through the main entrance and after signing in at the office, visitors and volunteers will be issued with a school lanyard or visitors' pass. The school has a clear system of ensuring visitors are accompanied/supervised by a regulated staff member. Any visitor on site who is not identifiable via a visitors' pass will be challenged by any staff member and this will be reported to a member of the Strategic Leadership Team;
- family members and carers attending functions have access only through the designated and supervised entrances, with tickets for visitors for appropriate school events;
- children will only be allowed home with adults with parental responsibility or confirmed permission;
- empty classrooms should have closed windows and doors;
- children under 16 should never be allowed to leave school alone during school hours unless collected by an adult such as a parent who is doing so for a valid reason. The parent/carer should report to Reception to do this;
- at least two members of staff are always on duty at break times;
- a Health and Safety audit with a risk assessment is completed annually. This forms part of the Trust Board Report and will include a fire evacuation and Prevent Risk Assessment;
- Risk management of site security is managed by strategic leaders and overseen by the Trust's Executive Group. The school has a clear system of risk assessments and review timescales.

⁸ Guidance document - [Data protection in schools](#)

⁹ Guidance - [School and college security](#) - GOV.UK

18. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)¹⁰

The [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#) is mandatory for all early years' providers.

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The EYFS framework sets the standards that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

For our staff who work in childcare provision or who are directly concerned with the management of such provision, the school needs to ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Child Care (Disqualification) Regulations 2018. Further information on the staff to whom these regulations apply, the checks that should be carried out, and the recording of those checks can be found in [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006](#)

Our school ensures that at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate must be on the premises and available at all times when EYFS children are present and must accompany EYFS children on outings.

19. Related School Policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school are appropriately safeguarded, the following policies are also included under our safeguarding umbrella:

- *Anti-Bullying Policy*
- *Attendance and Punctuality Policy*
- *Behaviour Policy*
- *Child on Child Abuse Policy*
- *Educational Visits Policy*
- *First Aid Policy*
- *Health and Safety Policy*
- *Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Mobile Phone Policy¹¹ (Early Years Framework)*
- *Online Safety Policy*
- *Recruitment & Selection Policy*
- *Use of Reasonable Force (Physical Intervention/Positive Handling) Policy*
- *Whistleblowing Policy*
- *Staff Code of Conduct*

¹⁰ Only applicable to primary schools

¹¹ EYFS statutory framework document states that the safeguarding policy must cover the use of mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices in the setting. School procedures should be detailed as part of the school-specific appendix or in a separate document.

Appendix 1 - Definitions and Indicators of Abuse

Neglect

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

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

The following may be indicators of neglect (This is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Constant hunger;
- Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food;
- Frequent tiredness or listlessness;
- Frequently dirty or unkempt;
- Often poorly or inappropriately dressed for the weather;
- Poor school attendance or often late for or not brought to school;
- Poor concentration;
- Affection or attention seeking behaviour;
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated/not being taken to medical appointments;
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight;
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially;
- Responsibility for activity that is not age-appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings;
- The child is regularly not collected or received from school;
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers;
- Adolescent neglect;
- Affluent neglect.

Physical Abuse

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

The following may be indicators of physical abuse (This is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape;
- Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt;
- Bite marks;
- Round burn marks;
- Multiple burn marks/burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks;
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given;
- Changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred;
- Bald patches;
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning;
- Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather;
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted;
- Fear of medical help;
- Fear of changing for PE;
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance;

- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying; or
- Isolation from peers.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

The following may be indicators of child sexual abuse (This is not designed to be used as a checklist but if we suspect that a child may be a subject to child sexual abuse, we will refer to and/or use the resources from the [CSA Centre](#)):

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge;
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching;
- Reluctance to go home;
- Inability to concentrate, tiredness;
- Refusal to communicate;
- Thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains;
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia;
- Attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse;
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation;
- Unusual compliance;
- Regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling;
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately;
- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group;
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming; or
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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 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 ill-treatment of another person. It may also 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.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse (This is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- The child consistently describes him/herself in negative ways - as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly;
- Over-reaction to mistakes;
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development;
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders;
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies;
- Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches;
- Self-harming, drug or solvent abuse;

- Fear of parents being contacted;
- Running away;
- Compulsive stealing;
- Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia;
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis.

N.B. Some situations where children stop communicating suddenly can indicate maltreatment. This is known as “traumatic mutism”.

Parental Response

Research and experience indicate that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- Delay in seeking medical treatment that is obviously needed;
- Unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb);
- Incompatible explanations offered or several different explanations, or comments that the child has acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development;
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries;
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries;
- A persistently negative attitude towards the child;
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child;
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse;
- Parents request removal of the child from home;
- Violence between adults in the household;
- Evidence of coercion and control.

Disabled Children

When working with children with disabilities, practitioners need to be aware that additional possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- A bruise in a site that may not be of concern on an ambulant child, such as the shin, may be of concern on a non-mobile child;
- Not getting enough help with feeding, leading to malnourishment;
- Poor toileting arrangements;
- Lack of stimulation;
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint;
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification such as deprivation of medication, food or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries;
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child’s means of communication;
- Ill-fitting equipment, for example, callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting;
- Misappropriation of a child’s finances; or
- Inappropriate invasive procedures.

Appendix 2 - Specific Safeguarding Issues

Behaviours linked to safeguarding issues

All staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Presenting behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including the link to County Lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.

Bullying, including Cyberbullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to protect themselves. It can take many forms but the main types are:

- physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft)
- verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling)
- emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group)
- cyberbullying (including sexting)

Guidance on addressing bullying can be found in our *Behaviour Policy*.

Further guidance on bullying:

- [Preventing & tackling bullying](#)
- [Cyberbullying advice](#)

Child-on-Child Abuse, including Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment¹²

Our staff have the knowledge and awareness that children can and sometimes do abuse other children (including online). All staff are clear about this school's policy and procedure regarding child-on-child abuse.

We have a separate *Child on Child Abuse Policy* which includes Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children, as well as *Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policies* to guide, inform and support children, staff and parents/carers.

Child-on-child abuse can occur both physically and verbally, either online or face-to-face, between two children of **any** age and sex. It can occur with a single child or group of children and can happen both inside and outside of school.

Children who are victims of this abuse, will find the experience stressful and distressing and it is likely to have an adverse effect on their educational attainment. This type of abuse can exist on a continuum and may overlap; it can occur both online and offline and can be both physical and verbal. It is never acceptable.

¹² Guidance Documents:

- [CSA Centre](#)
- [Hackett's Continuum - NSPCC Tool](#)
- [Disrespect NoBody campaign](#)
- [CEOP-Safety centre](#)
- [UKCIS Guidance: Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes](#)
- [Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges - www.gov.uk](#)
- [Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance July 2022 - www.gov.uk](#)
- [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings www.gov.uk](#)
- [Undressed \(lgfl.net\)](#)

Our staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports of it. They understand the importance of the **timely** challenge of inappropriate behaviours between peers, many listed below, that are abusive in nature. They are aware of the importance of: -

- Making clear that child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, is not acceptable and that we have a zero-tolerance approach in addressing it;
- Not dismissing this abuse as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as physical and sexual assaults e.g. grabbing bottoms, breasts, and genitalia, flicking bras and the lifting up of skirts.

All staff know that if we do not challenge and support our children that this will lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

We know that the initial response to a report from a child is vitally important. We do not want to miss that opportunity and so we reassure victims that their reports are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We never give victims the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. We reassure victims that they should not feel ashamed for making a report.

We have well promoted and easily understood systems in place so that our children feel confident knowing their concerns will be treated seriously. All allegations of child-on-child abuse are recorded, investigated and dealt with rapidly and sensitively. Those affected are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward; it is crucial that these children know that they will be supported and kept safe. Follow up for those affected by child-on-child abuse always takes place with ongoing support provided as required.

Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school will not be downplayed and will 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. We will ensure that children know that the law is in place to protect them rather than to criminalise them and we will explain this in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

Staff are aware of the groups that are potentially more at risk, as evidence shows that girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk. The DfE states that ‘child-on-child abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures’.

Those who experience child-on-child abuse will be supported by the school’s pastoral system and referred to specialist agencies if appropriate. Risk assessment and/or safety planning are an integral part of this support plan, particularly regarding the post incident management.

All staff understand, that even if there are no reports in school, this does not mean that it is not happening; it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important that if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they speak to the DSL or DDSL. Our staff will not wait for high thresholds before acting.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault and may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.

- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks about clothes and/or appearance, jokes, taunting and online sexual harassment. This also includes the telling of sexual stories, making lewd comments and calling someone sexual names and physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and online sexual harassment.
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive - but children still need to know it is illegal - whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive.
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All staff are aware of the importance of understanding intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.

All staff are clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the safeguarding referral process. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do, they should speak to the DSL or a deputy. Our *Behaviour Policy* will support any sanctions.

Children Missing Education

All professionals working with children, as well as the wider community can help by remaining vigilant to children's safety. The law states that every child should be receiving an education, and we stand a better chance of ensuring a child's safety if we know where and how they are receiving this. *The Education and Inspections Act 2006* places a duty on local authorities in England and Wales to make arrangements to identify children and young people of compulsory school age missing education in their area; we work closely with the Local Authority to ensure we put appropriate safeguarding responses in place for children who go missing from education, as detailed in our *Attendance and Punctuality Policy*, available on request.

A child going missing, particularly repeatedly, can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation; child criminal exploitation; mental health problems; substance abuse and other issues. Using professional curiosity to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk helps prevent the likelihood of them going missing in future.

We understand our responsibility to link school absence/missing episodes with the impact this has on the child's education. We know that there is a distinction between a child being absent and when they are subject to a missing episode and the importance of acting on this information and reporting a missing episode when appropriate. We have a key role in sharing information with the police and any lead practitioner involved with the family when a child is reported missing. We will provide, when required, an appropriate environment for a Return Home Interview (RHI) within the education setting, where possible and will contribute to safety planning when required. We will follow our attendance policy for children who are regularly and persistently absent.

If a child is not known to the Local Authority or other agencies but there are remaining safeguarding concerns, we will consult the SSCP Threshold Framework and ensure that any concerns are reported to the appropriate agencies/partners.

Our school will hold at least two emergency contact numbers for each pupil. If a child goes missing from our school and we are unable to locate them, we will inform parents/carers and will also contact the Police to report them missing in line with our *CAT Schools' Procedure for if a Child is Missing or Absconds* flowcharts ([See Appendix 12](#)). This will ensure that the Police and other partners have a true picture of missing episodes which are indicators of risk for some children.

The school will notify the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of ten days or more. The school will also notify the Local Authority of any pupil who is to be deleted from the admission register because s/he:

- has been taken out of school by their parents and is being educated outside the school system (e.g. elective home education);
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within a reasonable distance of the school at which s/he is registered (moved within the town, within the country or moved abroad but failed to notify the school of the change);
- has been displaced as a result of a crisis e.g. domestic violence or homelessness;
- has been certified by a medical professional as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither s/he nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- is in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe that s/he will return to the school at the end of that period; or
- has been permanently excluded.

Our school will demonstrate that we have taken reasonable steps to ascertain the whereabouts of children that would be considered 'missing'.¹³

Children who are absent from education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeated occasions, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including, neglect and child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important that the school response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education, supports identifying such abuse and in the case of absent pupils, helps minimise the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging and also where children are already known to local authority Children's Social Care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a Child in Need or who has a Child Protection Plan or is a looked after child) where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Further information and support include:

- Working together to improve school attendance, including information on how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns;
- The DfE statutory guidance Children Missing Education which provides information detailing schools' duties, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points;
- Full-time enrolment of 14 to 16-year-olds in further education and sixth-form colleges
- General information and advice for schools - Government's Missing Children and Adults strategy.

Child Missing from Home or Care

There are strong links between children involved in criminal and sexual exploitation and other behaviours such as running away from home, school or care, bullying, self-harm, teenage pregnancy, truancy and substance misuse. In addition, some children are particularly vulnerable, for example, children with special needs, those in residential or foster care, those leaving care, migrant children, particularly those who are

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

unaccompanied, those forced into marriage, those involved in gangs and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Most children who go missing are not in care and go missing from their family home. However, children who are looked after are much more likely to run away than those who live at home, and over 50% of young people in care have run away at some point.¹⁴

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved, or 'trafficked', for the purpose of exploitation.

We are aware of the [Child Exploitation Risk Screening Tool](#) and use this at the earliest opportunity to understand the risk factors in a child's life.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)¹⁵

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

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. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something to which they have agreed or consented.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

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

Child Sexual Exploitation¹⁶ (CSE)

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care>

¹⁵ Guidance documents:

- [Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked](#)
- [Child Exploitation - StaffsSCP](#)

¹⁶ Guidance documents:

- [Child Sexual Exploitation Definition & Guidance](#)
- [Know about CSE](#)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside 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 e.g. 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. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

The above CCE indicators can also be signs of CSE, as can having older boyfriends or girlfriends and/or suffering from sexually transmitted infections/becoming pregnant.

'County Lines'¹⁷

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move and/or store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in various locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes.

Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines is missing episodes, both from school and home, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral via the police to the [National Referral Mechanism](#) (NRF) should be considered.

If a child is suspected to be at risk of, or involved in, county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors

¹⁷ Guidance documents:

- [Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults; County Lines](#)
- [County Lines toolkit](#)

including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Domestic Abuse, including Operation Encompass¹⁸

Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Children living in households where domestic abuse takes place should be considered and treated as 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). Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. In all such cases, young people will be supported by the school and signposted to external agencies, where appropriate.

We are an Operation Encompass school. This means we work with the police to provide emotional and practical help to children impacted by domestic abuse. It ensures that we have up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be in place, according to the child's needs.

Further information regarding Operation Encompass can be found [here](#) or by contacting the Operation Encompass helpline on 0204 513 9990 (Mon - Fri 8am-1pm).

Drugs¹⁹

There is evidence that children and young people are increasingly misusing alcohol and illegal drugs. Consequences of drug and alcohol misuse range from non-attendance and poor attainment at school, poor health, committing crime to support 'habits' and also increased risk of being a victim of violent crime and criminal exploitation, including sexual exploitation.

Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII) & Perplexing Presentations²⁰

Fabricated or Induced Illness is a condition whereby a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of their parent/carer and which is attributed by the adult to another cause.

¹⁸ Guidance Documents:

- [Domestic Violence and Abuse](#)
- [NSPCC-Domestic Abuse](#)
- [Refuge-Domestic abuse & effects on children](#)
- [Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support](#)

¹⁹ Guidance Documents:

- [NSPCC-Parental Substance Misuse](#)
- [Drugs Advice for Schools](#)

²⁰ Guidance Documents

- [FII-PP Pathway](#)
- [NHS-Overview-Fabricated or Induced Illness](#)

There may be several explanations for these circumstances and each requires careful consideration and review. Concerns about a child's health should be discussed with a health professional who is involved with the child.

Perplexing Presentations are concerns raised around medically unexplained symptoms or concerning parental behaviours around a child's health, by a non-medical professional.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)²¹

FGM comprises 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 is a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

FGM is known by several names including "cutting", "female circumcision" or "initiation". The term female circumcision suggests that the practice is similar to male circumcision, but it bears no resemblance to male circumcision, has serious health consequences and no medical benefits.

FGM is also linked to domestic abuse, particularly in relation to "honour-based abuse".

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers - Section 5B of the *Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003* (as inserted by section 74 of the *Serious Crime Act 2015*) - places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Staff **must** personally report to the police, cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless there is good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL or Deputy DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where staff do not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, staff should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Forced Marriage²²

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical, emotional and/or psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived culture practices to coerce a person into marriage. Schools play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

There are some significant differences between the referral of a concern about a young person being forced into marriage and other child protection referrals. Professionals must be aware that sharing information with a young person's parents, extended family or members of their community, could put the young person in a situation of significant risk.

²¹ Guidance Documents:

- [Multi Agency Statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation](#)
- [Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#)

²² Guidance Documents:

- [Forced Marriage](#)
- [The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage](#)

Any disclosure that indicates a young person may be facing a forced marriage must be taken seriously by professionals who should also realise that this could be ‘one chance to save a life’. A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In cases of vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent to marriage, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.

From February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct the purpose of which is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages.

School staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit for advice or information on 020 7008 0151 or via email at fmufcdo.gov.uk.

Homelessness

Being homeless, or being at risk of becoming homeless, presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The DSL/DDSL should be aware of local contact details and referral routes into the local housing organisations so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority will be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this will not replace a referral into children’s social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Staff recognise that in some cases 16- and 17-year-olds may be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children’s services will be the lead agency for these young people and the DSL or Deputy DSL should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child’s circumstances.

‘Honour-based’ Abuse

So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to seemingly 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. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Mental Health²³

All staff have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and are 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.

²³ Guidance Documents:

- [Addressing Trauma and Adversity](#)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools Guidance](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying](#)
- [Every Interaction Matters](#)
- [MIND - Parenting Capacity and Mental Health](#)
- [NSPCC - Mental Health and Parenting](#)
- [Guidance for education settings responding to a sudden unexpected death being treated as a suicide](#)

Our school has a Strategic Mental Health Lead who is a senior member of staff. The Mental Health Lead ensures that we have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems. As part of Community Academies Trust, we adhere to a Trust-wide guarantee of universal, targeted and specialised mental health provision minimum offers, details of which can be viewed on our website.

Only appropriately trained professionals will attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken in line with this policy and by speaking with the DSL/DDSL.

Online Safety²⁴

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues, often providing the platform that facilitates harm in cases such as Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation.

Our staff understand that it is essential for our children to be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Our whole-school approach to online safety empowers us to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms for us to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material. For example, pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories;
- **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users. For example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes;
- **Conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils or staff are at risk, please report it to [the Anti-Phishing Working Group](#).

²⁴ Further guidance documents and resources:

- [Children's Commissioner-Online Safety](#)
- [Teaching online safety in schools](#)
- [Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring](#)
- [CEOP-Safety Centre](#)
- [National Cyber Security Centre](#)
- [NSPCC-Undertaking remote teaching safely](#)
- [360 Degree Safe - Online Safety Review Tool](#)
- [UKCCIS-UK Council for Child Internet Safety](#)

All staff receive online safety training and know to be vigilant and to report any concerns about risks to children online in the same way that they notice and report offline concerns. The school's *Online Safety Policy, based on the above 'four Cs'*, explains our approach to keeping pupils safe in school and protecting and educating pupils in the safe use of technology, including ways for them to report any harmful, distressing or abusive online content, contact, conduct or commercial activity. This policy is available on our website or by contacting the school.

Chatrooms and social networking sites are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and pupils are not allowed to access those sites in school. However, many pupils own or have access to hand-held devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community.

The school is unable to filter activity on devices not owned by the school but recognise that when children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet (i.e. via 3G, 4G and 5G), it is likely that some will misuse this to bully, sexually harass, threaten or control their peers via their mobile and smart technology; share nude or semi-nude images and/or videos consensually and non-consensually, including via large chat groups; request/pressurise other pupils to create and share nude or semi-nude images and/or videos; and view or share pornography and other harmful content.

Staff are trained to assume and anticipate such misuse and to take action where they have reason to believe that this is happening or has happened, reaching out to pupils identified as being at risk, reporting incidents to the DSL as with all other safeguarding issues and confiscating devices that they suspect may contain evidence of illegal or harmful content or activity. Parents may find it useful to refer to internetmatters.org for guidance on possible restrictions they could put in place to help keep their children safe online.

Online bullying, online sexual harassment and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying or sexual harassment and will be managed through our anti-bullying and child-on-child abuse procedures.

Safeguarding pupils in online learning and communication between staff and pupils

Staff receive advice regarding their personal online activity, use of social networking and electronic communication with pupils, about which there are strict rules, as detailed in the *Staff Code of Conduct*. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be the subject of a referral to the LADO and may be subject to disciplinary action.

The school engages, informs and regularly reminds parents/carers about the importance of children being safe online; parents and carers are likely to find it helpful to understand what systems the school uses to filter and monitor online use. Information will be provided for parents/carers about what their children are being asked to do online, the sites they will be asked to access and which school staff their child will be interacting with online.

The school will ensure that online learning tools and systems are used in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

In **rare and exceptional circumstances** where staff urgently need to contact a pupil or parent by telephone and do not have access to a school-owned device, they will discuss this with a member of SLT. If it is agreed there is no alternative to using a personally owned device, staff members will always use 'caller withheld' to ensure the pupil and/or parent is not able to identify the staff member's personal contact details.

Staff also receive advice regarding their personal online activity, use of social networking and electronic communication with pupils, about which there are strict rules. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be the subject of a referral to the LADO and/or may be subject to disciplinary action.

Filtering and monitoring

The DSL is directly responsible for ensuring the school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and for **regularly reviewing their effectiveness**. They should ensure that the SLT and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

The school should have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard the systems, with due consideration to the cyber security standards. They should consider the age range and number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.

Where the school is alerted to unsafe online behaviour, the DSL or a Deputy DSL is always informed, the concern is rapidly evaluated and where necessary, addressed as a safeguarding issue, within appropriate timescales, dependent on the nature of the report.

The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems is informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.

To meet this duty, in reference to the DfE [digital and technology standards](#), our school will:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems;
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually;
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning;
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet safeguarding needs.

The SSC and proprietors will review the standards and the DSL will discuss with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support the school in meeting this standard.

Preventing Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of our school's safeguarding approach.

- **Extremism** is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **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 is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

This school values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Pupils and staff have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

There is no single way of identifying whether an individual is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Radicalisation can also occur through various methods, including social media and the internet, and also settings, such as within the home.

The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. This school is clear that exploitation and radicalisation must be viewed as a safeguarding concern and that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's safeguarding duty.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs are aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

Definitions of radicalisation and extremism, and indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in [Appendix 4](#).

Prevent Duty²⁵

The school governors, the Headteacher and the DSL will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the school's Religious Studies/PSHE curriculum, *SEND Policy*, Assembly content, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of children by gender and SEND, *Anti-Bullying Policy* and other issues specific to our school's profile, community and philosophy.

All schools are subject to a duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism". This is known as The Prevent Duty and is part of our schools' wider safeguarding obligations.

The DSL, DDSLs and other strategic leaders are familiar with the revised *Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales*. We follow the guidance in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

Our school has a Prevent Lead who is the professional within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the DSL. When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with Prevent Lead or the DSL if this is not the same person.

Our school will monitor in-school online activity to ensure that inappropriate sites are not accessed by pupils or staff, through the use of specialist online monitoring software.

Private Fostering²⁶

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately without the involvement of a local authority for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or immediate relative. If the arrangement is to last, or has lasted, for 28 days or more, it is categorised as 'private fostering'.

The Children Act 1989 defines an immediate relative as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership), or a step-parent.

People become involved in private fostering for all kinds of reasons. Examples of private fostering include:

- Children who need alternative care because of parental illness;
- Children whose parents cannot care for them because their work or study involves long or anti-social hours;

²⁵ Guidance Documents:

- [The Prevent Duty](#)
- [Educate Against Hate](#)
- [ACT Early | Prevent radicalisation](#)

²⁶ Guidance Document:

- [Children Act 1989 - Private Fostering](#)
- [What is Private Fostering? | Foster For Staffordshire](#)

- Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their educational opportunities;
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children;
- Teenagers who stay with friends (or other non-relatives) because they have fallen out with their parents;
- Children staying with families while attending a school away from their home area.

Staff members will notify the DSL or Deputy DSL if they become aware of a private fostering arrangement. There is a mandatory duty on the school to inform Staffordshire Children's Social Care of a private fostering arrangement by contacting 0300 111 8007, who then have a duty to check that the young person is being properly cared for and that the arrangement is satisfactory.

Serious Youth Violence²⁷

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. 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, or 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 should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

²⁷ Guidance documents:

- [Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines](#)
- [Preventing youth violence and gang involvement - Home Office](#)

Appendix 3 - Allegations about Staff, including Supply Staff, Governors or Volunteers²⁸

1. Inappropriate behaviour by staff/supply staff/volunteers could take the following forms:
 - **Physical** - For example, the intentional use of force as a punishment, slapping, use of objects to hit with, throwing objects, or rough physical handling.
 - **Emotional** - For example, intimidation, belittling, scapegoating, sarcasm, lack of respect for children's rights, attitudes that discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, disability or sexuality.
 - **Sexual** - For example, sexualised behaviour towards pupils, sexual harassment, inappropriate phone calls and texts, images via social media, sexual assault and rape.
 - **Neglect** - For example, failing to act to protect a child or children, failing to seek medical attention or failure to carry out an appropriate risk assessment.
 - **Spiritual Abuse** - For example, using undue influence or pressure to control individuals or ensure obedience, following religious practices that are harmful such as beatings or starvation.
2. If a child makes an allegation about a member of staff, supply staff, Governor, visitor or volunteer the Headteacher must be informed immediately. Following the *Safeguarding allegations/concerns against staff flowchart* in [Appendix 12](#), the Headteacher must carry out an urgent initial consideration in order to establish whether there is substance to the allegation. The Headteacher should not carry out the investigation him/herself or interview pupils.
3. The Headteacher will exercise and be accountable for their professional judgement on the action to be taken as follows:
 - If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions, raise credible Child Protection concerns the Headteacher will notify the LADO via the LADO Referral form. The LADO will advise about action to be taken and may initiate internal referrals within Staffordshire Children's Social Care to address the needs of children likely to have been affected.
 - If the actions of the member of staff, and the consequences of the actions, do not raise credible child protection concerns, but do raise other issues in relation to the conduct of the member of staff or the pupil, these should be addressed through the school's own internal procedures.
 - If the Headteacher decides that the allegation is without foundation and no further formal action is necessary, all those involved should be informed of this conclusion, and the reasons for the decision should be recorded on the child's safeguarding file.
4. Where the school is not the employer of an individual, such as in the case of supply staff, volunteers and contractors, we still have a responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately and that we liaise with relevant parties. Under no circumstances will our school decide to cease using a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. Our Headteacher will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.
5. Where an allegation has been made against the Headteacher, the relevant TEG line manager alongside the Chair of the School Standards Committee take on the role of liaising with the LADO in determining the appropriate way forward.

²⁸ Further Guidance: [Allegations of Abuse - SSCP](#)

Appendix 4 - Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as: Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.
3. Extremism is defined as the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:
 - negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
 - undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
 - intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results detailed in the above points²⁹
4. 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.
5. Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff can recognise those vulnerabilities.
6. Indicators of vulnerability include:
 - Identity Crisis - the pupil is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
 - Personal Crisis - the pupil 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; events affecting the pupil'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 pupil may have perceptions of injustice or a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life;
 - Experiences of Criminality - this may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration;
 - Special Educational Needs - pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.
7. 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.
8. More critical risk factors could include:
 - Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
 - Family members convicted of a terrorism act or subject to a Channel intervention;

²⁹ [New definition of extremism \(2024\) - GOV.UK](#)

- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations;
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation, resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis; and
- Fascination with extreme violence or mass casualty attacks.

Appendix 5 - District Prevent Contacts

Prevent Leads	Contact Name	Email Address
Cannock	Oliver Greatbach	olivergreatbach@cannockchasedc.gov.uk
East Staffs	Mike Hovers	Michael.hovers@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk
East Staffs	Joanne Barrington	Joanne.barrington@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk
Lichfield	Yvonne James	Yvonne.James@lichfielddc.gov.uk
Newcastle	Georgina Evans	Georgina.Evans@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk
South Staffs	Maggie Quinn	M.Quinn@sstaffs.gov.uk
Stafford	Victoria Cooper	vcooper@staffordbc.gov.uk
Staffs Moorlands	Paula Goodwin	paula.goodwin@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk
Tamworth	Anna McLauchlan	anna-mclauchlan@tamworth.gov.uk
Staffordshire County Council (Safer Communities)	Fiona Chapman	fiona.chapman@staffordshire.gov.uk
Staffordshire Police Prevent Team	Sam Cartlidge	prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

Appendix 6 - Role of the Staffordshire LADO

The Staffordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) promotes a safer children's workforce by providing effective guidance, advice and investigation oversight to cases. The LADO may be able to offer advice and assist with communication in situations which sit outside the statutory criteria, albeit at the discretion of the LADO and where the broader goals of a safer children's workforce are relevant.

The service will give advice on how concerns or allegations should be investigated, including if a referral needs to be raised with the Police and/or Children's Social Care. The Staffordshire LADO is not directly responsible for investigatory activities but will actively support any investigation and give advice around a range of parameters including suspension, possible media interest and when to tell the adult.

The LADO will ensure all interested parties are appropriately linked together. They will retain oversight of individual cases to ensure concerns or allegations are investigated thoroughly in a fair and timely manner and will advise in relation to any subsequent duties to communicate with regulatory bodies and/or the DBS.

The StaffsSCP inter-agency procedures for [managing allegations of abuse](#) is based on the framework for dealing with such allegations made against an adult who works with children, as detailed in *Working Together, 2023* and should be followed by all organisations providing services for children and young people. Compliance with these procedures will help to ensure that allegations are dealt with consistently and in a timely manner, that a thorough, proportionate and fair process is followed and that processes are open to challenge.

Arrangements for managing concerns or allegations of this nature should be robust and effective in keeping children safe. All allegations should be taken seriously, approached with an open mind, and not be driven by preconceived opinions about whether a child has or has not been harmed.

The [Guidance for Safer Working Practice](#) document will help individuals form judgements on what may constitute behaviour that is unsafe or abusive.

Referral of concerns to the LADO:

The Staffordshire LADO should be contacted in all circumstances where there is a report of concern or an allegation that an adult working or volunteering with children:

- 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 he or she 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.

Follow the guidance in *KCSiE 2025*. The Headteacher/TEG Lead/Chair of Governors must contact the LADO via the LADO Referral form or on **0300 111 8007**.

If your concern or allegation is urgent and outside of office of office hours telephone: 0345 6042 886 (the Emergency Duty Team).

This single referral point will provide a responsive and inclusive service for all children's workforce sectors, focus the advice and support where it is needed most and enable the team to continue to work effectively with partners.

Appendix 7 - Useful contacts on safeguarding matters

Local Contacts

- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership - [StaffsSCP](#)
- Staffordshire Education Safeguarding Advice Service (ESAS) ON 01785 895836 e-mail : esas@staffordshire.gov.uk
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - All referrals via form
- Staffordshire Families Integrated Front Door (SFIFD) 0300 111 8007
- Emergency Duty Services (EDS - Emergency safeguarding concerns) 0345 604 2886 or email eds.team.manager@staffordshire.gov.uk
- Stoke-on-Trent Children's Services: Chat and Advice Service (CHAD) 01782 235100
Emergency Duty Team: 01782 234234 (outside office hours)
- Staffordshire Police Prevent Team 01785 232054, 01785 233109 or email prevent@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk
- PSHE Coordinator Natalie McGrath natalie@staffsscvs.org.uk

Local Advice

- [New Era](#) – Ending relationship abuse
- Fostering Service (Staffordshire) 0800 169 2061 email fostering@adoptionbus@staffordshire.gov.uk Out of Hours: Emergency Duty Service 01785 354030
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board [StaffsSCB](#)
- Entrust HR Services (subscription basis) 01785 278961

National Contacts

- CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) [CEOP Safety Centre](#) and knowaboutcse.co.uk
- [Stop It Now! child sexual abuse helpline](#)
- Women's Aid - 24 Hour Helpline: 0870 2700 123 www.staffordshirewomensaid.org/contact_us
- UNICEF - Support Care Team 0300 330 5580 (Mon - Fri 8am-6pm). If you think a child is in immediate danger, please call 999. [Unicef](#)
- Professionals Online Safety Helpline - 0844 381 4772 [Safer Internet Helpline](#)
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) - [Internet Watch Foundation](#)
- Safer Internet Centre - helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
- Childline - 0800 1111 [Childline](#)
- Ofsted - General enquiries: 0300 123 1231
 - About Schools: 0300 123 4234
 - Concerns: 0300 123 4666
 - e-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- HM Government (advice on protecting children from radicalisation for parents, teachers, and leaders) www.educateagainsthate.com

NSPCC

- NSPCC Staffs School contacts - rachel.willis@nspcc.org.uk & Matthew.Harding@nspcc.org.uk
- NSPCC helpline to provide support and guidance to any victims of sexual abuse in schools. This includes how to contact the police and report crimes if they wish. **0800 136 663**
- NSPCC - 24-hour Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000 [NSPCC](#)
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/sexting-sending-nudes/>
- NSPCC Harmful Sexual Behaviour project: **0844 892 0273**

Appendix 8 - Example Safeguarding Induction Sheet - For use with new or supply staff, regular visitors and volunteers

We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and at our school we take this responsibility seriously.

If you have any concerns about a child or young person in our school, you must share this information immediately with our Designated Safeguarding Lead (**Name**) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (**Name**)

Do not think that your worry is insignificant if it is about hygiene, appearance or behaviour - we would rather you told us as we would rather know about something that appears small than miss a worrying situation.

If you think the matter is very serious and may be related to child protection, for example, physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, you must find one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads and provide them with a written/electronic record of your concern. A copy of the form to complete is attached to this and others can be obtained from Please ensure you complete all sections as described.

If you are unable to locate a DSL, ask a member of the school office staff to find them to ask them to speak with you immediately about a confidential and urgent matter.

Any allegation concerning a member of staff, a child's foster carer or a volunteer should be reported immediately to the Headteacher. If an allegation is made about the Headteacher you should pass this information to the Chair of the School Standards Committee or contact a member of the Trust Executive Group. Alternatively, you can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer on 0300 111 8007.

The people you should talk to in school are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Location of office:

Contact Number:

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Location of office:

Contact Number:

Chair of School Standards Committee:

Contact Number:

Appendix 9 - Example Safeguarding Induction Checklist

Safeguarding Induction Checklist

Name:

Date:

	Criteria	Comments	Signature
DAY 1	Welcome		
	Employment checks complete		
	School background information: Pupils, Ofsted, Community		
	School structure, Governance arrangement		
	Keeping Children Safe in Education, Part 1 and Annex B issued and explained		
	School ethos explained		
	Role & Responsibility: reporting structure, safeguarding role in school		
	Names of DSL and Deputy DSLs, roles described and contact details		
	Role of the School Standards Committee - members		
	Staff Conduct of Code Policy		
	Behaviour Policy		
	Children Absent from and Missing from Education process		
	Confidentiality and breaches		
General Data Protection Act			
Health & Safety: Fire procedures and Fire officers; Lockdown procedures			
WEEK 1	Meet with Headteacher & DSL		
	Identify Leads CSE/Prevent/LAC/SENCO/IT/Pupil Premium/Mental Health/LGBT advocate		
	Named Governors Safeguarding - Chair -		
	TEG Name of Headteacher's line manager -		
	Pastoral Support Team/ behaviour/ attendance		
	Alternatives to reporting in school in an emergency		

	Signs and types of abuse		
	Where to find the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Policy		
	What to do regarding disclosure - reporting systems		
	Policies to read: Health & Safety Complaints Safeguarding Child on Child Abuse Code of Conduct Whistle Blowing KCSiE (Part 1 and Annex B) Online Safety Prevent Site Security Behaviour Other: Other:		
WEEK 2	Training needs identified		
	Training needs scheduled		
	Any other issues		
	Review date:		

Date Induction carried out on:

By:

Signed by Employee:

Date of Completion:

Areas to follow up:

Training needs Identified:

Appendix 10 - School Contact Details

Key personnel in Chadsmead Primary School

Role	Name	Contact details
Headteacher	Gemma Grainger	email: headteacher@chadsmead.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01543 421 850
The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Gemma Grainger	email: headteacher@chadsmead.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01543 421 850
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Dave Budge	email: office@chadsmead.staffs.sch.uk * tel: 01543 421 850
Other staff members trained to undertake the functions of the Designated Safeguarding Lead	Helen Cadman	email: office@chadsmead.staffs.sch.uk * tel: 01543 421 850
Mental Health Lead	Hayley Hathaway	email: office@chadsmead.staffs.sch.uk * tel: 01543 421 850
Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Helen Cadman	email: office@chadsmead.staffs.sch.uk * tel: 01543 421 850
Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Anna Hooper	email: ahoopergov@chadsmead.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01543 421 850
Chair of School Standards Committee	Sarah Snashall	email: ssnashallgov@chadsmead.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01543 421 850

*N.B. - Confidential content should not be sent to this email address

Key personnel in Millfield Primary School

Role	Name	Contact details
Headteacher (Acting)	Richard Wiggett	email: headteacher@millfield.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 213825
The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Richard Wiggett	email: headteacher@millfield.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 213825
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Allison Crook	email: a.crook@millfield.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 213825
Other staff members trained to undertake the functions of the Designated Safeguarding Lead	Allison Crook	email: a.crook@millfield.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 213825
Mental Health Lead	Jodie Holden	email: j.holden@millfield.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 213825
Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Heather Geobey	email: senco@millfield.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 213825
Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Sue Bramwell	email: s.bramwell@millfield.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 213825
Chair of School Standards Committee (Interim)	Philip Thompson	email: p.thompson@millfield.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 213825

Key personnel in Stoneydelph Primary School

Role	Name	Contact details
Headteacher	Esther Parsons	email: headteacher@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 896666
The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Esther Parsons	email: headteacher@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 896666
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs)	Claire Bevan Georgina Radcliffe Sara Fox	email: c.bevan@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk g.radcliffe@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk s.fox@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 896666
Other staff members trained to undertake the functions of the Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sara Fox Jo Leach	email: s.fox@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk office@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk * tel: 01827 896666
Mental Health Lead	Esther Parsons	email: headteacher@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 896666
Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Sharon Garlick	email: s.drake@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 896666
Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Sue Ebrey	email: s.ebrey@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 896666
Chair of School Standards Committee	Sue Ebrey	email: s.ebrey@stoneydelph.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 896666

*N.B. - Confidential content should not be sent to this email address

Key personnel in The Wilnecote School

Role	Name	Contact details
Headteacher	David Foskett	Email: headteacher@wilnecotehighschool.org tel: 01827 831300
The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Stephen Simpson	email: ssimpson@wilnecotehighschool.org tel: 01827 831300
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs)	Fran Taylor	email: ftaylor@wilnecotehighschool.org tel: 01827 831300
Other staff members trained to undertake the functions of the Designated Safeguarding Lead	David Foskett Mark Herbert Sam Ager Sarah Julius Tom Croydon	email: office@wilnecotehighschool.org * tel: 01827 831300
Mental Health Lead	Stephen Simpson	email: ssimpson@wilnecotehighschool.org tel: 01827 831300
Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Mark Herbert	email: mherbert@wilnecotehighschool.org tel: 01827 831300
Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Mike Howell	email: mhowell@wilnecotehighschool.org tel: 01827 831300
Chair of School Standards Committee	Mike Howell	email: mhowell@wilnecotehighschool.org tel: 01827 831300

*N.B. - Confidential content should not be sent to this email address

Key personnel in Woodlands Community Primary School

Role	Name	Contact details
Headteacher	Jon Baker	email: j.baker@woodlands.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 429020
The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Jon Baker Sarah Hodson	email: j.baker@woodlands.staffs.sch.uk hsl@woodlands.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 429020
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Claire Read	email: c.read@woodlands.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 429020
Mental Health Lead	Sarah Hodson	email: hsl@woodlands.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 429020
Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Claire Read	email: c.read@woodlands.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 429020
Nominated Safeguarding Governor	Bev Marshall	email: b.marshall@woodlands.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 429020
Chair of School Standards Committee	Adam Curtis	email: a.curtis@woodlands.staffs.sch.uk tel: 01827 429020

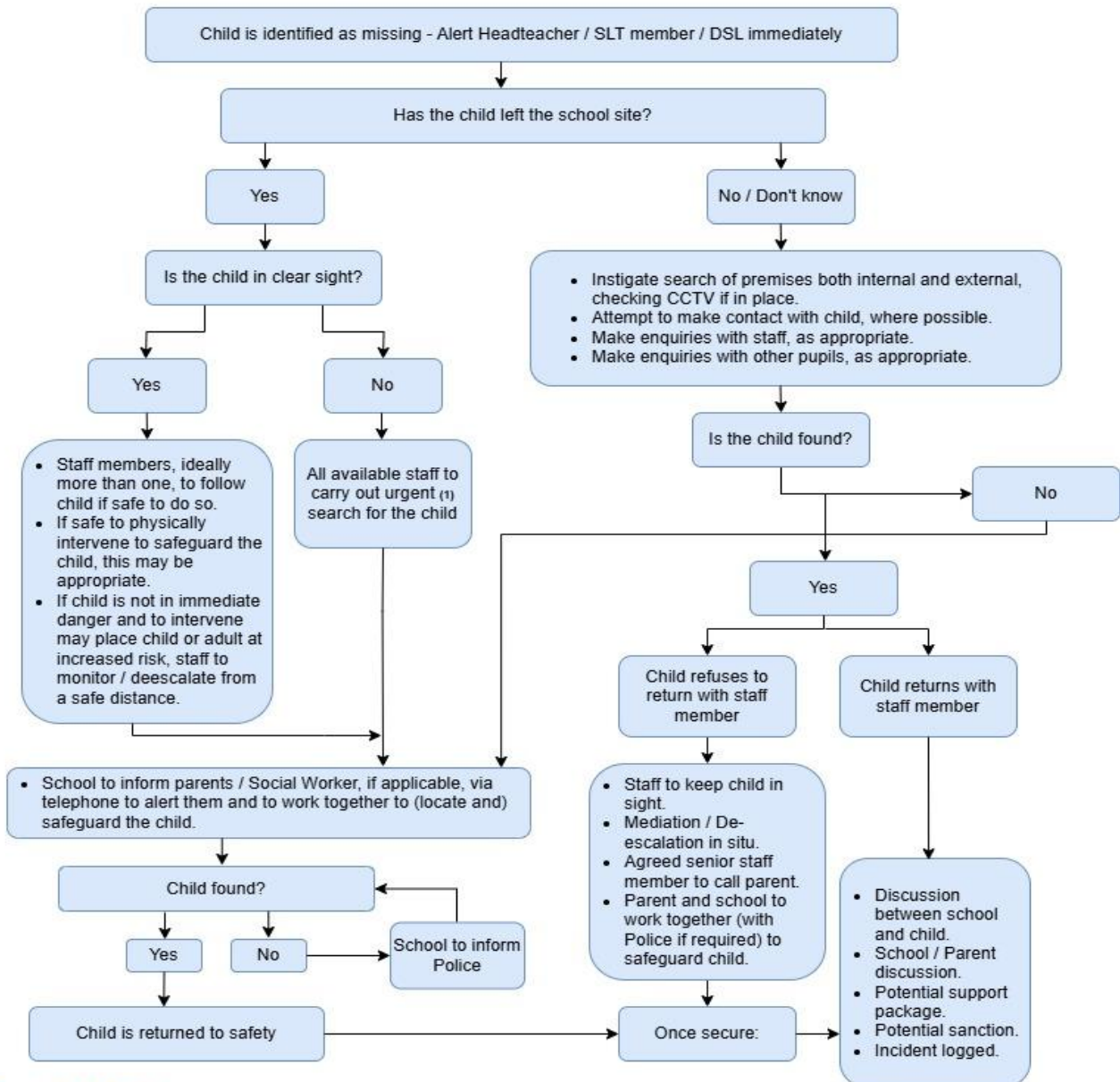
Appendix 11 - Additional School Specific Safeguarding Information and Procedures

Any/all further safeguarding information and procedures specific to individual schools can be found under the above heading on each school's website and/or by request from the school.

Appendix 12 - Safeguarding Flowcharts

CAT Primary Schools' Procedure for if a Child is Missing or Absconds

Ensure Risk Assessments (RAs) are in place for any child known to abscond and that all staff know the content of the RA.



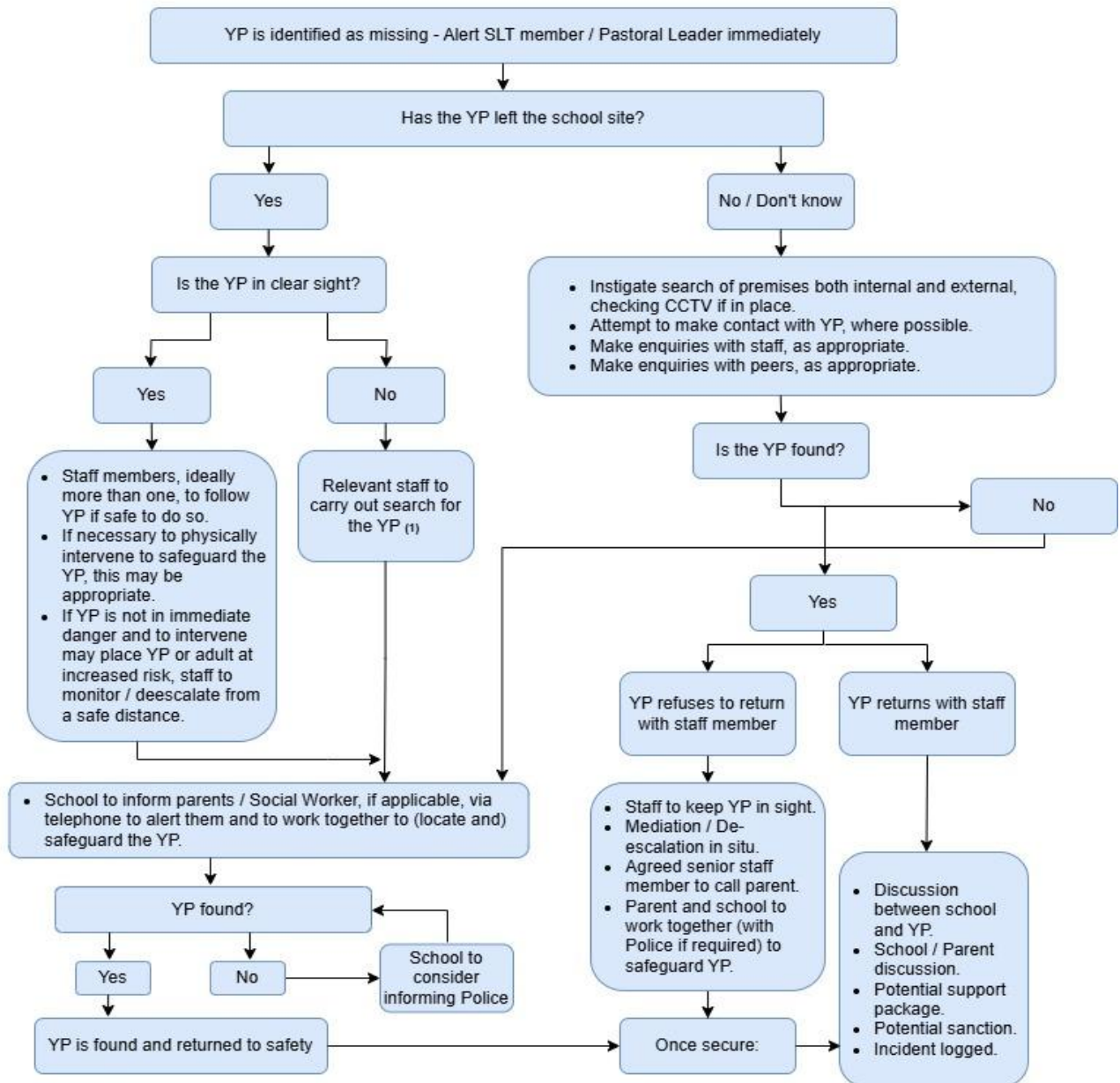
Other Required Actions

- As soon as possible, once initial safeguarding procedures are being actioned, school to contact CAT Director of Safeguarding and Behaviour to inform of situation and seek next step advice or provide assurances, as appropriate.
- Once child is safe, and on the same day, school to contact CAT Director of Safeguarding and Behaviour to provide update and further information and to discuss potential implications.
- As a matter of urgency, school to:
 - create/update Risk Assessment for child and/or site;
 - initiate a Behaviour Support Plan, if risk is maintained.

(1) Level of urgency and numbers of staff required will be informed by context, including age and vulnerability of child.

CAT Secondary Schools' Procedure for if a Child is Missing or Absconds

Ensure Risk Assessments (RAs) are in place for any YP known to abscond and that all staff know the content of the RA.

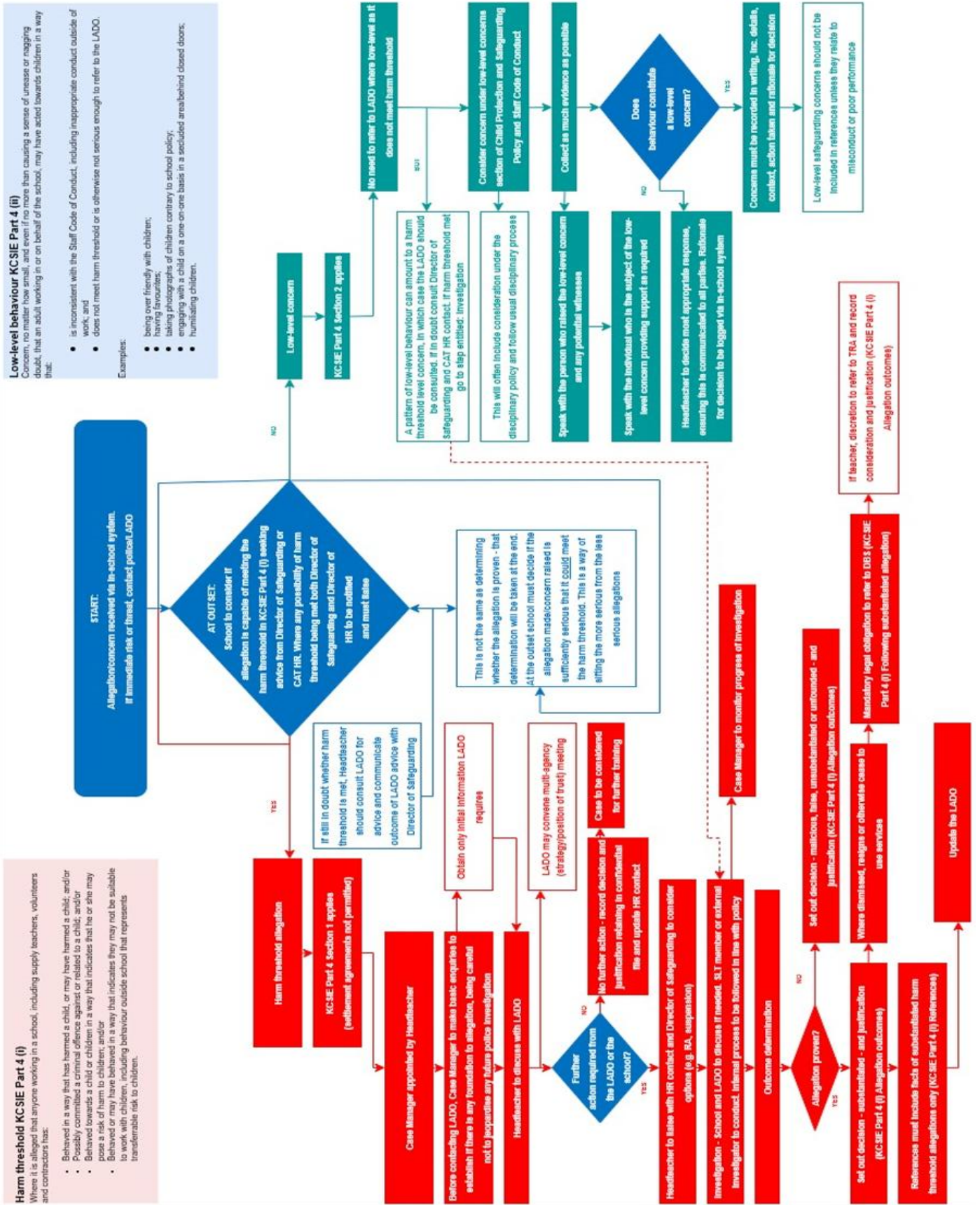


Other Required Actions

- As soon as possible, once initial safeguarding procedures are being actioned, school to contact CAT Director of Safeguarding and Behaviour to inform of situation and seek next step advice or provide assurances, as appropriate.
- Once YP is safe, and on the same day, school to contact CAT Director of Safeguarding and Behaviour to provide update and further information and to discuss potential implications.
- As a matter of urgency, school to:
 - create/update Risk Assessment for YP and/or site;
 - initiate a Behaviour Support Plan, if risk is maintained.

(1) Level of urgency and numbers of staff required will be informed by context, including age and vulnerability of YP.

Safeguarding allegations/concerns against staff (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors)



Version Control Table

Version	Last Modified	Last Modified By	Document Changes
1.1	January 2026	Rebecca Shakespeare	Key personnel at Millfield updated.