



## **7a SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **St Michael's School (Leigh-on-Sea) Limited**

Reviewed September 2024 and formally adopted by Governors on 25th November 2024

**POLICY TO BE NEXT REVIEWED September 2025**

### **KEY CONTACTS**

#### KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

|                                      |  |
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| <b>DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD:</b> | Mr David Webb (Pastoral Lead)<br>(01702) 478719 or<br><a href="mailto:pastoral@stmichaelschool.co.uk">pastoral@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a> |
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| <p><b>DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD:</b></p> | <p>Mrs Kate Mansfield (Deputy Head)<br/>(01702) 478719 or<br/><a href="mailto:deputy@stmichaelschool.co.uk">deputy@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a></p> <p>Mrs Kate Willis (Head of Foundation Stage) (01702) 478719<br/><a href="mailto:willis@stmichaelschool.co.uk">willis@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a></p> <p>Mrs Kate Perry (Head of Pre-Prep) (01702 478719)<br/><a href="mailto:perry@stmichaelschool.co.uk">perry@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a></p> <p>Mrs Joanne Walpole (Head of Achievement and Outdoor Learning) (01702 478719)<br/><a href="mailto:walpole@stmichaelschool.co.uk">walpole@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a></p> <p>Mrs Amy Noakes (School Nurse) (01702)<br/><a href="mailto:noakes@stmichaelschool.co.uk">noakes@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a></p> <p>Selina Fox (P.E and Games) (01702 478719)<br/><a href="mailto:fox@stmichaelschool.co.uk">fox@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a></p> <p>Edd Watts (IT Manager and Online DSL) (01702 478719)<br/><a href="mailto:edd@stmichaelschool.co.uk">edd@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a></p> <p>Alix Hatton (Library) (01702 478719)<br/><a href="mailto:hatton@stmichaelschool.co.uk">hatton@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a></p> <p>Kate Tainton (SENDCo)<br/><a href="mailto:tainton@stmichaelschool.co.uk">tainton@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a></p> |
| <p><b>DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR:</b></p>    | <p>Mr Mark Stenett<br/>(01702) 478719 to request a call back or<br/><a href="mailto:stennet@stmichaelschool.co.uk">stennet@stmichaelschool.co.uk</a></p>   |

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| <p><b>C-SPOC - and MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) (including First Contact)</b></p> <p><b>Children’s Social Care, Southend Borough Council:</b> Where schools have concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person.</p> | <p>01702 215007 9am – 5.30pm Monday to Thursday<br/>9am – 4.30pm Friday</p> <p><a href="mailto:mash@southend.gov.uk">mash@southend.gov.uk</a></p> <p><a href="mailto:C-SPOC@southend.gov.uk">C-SPOC@southend.gov.uk</a></p>  |
| <p><b>OUT OF OFFICE HOURS:</b><br/>To make URGENT referrals</p>  | <p>0345 606 1212</p>   |
| <p><b>SAFEGUARDING &amp; CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR and LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO):</b></p> <p>Where there are concerns/allegations in respect of people working with children <b>SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR:</b></p>            | <p>ALLISON FRANCIS<br/>01702 534539<br/><a href="mailto:allisonfrancis@southend.gov.uk">allisonfrancis@southend.gov.uk</a></p> <p>SHARON LANGSTON<br/>01702 534591<br/><a href="mailto:safeguardingforchildren@southend.gov.uk">safeguardingforchildren@southend.gov.uk</a> (unsecure)</p> |

#### KEY CONTACTS WITHIN ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Essex Social Services</p> <p>Children and Families Hub</p>                             | <p>0345 603 7627</p> <p><a href="https://www.essex.gov.uk/request-support">https://www.essex.gov.uk/request-support</a></p>        |
| <p>Emergency Duty Team (out of hours)</p> <p>Emergency Duty Team email (out of hours)</p> | <p>0345 606 1212</p> <p><a href="mailto:EmergencyDutyTeamOutOfHours@essex.gov.uk">EmergencyDutyTeamOutOfHours@essex.gov.uk</a></p> |

#### PREVENTING RADICALISATION

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Southend Borough Council Prevent Chair</p>              | <p>Carl Robinson</p> <p><a href="mailto:CarlRobinson@southend.co.uk">CarlRobinson@southend.co.uk</a></p>                      |
| <p>Department for Education<br/>(non-emergency advice)</p> | <p>0207 340 7264</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk">counter.extremism@education.gov.uk</a></p> |

## St Michael's School 3 Effective September 2024 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Anti-terrorist hotline | 0800 789321 |
|------------------------|-------------|

### OTHER CONTACTS

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Essex Police (non-emergency)  | (01245) 491491 |
| Police (non-emergency)  | 101            |
| NSPCC CHILD PROTECTION HELPLINE (24 hours)  | 0808 800 5000  |
| NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line<br>(8.00 a.m. – 8.00 p.m. Monday to Friday or<br>email: <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a> ) | 0800 028 0285  |
| Childline   | 0800 1111      |

### KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THURROCK COUNCIL

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Thurrock Social Services MASH      | 01375 652 802 or 01375 652634  |
| EMAIL                              | <a href="mailto:thurrockmash@thurrock.gov.uk">thurrockmash@thurrock.gov.uk</a> |
| Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) | 01375 372 468  |

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## 1 - CONTEXT

This policy has made use of Right help Right Service Right Time Threshold Guidance from SSP, Keeping Children safe in Education 2004 , Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and SET child protection procedures.

- 1.1 Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. *Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. ‘Children’ includes everyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfill this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centered. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.*(*Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, September 2024*). This policy makes use of and refers to KCSIE 2024, The early years framework 2021 and Working Together to safeguard children 2023.
- 1.2 This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school which have at their heart our commitment to always acting in the best interests of the child. It

should be read in conjunction with the Safer Recruitment Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Educational Visits Policy, Online Safety Policy and the Staff Safe Practice Code of Conduct (Appendix 3 of this policy), What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (HMG). 2015. It MUST also be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2021) and the role of the DSL (Annex C of KCSIE), also found in Appendix 6.

1.3 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, which includes everyone under the age of 18, is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

*(Keeping Children Safe in Education – DfE, September 2024)*

#### 1.4 Additional Safeguarding arrangements during COVID-19

1.4.1 When schools were instructed to close, the needs of pupils and families were assessed, and plans put in place to support them. These included COVID annexes to existing policies such as this and the Behaviour Policy, in order to support safety and wellbeing. These plans were regularly reviewed in line with government advice and our own practice.

1.4.2 St Michael's School is now fully open and our usual Child Protection Policy applies. As a continued response to COVID-19 and to ensure compliance with government advice and Health and Safety law, other arrangements may be put in place and will be communicated to parents.

1.4.3 Risk assessments are in place and will be reviewed when necessary and regularly to consider whether our current plans and protective measures are effective, working as planned and updated appropriately. [covid-19-symptoms](#)

## 2 - INTRODUCTION

2.1 St Michael's School takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. "The welfare of the child is paramount" (the Children Act 1989). In addition, the area of Child on Child Abuse and Sexual Harassment is taken seriously. The school has systems in place which deal sensitively and robustly both in prevention and response to these occurrences and have made use of [kcsie 2024](#)

2.2 Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 places a statutory responsibility on the governing body to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

2.3 This policy applies to all pupils (including those in the EYFS), staff, parents, governors, volunteers, students and visitors to our school.

2.4 There are three main elements to our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy:

- **Prevention**

- By ensuring that we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers who work with children,
  - Through establishing and maintaining a safe and positive environment and the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils,
  - By raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- **Protection** by following agreed procedures and ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
  - **Support** to pupils who have/may have been abused (in line with his/her Child Protection Plan, if appropriate).

2.5 This school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

### 3 - SCHOOL COMMITMENT

3.1 Our school is committed to keeping children safe and aims to:

- Create a culture of vigilance where the welfare of our pupils is promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken.
- Establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to by adults working in or on behalf of the school; staff remain professionally curious.
- Ensure that pupils know that there are adults within the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Ensure pupils receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. This includes identifying emerging problems and those children who may benefit from early help.
- Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to develop healthy and safe relationships.
- Include in the curriculum material which will help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- Protect children from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and our values and to promote respect for all others.
- Facilitate understanding of wider issues within the context of learning about the values on which our society is founded and our system of democratic government.
- Provide a curriculum which actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
  - Promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, and of the protected characteristics
- With parents and colleagues from partner agencies.
- Promote positive mental health and resilience. Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community, and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. Our school wants to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all pupils and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resilience. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counterbalance and promote disability and sexual orientations.
- Make parents/carers aware of the school policies and practice for safeguarding and ensure that,

wherever possible, every effort will be made to establish open and honest effective working relationships further growth or resilience.

3.2 The school works in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our pupils. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

## 4 - FRAMEWORK

4.1 The Governing Body of the school accepts its statutory responsibility (as set out in section 157 of the Education Act 2002) to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils of the school.

4.2 The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice in Southend are the responsibilities of the Southend Safeguarding (Child) Partnership (SS(C)P), previously LSCB. The statutory partners are Southend Borough Council, Essex Police and the Clinical Commissioning Group covering Southend. There is guidance set out in Working Together (HMG, 2018) on how agencies must work in partnership to keep children safe. This working together of the three safeguarding partners is to work in their area under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

4.3 In Southend, all professionals must work in accordance with the SET Procedures (Southend Essex and Thurrock Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures) (2022) and The Early Help Family Support Practitioner Toolkit (Threshold document) ([SET 2022](#)).

4.4 Our school works in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance (non-exhaustive list):

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2024\)](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (HMG, 2015)

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- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(HMG, 2023\)](#)
- Children Act (1989)
- Children Act (2004)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Children Missing Education – statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE, 2016)
- [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#)
- Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance (Home Office 2018)
- [Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (in KCSIE 2018)
- Early Years Framework 2021
- Education Act (2002)
- The Equality Act 2010 and Schools
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (s 74 – Serious Crime Act 2015)
- [Serious Crime Act 2015](#) (Home Office, 2015)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)

- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (DfE 2016)
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (HMG, 2018)
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (HMG, April 2018)
- NSPCC when to call the Police: guidance for schools and colleges (2020)
- Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for England and Wales (July 2015)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019, updated September 2021)
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (HMG, April 2019)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (DfE, July 2017)
- Searching, screening and confiscation (DfE, 2022)
- SEND code of practice 2020
- SET Procedures 2022
- Teaching online safety in school (DfE 2019)
- The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders (June 2015)
- The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)
- Use of reasonable force (DfE, July 2013)
- Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021

## 5 - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential. However, there are key people within schools and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those in our school with these specific responsibilities (the designated safeguarding lead, the deputy designated safeguarding leads and the nominated governor) are shown on the cover sheet of this document.

### The governing body

5.2 The governing body ensures that the policies, procedures and training in our school are effective and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place and that the safeguarding and child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually. In order to utilise the experiences and expertise of staff when shaping safeguarding policies, the Governing Body provides opportunities for staff to contribute to safeguarding arrangements and the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

5.3 The School publishes its Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on the school website alongside 'Keeping children safe in education' (DfE, 2024).

5.4 The Designated Safeguarding Governor takes lead responsibility for safeguarding arrangements in our school. The governing body ensures that, as well as the Designated Safeguarding Governor, there is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (appointed from the Senior Leadership Team) and at least one deputy safeguarding lead in place. Regular meetings and visits take place from the designated governor. The DSL has and does present safeguarding to governor's meetings from time to time and when required.

5.5 The governing body ensures the school contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and

local guidance. It ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Governing Body ensures that children are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. From September 2020, our school will work in accordance with new government regulations which will make the subjects of Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) mandatory. We ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems for online usage in school are in place. The school actively promotes online safety on its website and signpost stakeholders to information that will help keep children safe online.

5.6 The governing body ensures that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including Prevent and on-line safety) at induction and that it is then regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe (see Appendix 6).

5.7 The governing body ensures that children are taught about safeguarding, including online, ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems for online usage are in place. The School actively promotes online safety on its website and signposts stakeholders to information that will help children stay safe online. Our children will be taught how to keep themselves safe (including on-line) through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum (including PSHE).

5.8 The governing body and school leadership team are responsible for ensuring the School follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place (see the School's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information). It ensures that volunteers are appropriately supervised in school.

5.9 The governing body too ensures that it follows mandatory training in safeguarding to give a strategic oversight appropriate to their role.

5.10 The governing body should take a proportionate risk-based approach to the level of information that is provided to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors.

5.11 The governing body will ensure that child protection files are maintained as set out in Annex C KCSIE 2024. Where children leave the school (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This would be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

#### The Designated Safeguarding Lead

5.12 The designated safeguarding lead has ultimate lead responsibility for child protection. Namely, maintaining an overview of safeguarding in school, opening channels of communication and working with local and other statutory agencies, managing child protection referrals, undertaking specific safeguarding training and raising awareness of all child protection policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in school (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) is aware of and

has access to these procedures and that they are used appropriately. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff (on child protection matters) and ensure that timely referrals to Children's Services - C-SPOC, Early Help Family Support Assessment, as necessary, are made in accordance with current SET 2022 procedures. They work with the local authority and other agencies as required and monitor the effectiveness of the policies and procedures in practice and ensure that information is shared appropriately.

5.13 If for any reason the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable, one of the deputy designated safeguarding leads will act in their absence.

#### The Headmaster

5.14 The Headmaster works in accordance with the requirements of this policy with all school staff. In addition, they ensure that all safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are followed by all staff.

5.15 The Designated Safeguarding Lead in consultation with the Headmaster provides an annual report for the Governing Body detailing any changes to the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures; training undertaken by all staff (including volunteers) and governors and other relevant issues. The report forms part of the governors' annual review of the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding procedures and their implementation.

5.16 The Headmaster, Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Governor will undertake an annual Safeguarding Audit in line with their responsibilities under S.157 of the Education Act 2002.

#### All school staff

5.17 Everyone in our school has a responsibility to provide a safe learning environment in which our children can learn. All staff members are prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and understand their role within this process. They are also aware of signs of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. This includes identifying any emerging problems so appropriate support may be provided and prevent concerns from escalating and liaising with the designated safeguarding lead to report any concerns. All staff members are aware of and follow school processes (as set out in this policy), understand the difference between a **concern** and children who are **in immediate danger or at risk of harm** and are aware of how to make a referral to Social Care, and/or the Police, if there is a need to do so. Staff should also not assume that others have taken action. [https: when to call the police](https://www.nhs.uk/when-to-call-the-police/)

Colleagues should be 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. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication. [Every Interaction is an intervention](#)

Professional curiosity is where a colleague explores and understands what is happening within a family rather than making assumptions or taking a single source of information and accepting it at face value. It means testing out professional assumptions about different types of families and reflecting

on the information.

## 6 - SUPPORTING CHILDREN AT RISK

6.1 Our school is committed to ensuring that our children receive the right help at the right time. Staff are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and prevent concerns from escalating. Our school works with key local partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help assessment when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support through statutory services (a 'child in need' or a 'child protection' plan). We will seek advice and support from other agencies as appropriate.

6.2 Our school may be the only stable, secure and safe element in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered harm. Nevertheless, whilst at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviours towards other children. Our school recognises that some children may abuse other children (para. 7.13) and this is known as child-on-child abuse. This school takes this matter seriously and has procedures and systems to minimise its risk and to deal with it should it happen.

We recognise that some children may potentially be at greater risk of harm and require additional help and support. These may be children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, those in care, or previously in care or those requiring mental health support. We work with Social Care and other appropriate agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach for planning for these children and that they receive the right help at the right time.

We are aware of ACE children and how vulnerable they are. Colleagues would have knowledge of their ACE children and would be aware of their needs. [ACEs](#)

6.3 Our school will endeavour to support all children through:

- The curriculum: to encourage our children to stay safe, including online, and to develop healthy relationships, self-esteem and self-motivation through the PSHE syllabus, which is detailed in 6.5.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment, including listening to children, and which gives all children and adults a sense of being respected and valued
- The implementation of the school's behaviour management policies
- A consistent approach from all staff which will endeavour to ensure that our children know that some behaviour is unacceptable, but that s/he is valued
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the children and their families
- A commitment to develop open, honest and supportive relationships with parents, always with the child's best interests as paramount
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations
- Recognition that children with behavioural difficulties and special educational needs and/or disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Therefore, staff who work in any capacity with children with SEN and/or disabilities will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse
- Recognition that, in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol abuse, children are vulnerable and may be in need of support or protection

6.4 Promoting positive mental health and resilience in school:

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community, and we recognise that schools play a key part in this. Our school wants to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all pupils and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resilience. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counterbalance and promote further growth of resilience.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our pupils. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented. Should there be concerns about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern then the DSL should be contacted.

#### 6.5 Relationships, sex education and PSHE:

Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic, transphobic and sexual violence/harassment.

The school has a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of daily life. These are underpinned by the behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum.

In areas such as sexual violence, preventing and tackling bullying, behaviour, discrimination and mental health, there are clear links between RSE and KCSIE. The DSL is aware of these cross-referenced areas of school guidance (see the PSHE policy for more details). Issues within the RSE curriculum which overlap with the DSL role would include:

- Consent
- Choices
- Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation
- Unhealthy/abusive family relationships
- Internet/online safety
- Abusive intimate relationships

The DfE guidance on the new RSE requirements makes it clear that there is a strong focus on the part schools can play in keeping children safe and in preventative education. Should the school bring in visitors to deliver aspects of, or topics related to the RSE curriculum, the DSL is made aware of their visit and proposed content. It is also made clear to such visitors how and to whom they report a safeguarding concern. All visitors sign in at the office and the list is available for DSL scrutiny on a regular basis.

Children are taught about how they can keep themselves and others safe, including online. This information is presented in an age-appropriate way through PSHE classes and through the ICT curriculum. The school is sensitive to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities.

#### 6.6 The procedures that the school will follow to support a child where there are concerns about their safety or well-being are set out in Section 8 of this policy.

## 7 – TYPES OF ABUSE / SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

7.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024) defines abuse as the maltreatment of a child.

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

And further regarding the family

*“All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should 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. “*

7.2 The four main types of abuse referred to in Keeping Children Safe in Education are (*Appendix 1 outlines the definitions and indicators of these types of abuse*) and APPENDIX 1 of this policy contains full definitions and indicators:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

7.3 Our school is aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. (Appendix 1 outlines the definitions and signs of these types of abuse) All staff are aware that wider environmental factors may impact on a child’s welfare and safety and understand safeguarding in the wider context (contextual safeguarding). We understand that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely “stand alone” events and that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap. Staff are aware of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm and understand that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting put children in danger.

7.4 Our school recognises that KCSIE describes a number of other specific safeguarding issues about which staff need to be aware, including: children missing from education\*, children missing from home or care, child sexual exploitation (CSE)\*, domestic abuse, drugs, E safety, fabricated/induced illness, faith abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM)\*, forced marriage\*, gangs and youth violence, violence against women and girls, mental health\*, children with special educational needs and disabilities\*, private fostering, prevention of radicalisation\*, teenage relationship abuse, trafficking, child on child abuse\* (which may include bullying or cyber bullying), on-line abuse, gender-based abuse, so-called honour based abuse (HBA) sexual harassment, sexting, sexually harmful behaviour and upskirting.

Further information regarding some of these issues (as indicated \*) can be found below. All of these issues are addressed in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), which can be found in the policies section of the school website.

## 7.5 Children who are absent from education and missing from education

**Children being absent** from school or college, this being unexplainable and particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage.

The school sees early intervention as essential in order to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have, are entitled to a full-time education.

**Children missing education** are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

This includes not only when problems are first emerging, but 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. Children missing education is a sub group of Children being absent from education.

As highlighted, our school recognises that a child being absent and or missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the school procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence. Where contact is not made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Missing Education and Child Employment Service, Social Care or Police). Parents are required to provide at least two emergency contact numbers to the school, so we are able to communicate with someone if we need to.

Our school complies with the Children Missing Education (DfE, September 2016) and Southend on Sea Borough Council Early Help and Family Support Children Missing Education Guidance (January 2019). Our school accepts its responsibility to inform the local authority of any pupil who has been absent for a continuous period of 10 days or more without good reason, and the School has satisfied all avenues of enquiry and is unsuccessful in tracing the pupil.

The school also accepts its legal responsibility to inform the local authority of any pupil who is entered onto or is about to be deleted from the school's admission register (other than at the end of Year 6). This includes pupils who are to be home educated for which the Elective Education Team will be notified as well. Once notified or aware, within 5 days, child protection information will be sent on to

the relevant body. The DSL is responsible to report any pupils unaccounted for when leaving. Children Missing Education.

Further information and support, includes:

- Guidance on school attendance [‘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.
- Information regarding schools’ duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department’s statutory guidance: [Children Missing Education](#).

## 7.6 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

The statutory definition of Child Sexual Exploitation taken from Working Together is: ‘Child Sexual Abuse is a form of child sexual abuse which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. NB – all sexual activity with children of the age of children at this school is illegal. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (*Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2023)*)

It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. Our school is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The designated safeguarding lead is the named CSE Lead in school on these issues and will work with other agencies as appropriate.

Our school is committed to raising awareness of CSE and will use the guidance set out in *Child sexual exploitation Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE, February 2017)*. [child-sexual-exploitation definition-and-guide-for-practitioners](#)

## 7.7 So-called ‘Honour-Based Abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

### Honour based Abuse (HBA)

So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and

can include multiple perpetrators. Awareness of this dynamic and additional risk factors are important to consider 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. [Forced marriage](#)

### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

As of October 2015, the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a legal duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police personally of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. This can be by 101 if not an emergency or 999 for risk of life or immediate harm. All 101 calls should be made as soon as possible or by the close of the next working day. In addition, all staff should inform the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) without delay, unless they have good reason not to do so. Our school will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with 'Multi Agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation' (HMG, April 2016) and existing local safeguarding procedures. [FGM reporting](#)

Our staff are alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), or already having suffered FGM. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Staff should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found in the SET procedures (2022) and in the above guidance that can be found on the GOV.UK website.

## **7.8 Forced marriage**

A forced marriage is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue. [Forced marriage](#)

Since February 2023 it has been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose 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.

[The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fmufcdo.gov.uk](mailto:fmufcdo.gov.uk).

## **7.9 Vulnerable children**

Children may be more vulnerable to safeguarding risks through requiring a social worker, in care or being fostered. The DSL should have oversight and communication with all relevant parties in all these matters.

### Children with a social worker.

Children may have a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The fact that a child has a social worker, means that the designated safeguarding lead should have oversight and hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the designated safeguarding lead should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The school is aware that from June 2021, that the Virtual Headteacher has responsibility to promote the education of children who have a social worker. [Promoting the education of children with a social worker.](#)

### Looked after children.

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and these children are therefore an ongoing safeguarding concern. The governing body should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe. In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

The designated safeguarding lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

As previously mentioned, a previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together, and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children and the DSL should have continuous oversight of the matter. [Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children](#)

### Private fostering.

This occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. A child is not privately fostered if the person caring for and accommodating them has done so for less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for longer. Such arrangements may come to the attention of school staff through the normal course of their interaction, and promotion of learning activities, with children. The DSL should then notify the local authority to allow the local authority to check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

As a school, we recognise that children under private fostering are vulnerable to safeguarding issues; we make sure that any privately fostered children are properly and safely cared for. We recognise that the Local Authority is under a legal duty to ensure the welfare of a privately fostered child is being promoted and safeguarded and are therefore required to undertake assessments of proposed or actual private fostering arrangements. As such, and as said above, we will always inform the Local Authority when we are notified about such an arrangement or become aware of one. [Private fostering](#)

### Alternative provision

Where the school has a pupil placed with an alternative provision provider, such as homeschooling due to illness, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

[Alternative-provision](#)

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

## **7.10 Children with special educational needs and disabilities**

Our school understands that children with special educational needs (SEND) or disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability and or presentation without further exploration.
- being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- children with SEN and disabilities and mental health conditions can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - sometimes without outwardly showing any signs.
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

Our school recognises these potential additional barriers for children with SEND and disabilities and is mindful of them in our safeguarding and child protection procedures. We provide extra pastoral support and attention for these children and ensure that this is appropriate. [essexsendiass.co.uk](http://essexsendiass.co.uk)

[NSPCC advice with SEND](#)

## 7.11 Mental Health

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Abuse may also be misinterpreted as a mental health condition. It is essential that the Mental Health Lead (Mr D Webb) who is also DSL, be informed in all mental health concerns

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

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. These children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. For further information see the Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. This can be in person or through the Engage portal. The Mental health Lead should be informed too - Mr D Webb - DSL or the school nurse.

The children in the school are taught how to recognise mental health indicators in themselves and their peers through the PSHE curriculum, assemblies, focus weeks such as mental health week, focusing on the zones of regulation system and social skills groups and 1-1 PSHE when needed.

Staff have training in recognising mental health indicators through zones of regulation training and inhouse wellbeing training and their links with safeguarding and training through MHFE. Two members of staff are trained mental health first aiders and their expertise should be sought - Mr D Webb (Pastoral Lead) and Mrs J Whitford (PSHE). In addition, the School Nurse's expertise in the field of mental health should be sought too.

The school is aware of the effect that the COVID pandemic has had and can have and will continue to have on the mental health of the school community, in particular its children. The school has appropriate responses in place to identify and address mental health issues during the pandemic and any other subsequent lockdown. A COVID annex will be put in place with this policy which details such responses and systems during a lockdown, should the need arise. [Mental health and behaviour in schools](https://www.essexsendiass.co.uk/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools) [essexsendiass.co.uk](https://www.essexsendiass.co.uk)

## 7.12 Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Gender Questioning Children LGB/GQ

These children are highlighted as being more vulnerable to child on child abuse, abuse, wellbeing issues and other stigma and discrimination. At school we provide extra support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place through their form teacher, pastoral staff SMT and SLT.

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

The school is aware that risks can be compounded where children who are LGB/GQ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. We therefore provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff in the Relaxation room or other arranged place.

Inclusion is part of the statutory [RSE.GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/raising-awareness-of-homosexuality-in-schools) and there is a range of support available to help counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse. In addition the school strives toward a culture of inclusion.

The section of KCSIE 2024 that deals with the issue of gender questioning children is under review pending the outcome of the *gender questioning children guidance* consultation and the publishing date of this. Until then, the school will be guided by the section in this publication and NHS guidelines which will form part of its policy. The school will continue to work in consultation with the family, school ethos and wellbeing of the child.

### 7.13 Prevention of radicalisation

As of July 2015, the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/474227/Counter-Terrorism_and_Security_Act_2015.pdf) placed a new duty on schools and other education providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.” This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

It requires schools to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils. This is taught alongside fundamental British values and the school's

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core values too, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life which promote community cohesion

- be safe spaces in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

Where staff are concerned that extremist views exist in a child or are showing signs of becoming radicalised, which is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence, then this should be discussed with the DSL, Online DSL and or Mr Mobbs who are Prevent Duty trained. Staff will be able to be supported with their concerns. [Prevent duty training](#)

Staff should be alert to changes in behaviour, including online, which may indicate that they need help

or protection such as showing sympathy for extremist causes be it right wing extremism or Jihadist based extremism; glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures; intolerance of difference including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality; verbalising anti-western or anti-British views; possessing literature, art writing which displays extremist themes. Further, a child, young person or adult learner may be vulnerable in certain ways that could make them more susceptible to a range of harm. [understanding and identifying radicalisation risk in your educational setting](#).

We will use the local referral processes to access appropriate help for children at risk of being drawn into terrorism. The Southend Prevent Lead may be consulted as part of the referral process. The child may well be placed on CHANNEL, which is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. See the following: [Prevent.Essexpolice](#) [safeguardingsouthend.co.uk/professionals-policy-guidance-adults/prevent/](https://safeguardingsouthend.co.uk/professionals-policy-guidance-adults/prevent/)

Our school works in accordance with local procedures for the Prevent Duty and follows the Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into extremism or terrorism. (*'The Prevent Duty'* (DfE, June 2015)) and the 'Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales' (HMG, April 2019). [Prevent duty guidance](#)

The section of KCSIE 2024 that deals with this remains under review following a new publication of the definition of extremism. The school shall continue to be guided by this section of the policy.

#### 7.14 Child-on-child abuse

Our school recognises that some children may abuse other children and any incidents of child-on-child abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures. The school has a zero tolerance of child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse can also blend into the area of sexual harassment. The school is aware that even when there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse that does not mean that it is not happening or has not happened. All staff at this school maintain an attitude of **it could happen here**.

Child-on-child abuse can manifest itself in many ways; it can happen both inside and outside of school. This may include physical abuse, bullying (including cyber bullying), banter, on-line abuse, gender based abuse, sexting (youth-produced sexual imagery), sexual violence, sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment which may be a standalone case or part of a broader pattern and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals and *upskirting* which is a colloquial term referring to the taking a picture under a person's (any gender) clothing without them knowing and is an offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019.

We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in school and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs. We use lessons and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Child-on-child abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'part of growing up' or 'having a laugh'. To do so would normalise the behaviours leading to a culture of unacceptable behaviours. We recognise that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators but this should not lead to stereotypical assumptions.

Our school understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, and staff know how to respond to allegations, disclosures or concerns. All forms of child-on-child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously by the school. Firstly, staff will challenge the inappropriate behaviours between peers. The DSL should be informed.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, in line with agreed SET procedures the Designated Safeguarding Lead, in liaison with one or both of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, will refer any such abuse to Children's Social Care. In so doing the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider all of the available evidence and decide whether the behaviour directed at the abused child by the other should be classified as abusive or not. The possibility the abuser is or has been a victim will also be considered.

Concerns about possible abuse by one child of another may initially be considered under the school's Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies.

However, where there is a clear child protection concern, e.g. disclosure or witnessing of sexual abuse or allegation of physical assault or being likely to be involved in sexually harmful behaviour there will be no delay in the referral to Children's Social Care. Separate referrals for the child victim and the child abuser will be made; all children involved whether perpetrator or victim, are treated as being 'at risk'.

All children involved will be supported through the school's pastoral processes, as detailed in the Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies. In addition to any referral process. Allegations and records of incidents will be recorded in line with this policy (see Section 11) and the school's Behaviour and Anti Bullying policies. Child-on-Child abuse incidents will be recorded on the school's safeguarding package - Engage.

Should child-on-child abuse result in an exclusion, then the school will be responsible for ensuring continuity in education for those concerned.

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes (previously known as sexting) have been shared the guidance given by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) will be followed. [sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children](#). The DSL should be informed immediately, see Appendix 4 for details. Searching for and confiscating devices are detailed in [Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#) whereby Headteachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item.

Colleagues should note again that even if there are no reports in the school concerning child-on-child abuse, then this does not mean that it is not happening, it may not be being reported. All staff should continue to challenge inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature and be aware of the important part that they play in preventing and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

## 7.15 Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

The school supports a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated, and where we do identify issues, we intervene early to better protect the children and families. We regretfully assume that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse may well and are possibly happening in this setting, even where there are no specific reports, and have put in place a whole school approach to address them.

This school is aware that sexual violence and harassment can occur between children of any age and sex. This can often overlap with child-on-child abuse, can be perpetrated by an individual or by a group and occur online. All staff at this school maintain an attitude of, *it could happen here*. Addressing any inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent such behaviours in the future. Details on sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviours can be referred to in KCSIE 2024 part5, and this publication will be used with this policy when dealing with this area.

All reports of sexual violence and harassment will be taken seriously and staff are aware that girls will be more likely to be the victims and it is more likely to be perpetrated by boys. All victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously, will be supported and kept safe. The victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem, nor should they be made to feel ashamed for making a report. [Sexual Violence and sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges](#)

should be consulted for further information. In cases where nudes or semi-nudes (previously known as sexting) have been shared the guidance from the UKCIS will be followed as detailed above. In responding to allegations, the decisions made by the school will be on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL taking a lead supported by the Head and by other agencies if required.

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL makes an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where a report of sexual harassment has been made, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Staff taking a report should never promise confidentiality as it is very likely that it will be in the best interests of the victim to seek advice and guidance from others in order to provide support and engage appropriate agencies.

The victim may ask the school or college not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if there is another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.

Advice should be sought from the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), who should consider the following:

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care, and
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. Whilst

the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach, in these cases.

If the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) decide to go ahead and make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or a report to the police against the victim's wishes, this would be handled extremely carefully, the reasons being explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support would be offered. [Safeguarding Practitioners Information Sharing Advice](#)

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, the school will be aware of anonymity, witness support, and the criminal process in general so support can be offered and act appropriately. [CPS: Safeguarding Children as Victims and Witnesses](#).

Risk Assessment: When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment for a report of sexual violence should consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support
- whether there may have been other victims
- the alleged perpetrator(s)
- all the other children, (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school or college, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms, and
- The time and location of the incident, and any action required to make the location safer. Risk assessments should be recorded (paper or electronic) and should be kept under review. At all times, the school or college should be actively considering the risks posed to all their pupils and students and put adequate measures in place to protect.

It is not the role of the school to provide legal advice or support to victims, alleged perpetrators or parents in respect of a criminal justice process. The school will focus on their responsibilities and keep the children safe.

Part 5 of KCSIE 2024 highlights four scenarios of presentation:

1. Manage Internally - This is the more likely of the scenarios for the setting of the school and deals with some cases of sexual harassment, one off incidents. After investigation and it is considered that Early Help or referrals would not be needed, then it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, maybe using the Behaviour policy and providing Pastoral support. The response will be underpinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic).
12. Early Help - In line with managing internally, the school may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children

than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. More information on early help is set out in Part one of this guidance with full details of the early help process in [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](#).

Early help and the option to manage a report internally do not need to be mutually exclusive: a school could manage internally and seek early help for both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s).

Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and that both are never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written or electronic). [Southend Early Help Framework](#)

3. Referral to Social Care - where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, a referral should be made. The school will then work alongside and co-operating with the relevant lead social worker. This approach will support the victim and perpetrator(s), and any other children that require support and also consider their safeguarding which should be immediate.

After reviewing the case, should a referral be not deemed appropriate by Social Care then the school can refer again if the child remains at risk of harm or consider step 2 as a means of support.

4. Reporting to the Police - Any report to the Police will be in parallel with a referral to social care. [When to call the police](#) will help to decide but where a sexual assault and worse is made then the police are to be called. Police advice will be followed with social care support, regarding information to disclose and the best way to protect the victim and perpetrator(s) anonymity. Should the police not take any further action then the DSL should liaise with the LADO and seek specialist support for the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) as required.

Whatever the response it should be reiterated that there is an zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All concerns, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded.

5. Safeguarding and ongoing support - The priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school is a safe space for them. The victim will never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report. Support will be tailored on a case-by-case basis and external support will be sourced from the local authority. Support for siblings will be identified.

Children who have experienced sexual violence display a very wide range of responses to their experience, including in some cases clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses, or no overt signs at all. The school should remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to the needs of the child (e.g. about attendance in lessons) irrespective of how overt the child's distress is. [HSB toolkit](#)

## 7.16 Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or a group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and or the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or

facilitator and or through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can

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also occur through the use of technology. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing serious violence to others. All staff are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or 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 a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. [Child exploitation disruption toolkit - GOV.UK](#)

### 7.17 County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". Exploitation is an integral part with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation and violence to ensure compliance of victims. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation. Our school is vigilant concerning county lines where more and more children are becoming exploited by this crime. [County lines toolkit](#)

### 7.18 Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside our school and/or can occur between children outside school. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and the fact that they should consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child in the wider community and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family. [Contextual safeguarding](#)

### 7.19 Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (part 1) defines domestic abuse as either as a pattern of behaviour or as a single incident between two people over the age of 16 who are personally connected to each other. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse and psychological, emotional or other abuse. The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear or experience the effects of the abuse and they are related to the abusive person.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. 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. The school will work with the families and relevant parties in such situations, and bear in mind the issues around ACE children.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of

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domestic abuse regardless of sexual identity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. National Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0800 2000 247 (24hr). [Domestic Abuse](#)

### Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates in the majority of police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. [Operation Encompass](#)

This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs. Essex police is signed up with Operation Encompass and the school is a participating partner.

## **7.20 Visitors and invited speakers**

The school acknowledges the value that visiting speakers can add to the children's learning, but also recognises its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty (2015) to protect children from being drawn into terrorism, for example by a visiting speaker.

The following protocols will be followed when planning a visit from a visiting speaker (whether invited by staff or by the pupils).

1. All requests for a visiting speaker are passed to the Headmaster for approval. In considering the request the Headmaster (or Deputy) will:
  - Evaluate the perceived value to the children's learning or personal development to be gained from the visiting speaker (ie the purpose of the visiting speaker)
  - If the speaker is a representative of a charity or organisation, check that the organisation's objectives support (or do not undermine) the fundamental British values.
2. The person inviting the speaker will inform them that they will be required, as part of Prevent, to sign a statement to declare that in delivering their speech they will support (or not undermine) the fundamental British values.
3. The Headmaster will be informed a month in advance to allow informal suitability checks to be performed (e.g. internet search, no contrary indicators from school staff etc). Any concerns raised will be discussed with the speaker/organisation.
4. On the day of the visit, the visiting speaker will be met by the Headmaster (or deputy) and will be asked for proof of ID and to sign the declaration of supporting the fundamental British values.
5. The visiting speaker will be required to wear a visitor's badge at all times whilst on the premises and will be supervised by a member of staff at all times.
6. A record will be kept by the Headmaster of all visiting speakers which will include:
  - the date of the visit

- the full name of the visiting speaker
- the name of the organisation or charity they represent
- the purpose of the visit and which year groups they spoke to
- the name of the person who invited the speaker

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- the checks undertaken on the speaker, by whom, when and the result
- that the speaker signed the fundamental British values declaration (the signed declaration will be kept in a file)

A returning speaker will not be required to sign subsequent declarations each time they visit unless there has been a change in their circumstances (e.g. a change of organisation or a concern is raised).

#### 7.21 Child abduction and community safety incidents

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

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older, e.g. Year 6, and are granted more independence they may start walking to and from school on their own. School staff ensure that the children are knowledgeable about the route and details of their journey and staying safe. Children's confidence and abilities are the focus. A list of the children with permission is sent to colleagues each term and is updated when necessary. Should the child be meeting someone for part of the journey, the child is told to return to school should no one be there. Should the school have the slightest doubt about the arrangements the parents are contacted, and the children kept in school until these arrangements are verified. The children with permission to walk home or to school have been agreed by the Headmaster.

[www.actionagainstabduction.org](http://www.actionagainstabduction.org) and [www.clevernevergoes.org](http://www.clevernevergoes.org)

#### 7.19 Children and the Court System

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5 to 11 year olds and 12 to 17 year olds. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online help with child arrangements tool kit with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers. The DSL would have oversight.

#### 7.20 Children with family members in prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, [NICCO](http://www.nicco.org.uk) provides information designed to

support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children. The DSL would have oversight.

### 7.21 Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

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Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead or the online DSL, should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: '[NPCC- When to call the Police](#)' and [NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

### 7.22 Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. [Southend On the Move website](#)

The school is aware of its duty in this regard to inform local authorities and children's social care should we suspect that a family is heading into homelessness. 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 should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. [Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets](#).

### 7.23 Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Modern slavery is more prevalent than one may wish to think, and staff are asked to maintain a view of 'it could happen here.'

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance. [Modern](#)

## 7.24 On-line Safety

The school aims to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate. The school's E-safety policy should be consulted. In addition, staff may view the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools, which will help school staff, governors and trustees understand how to comply with data protection law, develop their data policies and processes, know what staff and pupil data to keep and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches. [Data-protection-in-schools](#)

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The breadth of issues can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes'.
- **conduct:** 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;
- **commerce or contract** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. Here the contract may become harmful in the case of data being used without permission or accessing a platform whilst underage and then breaking the agreement in the contract.

Online safety is a running and interrelated theme at St Michael's and the DSL works closely with the ICT co-ordinator and the ICT manager, who is also the online safety DSL. The school E-safety policy should be consulted for further details. The on-line safety DSL and the work of the ICT manager is overseen by the DSL.

The school is aware of the fact that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some children, whilst at school or home, may harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share images consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and other harmful content. We are aware that of the potential for some of this to be classed as sexual harassment and have responded to this in this policy. Appendix 4 deals with this area too.

We expect our community to interact with online learning provision responsibly. Our wider community is strengthened and skilled via access to training and information via the National Online Safety in addition to parent information sessions and access to our on-line safety DSL for advice and resources including responses to online hoaxes. [Online-hoaxes](#)

The school is very much aware that safeguarding issues can occur online and that the use of safe search and Blocksie screening helps to achieve this. The school is aware of 'Over-blocking' as this may place unreasonable restrictions on what children can learn in relation to online safety.

Pupils are taught online safety through ICT and PSHE classes including Digital Wellbeing. Regular communication is maintained with the parents in order to offer online safety advice and specific courses in answer to issues and updates through NOLS. Abuses online and the consequences are treated the same as offline abuses. Regular reviews are carried out concerning the safety of our online provision and its effectiveness. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

## **Filtering and Monitoring**

The school takes filtering and monitoring seriously. Technology, and risks and harms related to it, evolve, and change rapidly. The school is committed to limit children's exposure to risks from the IT system through an effective filtering and monitoring system, as mentioned above. This system is regularly reviewed with regard to effectiveness. The leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

The school has made reference to the Department for Education publication [filtering and monitoring standards](#) and details below the four areas that the school carries out:

- identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities throughout the school to manage the filtering and monitoring systems:

The **Governing body** has overall strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring and they will seek assurance that the school is meeting the standards. They should be aware of and review the standards, in consultation with the DSL, Online Safety DSL and the governor with responsibility for this standard. The **DSL** has lead responsibility for this standard and is advised by the Online Safety DSL. This includes overseeing and acting on filtering and monitoring reports, safeguarding concerns, and the checks to filtering and monitoring systems. The **Online Safety DSL** will have technical responsibility for maintaining the filtering and monitoring systems, providing reports on these systems and completing actions following concerns or checks to systems. The **SLT** will support the DSL on a day to day basis with good practice and leadership concerning this area. All of the **staff** must share the following areas with the DSL; seeing or suspecting that unacceptable content has been accessed; unacceptable content being able to be accessed; inform if the content taught may well cause a spike in logs; if a failure or abuse of the filtering system is detected; any perceived unreasonable restrictions detected; any abbreviations or misspellings that allow unacceptable content to be accessed.

- ensuring that the reviewing of the filtering and monitoring provision occurs at least annually:

The review of the system will be at least annually as a minimum and increased if; a safeguarding risk is identified; there is a change in working practice such as remote access or bring your own device - BOYD; or new technology is introduced. The review, check and reward model is used. The DSL, OLDSL, governor responsible for online safety would be involved with this and would report to the SLT and then the governing body. The report would include; specific safeguarding issues emerging; any teaching requirements emerging from this; any specific cases; and an emerging risk assessment for pupils including vulnerable learners, which would feed back into the system. Self review tool? The filtering works across the school including mobile devices.

- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.

The use of safe search and Blocks i helps to achieve this. The school is aware of overblocking and the restrictions this leads to on pupils education in accessing material needed and allowing them to reasonably assess and manage risk. The school is aware that no filtering system can be 100% effective.

- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet the safeguarding needs of the school.

The above is a response of the school to this. The filtering is robust and the monitoring allows physical monitoring, live software viewing, the monitoring of user logs and individual device monitoring. All staff have annual cyber training including at least on governor. The school meets the Cyber Security Standards. For further information: [appropriate filtering and monitoring](#) and on the standards

[Cyber security standards for schools and colleges.GOV.UK](#)

### 7.25 Out of school Providers.

Where schools host out-of-school providers on their premises, they should ensure that the provider meets the guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe during community activities, after-school clubs and tuition' (DfE, 2020).

Schools should follow their own safeguarding and child protection procedures where they have concerns about the out-of-school provider. This may include contacting the local authority designated officer in the case of concerns about adults.

Where schools host out-of-school providers on their premises, they should note in their safeguarding and child protection policy that whilst the provider is responsible for their own safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, the school may refer any concerns they have about the provider to the local authority. [after school clubs DfE 2020](#)

## 8 - PROCEDURES

8.1 Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare may make a referral. Our school works with key local partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of early help assessment when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide support through statutory services (a 'child in need' or a 'child protection' plan).

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8.2 All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance and advice (refer also to section 4.4):

- The [SET Procedures 2022](#) (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures (Southend-on-Sea LSCB, 2019)
- *Right Help, Right Service, Right Time* Making Children's Lives Better Continuum of Need City of Southend Threshold Guidance. 2023
- [Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) (ESCB, 2017) (Essex)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2024\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(HMG, 2023\)](#)
- [Southend Early Help Framework](#)
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (DfE, 2023) and *Information Sharing* (DfE, 2024)
- *Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales* (DfE, July 2015);

- *The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders* (June 2015);
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (HMG 2019)
- *The use of social media for on-line radicalisation* (July 2015)
- *Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation* (HMG, 2019)
- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused* (March 2015)

8.3 Safer recruitment procedures are deployed in all staff appointments and pre-employment checks are made on volunteers, staff of contractors and other individuals that are not school staff or supply staff (in accordance with KCSIE). The school's Recruitment policy provides detailed information about suitability checks. When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our school they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They are given a copy of this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (which includes the Staff Safe Practice Code of Conduct), advised who our Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) is/are, what their role is, and are informed how to share concerns with them. All new staff are also given a copy of the School's Behaviour Policy and made aware of the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.

Appropriate staff are trained in safer recruitment and on each interview panel there will be at least one who holds this qualification.

8.4 All staff, governors and volunteers are provided with a copy of Keeping Children Safe in Education - information for all school and college staff (Part 1 and Annexes A&B) and are required to read this document. Each time this document is updated, staff, governors and volunteers are issued with the new version and are required to confirm that they have read the document. Staff can have access to What To Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG, March 2015), which gives helpful advice about how to respond to child protection concerns or disclosures.

8.5 All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to children who may be in need of help or protection. All Staff are kept informed about safeguarding and child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and regular awareness training, as required, but at least annually.

8.6 Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare may make a referral. There is a single entry number detailed at the front of this policy. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation, suspects that abuse may have occurred, or is concerned about a child's welfare, **must** report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Continuum of need publication from Southend will be used in most cases. The matter should not be discussed at this stage with any member of staff so that the DSL may take professional advice and only then on the advice of the DSL may others be involved. In the absence of the DSL, a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead may be sought so that discussion can take place regarding whether any support for the child can be managed internally via the school's own pastoral support process, or if an Early Help assessment is indicated, or a referral to Children's Social Care should more intense support be needed with social worker advice and involvement; and/or the Police is required for intense and complex work. The school may seek advice from Social care about a concern if they are unsure how to respond to it.

8.7 The contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are prominently displayed in the school to ensure that all members of the school community have unfettered access to safeguarding support.

In the event that neither the Designated Safeguarding Lead or either of the Deputy Designated

Safeguarding Leads are on site, one of these individuals will be denoted as being 'on call' and will be contactable by mobile telephone. 'On call' notifications will be communicated on the Staff Room notice board. Should a Safeguarding concern arise in the situation where none of the Safeguarding Leads are on site, the 'on call' safeguarding lead will support the member of staff/volunteer in deciding on a course of action and will follow up with the member of staff immediately on their return to school (or pass the matter on to another safeguarding lead if they are not immediately returning to school). In any event, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff who may wish to contact the on-call safeguarding lead as well. Absence of any of the designated staff should not delay appropriate action being taken. Any individual may refer to Social Care / Children and Families Hub / the Police where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child.

8.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead, or the Deputy, will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse to Children's Social Care at the now **Single Point of Contact**, Southend Borough Council or the Children and Families Hub, Essex County Council by telephone (contact numbers are on the cover sheet of this document) and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the SET procedures 2019.

8.9 A telephone referral to Children's Social Care (Southend) will be confirmed in writing within 48 hours.

Matters are dealt with through a 1-4 level continuum of need and aims to be restorative in practice. Each of these levels is discussed in the Continuum of needs threshold document and SET procedures.

8.10 At **level 4**, multi services will be used, if the child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care / Children and Families Hub and/or the Police immediately. The practitioner should make a referral to the Southend **Single Point of Contact (SPOC)**.

The **SPOC referral form** should be completed and emailed to and include clear information about the safeguarding concerns and detail of professional involvement and support offered at Levels 2 and 3, if any, prior to this referral. Where there are concerns around neglect, the **Graded Care Profile 2** tool information will also be required.

If the child has special educational needs or a disability their **SEND** report should also be forwarded. Unless there is immediate risk of significant harm the family should be consulted about the pending referral and agreement sought.

8.11 At **level 3**, should the child have complex needs but is not in immediate danger or risk of harm and a social workers involvement would be needed, then a referral may be made to **SPOC**. In Southend, the **SPOC referral form** and where there are concerns around neglect, the **Graded Care Profile 2 tool** should also be attached. These should then be emailed to the Southend Single Point of Contact (SPOC). This is the route to requesting the involvement of the Supporting Families Service; this service generally works with families with three or more complex unmet needs.

8.12 At **level 1 - 2**, In Essex, non-urgent concerns or requests for support will be referred to the **Early Help**. At level 1 a single agency may assist.

8.13 For all referrals, essential information will include the pupil's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral, the

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name of person who initially received the disclosure, plus any advice given. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer and given to the DSL.

8.14 The school will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care / the Children and Families Hub with the parents or carers, unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions, advice will be taken from Children's Social Care/ the Children and Families Hub and/or Essex Police about when it is appropriate to share information with parents/carers.

8.15 Whilst all staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy) with regard to any concerns about Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher has a statutory legal duty to report this personally to the Police. See paragraph 7.7 and Annex B [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2023\)](#) for more details.

8.16 If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed, or does not appear to be improving, the staff member concerned should press for reconsideration of the case with the designated safeguarding lead, who will press for reconsideration of the case to ensure that the child's situation improves.

8.17 Parents and Carers are informed about our school's duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures on admission, in the parents' handbook and on the school website.

8.18 At **level 2**, In line with KCSIE, should a referral **not** be required at a higher level, or a social worker decides that no formal assessment is required, following a referral, then the school will take relevant action, including Early Help and the school's own pastoral systems. **Early Help** means providing support as soon as a problem emerges but where a child is not in immediate danger or is at risk of harm. Examples (non-exhaustive list) of where early help may be appropriate include children with:

- feelings of low self-worth or self-esteem,
- difficulties in managing feelings, emotions or behaviours,
- developing mental health issues, or
- disabilities

The social worker may refer the child to **Team Around the Family (TAF)** for ongoing support with a local authority TAF officer. [Southend Early Help Framework](#)

8.19 At **level 2**, in addition, Staff who identify children who may benefit from Early Help will discuss their concerns with the Pastoral Lead who, as in this case is the DSL, will discuss the+ concerns with a Deputy Safeguarding Lead. An **early help assessment** will be undertaken by a lead professional (usually the Pastoral Lead or SENDCo) who will provide support to the child and family, act as an advocate on their behalf and coordinate the delivery of support services.

The professional completing the **early help assessment** will then coordinate a **team around the family plan**. School nursing or SET CAMHS can always be consulted should there be concerns about the mental health of a child. At all stages of the assessment the lead professional will liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and advice and consultation can be sought from the Supporting

Families Service if required. Extra information is available on Early Help, section 7.15.

These services are not accessed via the Southend Single Point of Contact and do not require the intervention of Southend Children's Services. There is no need at this level for specialist or intensive services.

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8.20 Any member of staff with direct involvement with the child (e.g. form teacher) may be asked to participate in such an assessment. In performing the early help assessment, the lead professional will work with other practitioners to decide whether the child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency.

If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child (not being addressed or improving) then this must be discussed with the DSL who will press for reconsideration.

8.21 If, at any stage during this process, it is believed that the child may be in need (as defined by S17 of the Children Act 1989), or is being harmed or is likely to be, (S47) then the DSL will refer the child to the relevant local authority children's social care and follow SET procedures.

## 9 - TRAINING AND SUPPORT

9.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) will undergo updated Level 3 Child Protection training specifically for Designated Safeguarding Leads at least every two years, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (*DfE, September 2024*). In addition to formal training, the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) will keep up to date with safeguarding developments and refresh their knowledge and skills regularly, but at least annually. They will also attend safeguarding meetings with SSP as regularly as they can and any other local meeting which may be of benefit. The school is also a member of Safeguarding Pro - an online safeguarding platform and uses training from the National College

9.2 The Headmaster, all other staff members, governors and volunteers who have contact with children and young people, will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection effectively. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Part 1 of KCSIE and Annex A should be read by all school leaders, teachers and those who work directly with children. Further information (Annex B) by school leaders and those who work directly with children. A questionnaire is used to consolidate learning. Records of safeguarding and child protection training undertaken are kept for all staff, governors and volunteers. Training resources can be found at St Michael's on National Online Safety. Annex A from KCSIE 2024 is read by staff who do not directly work with children. This has been thought to be effective and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

9.3 Safeguarding induction is given to all new staff, governors and volunteers. The training will give appropriate safeguarding and child protection training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection effectively. In addition, the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, including the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse and information about the identity and role of the DSL and any deputies; the staff code of conduct/behaviour policy including the whistleblowing procedure and the acceptable use of

technologies policy, if separate (see above for more about the staff code); the pupil behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); the school's safeguarding response to children who go missing from education (children missing education policy to be provided); on-line safety; which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, a copy of Part 1 of KCSIE or Annex A if appropriate (and, in effect, Annex B also, for those who work directly with children). Induction and training should be in line with any advice from the safeguarding partners.

- 9.4 The school ensures that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) also undertakes training in inter-agency working and other matters, as appropriate.
- 9.5 Governing body should ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.
- 9.6 The Headmaster/Designated Safeguarding Lead, in the first instance, will provide support and supervision to staff involved in safeguarding from everyday support to child protection issues. Further support and advice may be sought from Southend Safeguarding (child) Partnership.
- 9.7 All staff are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct and of the importance of maintaining these. These matters form part of staff induction, are referred to in the Staff Handbook and are outlined in the Staff Safe Practice Code of Conduct (APPENDIX 3 of this policy).

## **10 - PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 10.1 Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern including parents, carers and pupils and will not agree with a parent, carer or pupil to keep a secret as, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.
- 10.2 All staff members are informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a 'need to know basis' only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way is treated confidentially. This is carried out for reasons of safety and respect for all concerned.

## **11 - RECORDS AND INFORMATION SHARING**

- 11.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be shared with other agencies.
- 11.2 Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and

effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing information where there are safeguarding concerns. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect.

11.3 All Safeguarding concerns and disclosures are recorded using the *Engage Safeguarding* software. Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will report this outlining a summary of the concern including the name(s) of the child(ren) involved, the date of the concern, details of the concern, the location and the action already taken, including body maps if needed. The inclusion of a body map is not an invitation for the colleague to look at the child's injury areas to fill in the body map - it is merely used as a reference in response to what the child has told. The report may be on paper, (signed and dated) or on a concern form - orange located in the staffroom or directly on Engage Safeguarding software. The paperwork should then be given to the DSL or deputies immediately to assess the concern.

If submitted to Engage Safeguarding software, the DSL (and deputies) receive an email alerting them that there is a new concern. Though good practice would be to inform the DSL or deputy verbally if possible. The DSL (or deputies) will immediately assess the concern, categorising the type of concern, and in discussion with the person raising the concern and the other designated leads will decide on the course of action to take. Any hand-written notes or other evidence will be scanned and attached to the record. All subsequent actions, including discussions and decisions, the reasons for those decisions and why, the reasons for why threshold not met, will be recorded using Engage Safeguarding software.

11.4 Any records related to safeguarding and child protection are recorded and stored securely using the *Engage Safeguarding* software. All safeguarding and child protection records are accessible to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies). A copy of any record will be retained for 25 years after the pupil's date of birth. Any hard copies in files are kept in an individual child protection file for that child which is separate from their pupil file. These are stored securely in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office. They are accessible through the DSL. Digital records are protected through *Engage Safeguarding* software.

11.5 If a pupil transfers from our school to another, their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting either using hard copy or secure email. Digital records will be password protected. Post will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving school's designated safeguarding lead, with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to us if it goes astray. Copies of this paperwork will be retained by our school, should it be required at a future date. The new school will receive a schedule of the documents forwarded; this schedule is then signed by the designated safeguarding lead and returned to our school. Where possible, the DSL will make personal contact with the receiving school to share information about the child with safeguarding staff so that appropriate support can be put in place for them and key staff, such as the SENDCo or DSL, are aware of their needs.

Where children leave the school or college, the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an

in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. For schools, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) or the named persons with oversight for special educational needs and disability (SEND) in a college, are aware as required.

In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker

Care will be taken to ensure confidentiality and safety. A copy of the child protection file will be kept until confirmation is given that the other school has received it. Once confirmed, our copy is shredded unless there is a specific reason to keep it such as ongoing business, siblings in the school, etc. CP Conference reports are held with the DSL.

11.6 When a new pupil joins our school, we will request child protection records from the previous school (if none are received).

11.7 For records of allegations involving a member of staff, please see paragraph 13.8 below.

## **12 – INTER-AGENCY WORKING**

12.1 It is the responsibility of the designated safeguarding lead to ensure that the school is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any child protection conference (statutory meeting) called for children on the school roll or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate any report will be shared in advance with the parents and carers. A report will be made available to the Conference Chair 48 working hours in advance of the Conference and shared with the parents/carers before the day of the Conference. Whoever attends the Conference will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the Conference and express a view, at the end of the meeting, as to whether the child(ren) should be made subject to a Child Protection Plan.

12.2 If a child is subject to a Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure the child is monitored regarding their school attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation. If the school is part of the core group, the designated safeguarding lead will ensure the school is represented and provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the designated safeguarding lead will inform the child's key worker **immediately** and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

12.3 If there is an unexplained absence of, or injury to a child subject to a Child Protection Plan, the child's Key Worker must be notified **immediately**.

## **13 - ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING A MEMBER OF STAFF**

- 13.1 All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Handbook / Policies and Procedures for Staff document / Staff Code of Conduct. (APPENDIX 5 also outlines these procedures.)
- 13.2 The School recognises that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when allegations are made about members of staff.
- 13.3 The School works in accordance with statutory guidance and the SET procedures (2022) in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity). Section 7 of the current SET procedures provides detailed information regarding this.
- 13.4 The School has processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children) (APPENDIX 5 outlines these procedures). Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff will be referred to the Headmaster (or the Chair of Governors in their absence). Staffing matters are confidential, and the school must operate within statutory guidance around Data Protection.
- 13.5 Where the concern involves the Headmaster, it should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors.
- 13.6 The SET procedures require that, where an allegation against a member of staff has been received, the Headmaster, or the Chair of Governors must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see cover sheet of this document for contact details) within one working day. Where the allegation is against the Headmaster, the Chair of Governors will consult with the LADO without informing the Head. For people working with children in Southend, the LADO is Allison Francis, who can be contacted on 01702 534539 (Child Protection Adviser, Sharon Langston 01702 534591) [safeguardingforchildren@southend.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingforchildren@southend.gov.uk).
- 13.7 The LADO has overall responsibility for oversight of the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff members. Wherever possible, contact with the LADO should be made immediately, as she will then advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. This will include advice on speaking to pupils and parents and HR. The School will manage these procedures alongside the school's disciplinary process in liaison with the school's HR Advisor (Peninsula Business Services).
- 13.8 In accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, September 2024) details of allegations that are found to have been malicious will be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, the record will be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age, or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer. However, cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in employer references.

### **13.9 Low Level Concerns about Staff Behaviour**

We recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, teachers, supply teachers and agency staff and this is dealt with in Appendix 5 of this policy.

Concerns may be graded Low level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation and the person has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. The procedures for these are dealt with in Appendix 5.

## **14 - WHISTLEBLOWING**

14.1 Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example pupils in the school or members of the public.

14.2 All staff are made aware of the duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of staff in line with the school's Code of Conduct / Whistleblowing policy.

14.3 We want everyone to feel able to report any child protection / safeguarding concerns. However, for members of staff who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, they can call the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

14.4 Parents or others in the wider school community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24-hour helpline) or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

## **15 - USE OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

15.1 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Governing Body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

## **16 - POLICY REVIEW**

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring:

- the annual review of this policy
- that the list of key contacts on the cover sheet is kept up to date.

### **Acknowledgement:**

We acknowledge the Southend Safeguarding Partnership Model Child Protection Policy (Sept 2024) which contributed to the development of this policy.

## **APPENDICES**

APPENDIX 1 Signs and forms of abuse

APPENDIX 2 How to respond to suspicions of child abuse

APPENDIX 3 Staff safe practice Code of Conduct

APPENDIX 4 Policy on the use of mobile phones, cameras and the sharing of images

APPENDIX 5 Procedures for dealing with allegations against teachers and other persons working in or on

behalf of the school

APPENDIX 6 The role of the DSL

## APPENDIX 1

# SIGNS AND FORMS OF ABUSE

## ABUSE

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

## PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical Abuse involves 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.

### Signs of possible abuse:

*Bruising (especially bruising away from bony prominences; simultaneous bruising to both eyes; bruises to the face, back, abdomen, buttocks, ears and hands; clusters of bruises; multiple bruising of uniform shape; bruise that carry an imprint); Linear pink marks; broken teeth and mouth injuries; bite marks; burns and scalds (especially any burn with a clear outline, e.g. circular burns, friction burns, linear burns, burns of uniform depth over a large area, scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid); fractures; scars.*

## SEXUAL ABUSE

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or 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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

### Signs of possible abuse:

#### *Behavioural indicators*

Inappropriate sexualised conduct; sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age; continual and inappropriate masturbation; self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation

and suicide attempts; involvement in sexual exploitation or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners; an anxious unwillingness to remove clothes for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties); running away.

#### *Physical indicators*

Pain or itching of genital area; vaginal discharge; enuresis (inability to control urination); sexually transmitted infections; blood on underclothes; pregnancy; symptoms e.g. injuries to genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted infection, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing.

### **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include 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. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

#### **Signs of possible abuse:**

Delay in achieving developmental, cognitive and / or other educational milestones; failure to thrive / faltering growth; behavioural problems e.g. aggression, attention seeking; frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children; low self-esteem, lack of confidence, fearful, distressed, anxious; poor peer relationships including withdrawn or isolated behaviour.

### **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, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

#### **Signs of possible abuse:**

A child who is unkempt or inadequately clothed or dirty or smells; a child perceived to be frequently hungry; a child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause or displaying anxious attachment, aggression or indiscriminate friendliness; failure to grow or develop within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss or speech / language delay; recurrent / untreated infections or skin conditions e.g. severe nappy rash, eczema or persistent head lice / scabies; unmanaged / untreated health / medical conditions including poor dental health; frequent accidents or injuries; child frequently absent or late at school; poor self-esteem; child thrives away from home environment.

## APPENDIX 2

### How to respond to suspicions of child abuse

**BE ALERT TO ABUSE.**

**NEVER THINK ABUSE IS IMPOSSIBLE AS AN ABUSER COULD BE ANYONE.**

#### **When an observation or a child's behaviour, comment or report gives rise to concern**

##### DO

- ✓ Remain calm, stop and listen, observe, record
- ✓ Ask questions to clarify your understanding
- ✓ Keep questions open
- ✓ Get permission from the child to take notes (if possible)
- ✓ Use original notes when reporting to the DSL
- ✓ Use the child's words wherever possible
- ✓ Report your concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or one of the Deputy DSLs

##### DO NOT

- ✗ Stop a child from disclosing
- ✗ Offer confidentiality
- ✗ Investigate the situation
- ✗ Asked closed or leading questions

## APPENDIX 3

## **Staff Safe Practice Code of Conduct (updated May 2022)**

This safe practice code of conduct should be read in conjunction with other school policies and the Staff Handbook. Throughout this appendix the term “staff” is used. It should be understood that this code will also apply to volunteers, students or any other adult working in or on behalf of the school as everyone at school has a responsibility towards safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Everyone is expected to uphold school policies and to behave in a professional way and to exercise professional judgment. It is understood that some staff have closer relationships and friendships with some families, often through their own family or geographical location. However, they must always be mindful of this code of conduct and uphold its principles. Whenever staff have a concern that they may have acted in a way which could be open to misinterpretation they are advised to inform the Headmaster. Staff should also read Appendix 5 Low level concerns.

**Acceptable use of technologies** – staff are required to use all forms of technology (including PCs, lap top computers, tablet devices, mobile telephones etc) in accordance with their professional status and using their professional judgement. School computer equipment must only be used for school purposes. Any staff use of school computer equipment which contravenes school policies on the acceptable use of computers and/or the internet/email will be liable to disciplinary action which could result in dismissal.

**Behaviour management** - This should be in line with the school’s behaviour Policy. No corporal punishment may be used or be threatened at St. Michael’s School. Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children is unacceptable.

**Conduct** - All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of the children. Staff should be aware that their conduct, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children. This means that staff should not conduct themselves in such a manner which would lead a reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or to act as an appropriate role model. This includes unprofessional comments which scapegoat, demean, discriminate, or humiliate others, or that which may well be interpreted as such.

Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children. Staff should report to the Headmaster and or the Bursar if taking any medication which may adversely affect their ability to undertake duties.

**Confidentiality** - The storing and processing of personal information is governed by the General Data Protection Regulations 2017 (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.

Staff may have access to special category personal data about pupils and their families which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them. Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child.

Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the pupil’s identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. Any personal information should be shredded or disposed of using the confidential waste bins after the event.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a responsibility to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities or to statutory services. If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior management.

**Corporal punishment-** No corporal punishment may be used or be threatened at St. Michael's School. Please refer to the Behaviour Policy.

**Curriculum** - Many areas of the curriculum could include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of a sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and that they clearly relate to the Key Learning Objectives. The curriculum may sometimes lead to unplanned discussion. Staff should respond carefully to pupils' questions and should not enter into or encourage inappropriate discussion about sexual activity. Staff should comply at all times with the school's relevant policy on such matters.

**Dress code** - A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression and some individuals will wish to exercise their own cultural customs. However, staff should select a manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and which may be necessarily different to that adopted in their personal life. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those teaching sports should be dressed appropriately for the teaching role in sports clothing. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be viewed as offensive or inappropriate may render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

This means that staff should wear clothing which:

- promotes a positive and professional image
- is appropriate to their role
- is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative
- does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- is not considered to be discriminatory
- is compliant with professional standards

In addition, staff should dress in keeping with the standards expected from the pupils. Shorts (with the exception of PE kit), leggings, denim of any kind, sun tops and micro skirts are unsuitable. Bare mid-riffs, visible body tattoos and piercings, apart from ladies' earrings are generally considered to be unsuitable. Attention should be given to logos which may be unsuitable e.g. FCUK. Staff are expected to dress in a professional but practical way, including whilst on educational visits. For residential visits the dress code may be more informal but must still be appropriate.

**Email contact** - Staff should not give a personal email address to pupils; either present or past, or to their parents to discuss them. If staff are contacted by pupils on a personal email address, they should advise the Headmaster, who will advise the parents. School email addresses should not be given to pupils for school or homework purposes as the School uses Google Classroom.

**Exposure to inappropriate images** - Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images. There are no circumstances that will justify adults: making, downloading, possessing or distributing indecent images or

pseudo-images of children (child abuse images).

Accessing these images, whether using the setting's or personal equipment, on or off the premises, or making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal. If indecent images of children are discovered at the establishment or on the school or setting's equipment an immediate referral should be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the police contacted if relevant. The images/equipment should be secured and there should be no attempt to view or delete the images as this could jeopardise necessary criminal action. If the images are of children known to the school, a referral should also be made to children's social care in line with local arrangements.

Under no circumstances should any adult use school or setting equipment to access pornography. Personal equipment containing pornography or links to it should This means that staff should abide by the establishment's acceptable use and e-safety policies.

This will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the adult to continue working with children and young people. Staff should keep their passwords confidential and not allow unauthorised access to equipment. In the event of any indecent images of children or unsuitable material being discovered on a device the equipment should not be tampered with in any way. It should be secured and isolated from the network, and the DSL or DDSL contacted without delay. Adults should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves as this may lead to a contamination of evidence and a possibility that they will be at risk of prosecution themselves.

**FGM reporting** - If a pupil informs you that they have undergone FGM or you observe physical signs which appear to show FGM has been carried out you must ring the non-emergency number 101. This can be by 101 if not an emergency or 999 for risk of life or immediate harm. All 101 calls should be made as soon as possible or by the close of the next working day. In addition, all staff should inform the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) without delay, unless you have good reason not to do so.

Our school will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with 'Multi-Agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation' (HMG, April 2016) and existing local safeguarding procedures. [FGM reporting](#)

**You** should make a note of **your** actions and record the police reference number as evidence that **you** have complied with the duty. Reporting of FGM is a **legal** duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police personally of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. This is part of the Serious Crime Act 2015.

**First Aid** - Please refer to the First Aid and Medical Policy.

**Gifts, rewards and selection of pupils** - No gifts may be accepted as bribes or that lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. It is acceptable to receive tokens of appreciation e.g. at Christmas, end of term etc. However, gifts should not be received on a frequent basis or of any significant value from an individual. It is inadvisable to give personal gifts to pupils as these could be interpreted as a bribe or as a gesture to favour a pupil or single out a pupil. Any gifts given should be a part of the reward system or to a whole class e.g. at Christmas. However, even then they should not be personal or of significant value and the giving of any such gifts should be "open", not secretive. Staff should exercise care when selecting pupils for school teams, productions etc. to avoid any perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when pupils are excluded from an activity.

**Home visits** - It is essential that policies and risk assessments are in place to safeguard both staff and pupils,

who can be more vulnerable in these situations. Consideration should be given to any circumstances which might render the staff members becoming more vulnerable to the possibility of an allegation being made, e.g. child protection concerns or grievances.

**Infatuations-** Staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or to develop a heterosexual or homosexual attraction. All situations should be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of all involved. Staff should also be aware that such circumstances carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. A member of staff, who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with themselves or a colleague, should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken.

**Internet** - Please refer to the Acceptable Use for guidance about responsible use of the internet and teaching online safety in school January 2021.

**Intimate care** - All pupils have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required. For any pupils who need regular assistance with toileting or the removal of wet/soiled clothing, a care plan should be drawn up and agreed with parents. All pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible. If assistance is required, staff should ensure that another adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken. Wherever possible, parents should be informed, e.g. via the home school link book, about intimate care assistance that has been given. For more information, please refer to the Intimate Care Policy.

**One-to-one situations** - Staff need to be aware that if they are working in one-to-one situations (e.g. music lessons, sports or SEN provision), they are more vulnerable to allegations. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met. Staff should follow these guidelines:

- ✓ Avoid being in a one-to-one situation unless absolutely necessary (e.g. an individual lesson)
- ✓ Keep the time spent in a one-to-one situation as brief as possible
- ✓ Ensure that, if the meeting/lesson takes place in a room, both the member of staff and the child are visible through the viewing panel in the door (where practical, the room door should be kept open)
- ✓ Ensure that the child is closest to the door
- ✓ Speak clearly, without whispering, so that child does not need to come closer to hear

**Physical contact** - When physical contact is made with pupils it should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Professional judgement should be used at all times.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible in the school's Child Protection file.

If physical contact needs to occur regularly (e.g. in relation to pupils with SEN or physical disabilities) it needs to be part of a formally agreed plan with the pupil, parents and staff. Where feasible, staff should seek the pupil's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the pupil's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact which is acceptable for the pupil for the minimum time necessary. Extra caution may be required where it is known that a pupil has suffered previous abuse or neglect. A general culture of "limited touch" should be adopted. The following guidelines should be followed:

- ✓ Try to demonstrate first without touching the child
- ✓ Ask the child's permission; say what you intend to do first and explain why
- ✓ If a pupil seems uncomfortable: stop
- ✓ Only touch hands, arms or shoulder nearest you (don't reach across the body)
- ✓ Be aware of overall proximity; maintain physical space; don't stand behind a child
- ✓ Inappropriate areas for physical contact include: chest, diaphragm, waist, thighs
- ✓ Move away as soon as the contact is no longer required.

Staff who teach PE, Games or offer music tuition will, on occasions, have to make physical contact with pupils in order to support a child so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a piece of equipment or assist them with an exercise. A general culture of "limited touch" should still be adopted but safety or practical necessities may prevail (e.g. to support a child on a piece of gymnastics equipment or to demonstrate a bowling technique in an individual instrumental lesson).

Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort exercised by the pupil, verbally or non-verbally.

If a pupil is distressed, they may need comfort and reassurance, which may include age-related physical contact.

**Physical restraint** - Staff do have the right to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances. On no account should physical force be used as a form of punishment. Guidance about this can be found in the school's policy on the use of physical restraint.

**Prevent Duty** - if a member of staff in a school has a concern about a particular pupil with regard to radicalisation they should follow the school's normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the school's designated safeguarding lead, and where deemed necessary, with children's social care. Southend Safeguarding Partnership will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support. You can also contact your local police force or dial 101 (the non-emergency number).

**Residential Educational Visits** - Careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Parents should be informed of the general arrangements prior to the visit and all arrangements should be in accordance with the Educational Visits Policy. Staff need to exercise care that they do not put themselves in a vulnerable position e.g. by being alone with a pupil in a bedroom with a closed door.

**Sexual contact** - Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff towards a child or young person is a Criminal Offence. Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is a crime for an adult in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a person under the age of 18. This may include non-contact activities and "grooming", whether or not the pupil is aware of what is happening.

**Showering/Changing** - A balance needs to be achieved between respect and privacy when showering or changing and an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard the pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and to ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. The supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils (e.g. When changing for PE, Nursery children will require the assistance of adults; Year 6 children will change with more remote supervision). Staff should announce their intention to enter the changing room and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour. Staff must not change or shower in the same place and at the same time as the pupils.

**Social contact** - Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of

securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Staff should be aware that social contact could be misconstrued as grooming. Staff should not inform pupils of their home address.

**Social media** - Staff must not contact pupils, either present or past, or discuss pupils past and present with parents, past or present, through social media. Staff are advised to exercise great caution when using social media outside of school. Staff should not discuss or share data relating to children, parents or carers in staff social media groups.

**Standards of behaviour** - All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work. There may be times where an individual's actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from the community, the media or public authorities, including with regard to their own children, or children or adults in the community.

Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute. Such behaviour may also result in prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) a bar from engaging in regulated activity, or action by another relevant regulatory body.

**Staff/Pupil relationships** – Staff must not seek to establish secretive, exclusive relationships with any pupil; exclusive relationships with pupils could be misconstrued as grooming and abusive. Staff must treat all pupils equally and professionally and not treat any pupil more favorably than any other.

**Telephone contact** - Staff should not give their mobile or home telephone number to pupils. If pupils contact staff by their mobile or home phone number, they should advise the Headmaster, who will advise the parents.

**Transporting pupils** - Staff may only transport pupils for agreed purposes (agreed between school and parent), and with parental permission. Staff should ensure that their vehicle meets all legal requirements and that their insurance covers them for such a purpose. Please also be aware of booster seat regulations.

**Use of chat rooms** - Staff must not contact pupils through chat room sites. If staff are contacted by pupils when using a chat room at home, they must advise the Headmaster, who will inform the parents. Staff are advised to exercise great caution when using chat room sites for their own purposes at home.

**Use of photography** - No photographs should be used for inappropriate or illegal purposes. Personal cameras and mobile telephones must not be used to take photographs of school children. School cameras must always be used when taking photographs of the children. Images of school children must not be stored on personal computers, including laptops and tablet devices. Staff must not take images of a child's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse) even if requested by children's social care; or make audio recordings of a child's disclosure. See Appendix 4.

**Vetting of visitors** - Please see the Safeguarding Policy, section 7.17 for details.

**Whistle blowing** – all staff (including any person working on behalf of the school) shares a duty to raise concerns about any inappropriate behaviour of any other member of staff. The school has a culture of valuing staff and reflective practice. The procedures for reporting and handling concerns (including about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime), provision for mediation

and dispute resolution can be found in the Employee Handbook (Peninsula HR Services). See also APPENDIX 5 for reporting allegations of abuse against teachers and other persons working in or on behalf of the school.

*Based on "Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Pupils and Staff in Educational Settings" 2009 and 2019*

## **APPENDIX 4**

# **POLICY ON THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES, CAMERAS AND THE SHARING OF IMAGES, SEMINUDES AND NUDES.**

**SCOPE:** This policy is specifically for the EYFS, but it also applies to the whole school. The word 'setting' is used to describe the EYFS but, for the purposes of this policy, 'setting' is also used to refer to the school as a whole.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This policy has been written with reference to and has regard to:

- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 (3.4 Early Years Foundation Stage Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements)
- Cambridgeshire County Council model policy on the use of mobile phones and cameras 2012. not located
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings 2019
- Sharing nudes and semi nudes: how to respond to an incident, Dec 2020

## **AIMS**

St. Michael's School takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people in its care. There are two main elements to this policy:

- **Protection** of children within the setting, through establishing guidelines regarding the taking of photographs.
- **Prevention** of the inappropriate use of cameras and mobile phones to take photographs and videos, and limitations upon their publication.

This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, parents, volunteers and visitors to St. Michael's School.

## **IMAGES OF CHILDREN**

The use of images can be divided into four categories:

1. Images taken by the setting for setting use i.e. observations & marketing
2. Images taken by the setting for safeguarding and security
3. Images taken by parents at setting events
4. Images taken by third parties
5. Images taken by the press
6. The sharing of nudes and semi nudes.

### **1. Images taken by the setting for setting use**

Children within St Michael's School, in particular within the Foundation Stage, have their photographs taken to provide evidence of their achievements for developmental records (The Early Years Foundation Stage, EYFS 2017).

Only school cameras (or cameras containing school memory cards) and school videoing equipment are permitted to be used to take photographs of the children. Staff or volunteers must not use personal cameras, videoing equipment or mobile phones to take images of children that attend St Michael's.

The Data Protection Act 2018 affects the use of photography. An image of a child is personal data and it is, therefore, a requirement under the Act that consent is obtained from the parent/carer of a child for any images made such as those used for setting websites, observations, outings and events or other purposes. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the child, remembering that some children do not wish to have their photograph taken.

A signed consent form will be obtained from all children's parents/carers at the start of each school year (or when a child starts school), and this will be kept on their child's file. The consent form covers all cases where images of children are to be used.

Where parents/carers have refused permission for their child to be photographed or have not returned a correctly completed and signed consent form, the child will be removed from situations where their image may be recorded.

Where a parent/carer has given consent but a child declines to have an image taken, this will be treated as consent not having been given and other arrangements should be made to ensure that the child is not photographed or filmed.

Care should be taken in relation to particularly vulnerable children such as Looked After Children, recently adopted or those who have experienced domestic violence.

### **2. Images taken by the setting for safeguarding and security**

The external areas of the school, outside the changing rooms, the Refectory and the Foundation Stage classrooms are covered by CCTV cameras which are in use at all times. Signs are posted around the school to alert individuals to the presence of the cameras. CCTV is in use for the purposes of safeguarding pupils and security. Any queries relating to the use of CCTV cameras should be addressed to the Bursar.

### **3. Images taken by parents at setting events**

The Data Protection Act does not prevent parents from taking images at school events, but these must be for their own personal use and as such, the Data Protection Act does not apply. However, if any parent intends to use photographs or video on a social networking site e.g. Facebook, Twitter, they must receive permission from the parents of all the other children involved. This requirement will be made known to parents at school events where they are likely to be taking photographs.

At some events or occasions, it will be deemed inappropriate for flash photography or video to be taken during the proceedings, and parents and guests will be informed accordingly prior to the start of such an event. On such occasions, photography (including flash photography) may be allowed at the end of the event at the discretion of the Headmaster or other senior member of staff hosting the event.

### **4. Images taken by third parties**

It is the school's intention that people with no connection with St Michael's do not have any opportunity to produce images of the children covertly. Staff will question anyone who is using a camera, mobile phone or video recorder at events or on outings whom they do not recognise.

## 5. Images taken by the press

If a child is photographed by a newspaper, the photo becomes the property of the newspaper, and the newspaper has the final say as to how it is used. Photographers from newspapers will only take photographs of the children in school on the invitation of the school (e.g. Nativity Supplement). Children whose parents have not given permission for their child's photograph, full name and age to be published are not involved in photographs of small groups of children where this information will be published.

All Reception children (unless withdrawn by parents) are included in the 'New starters' photograph published by The Echo and all Year 6 children (unless withdrawn by parents) are included in the 'Leavers' photograph published by The Echo newspaper. Parents are made aware through the Newsletter that these photographs are to be taken.

## 6. Semi-nudes and nudes.

This is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by children. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated. This advice does not apply to adults sharing nudes or semi nudes of children. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police as a matter of urgency. Should a semi-nude or nude image be discovered this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

**Never** view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – **this is illegal!** If you have already viewed the imagery by accident see the DSL but **Do not** delete. **Do not** ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL.

**Do not** share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.

**Do not** say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.

**Do** explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL (or equivalent).

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) (UKCIS, 2020)

## Use of mobile phones

St Michael's School recognises that staff, students and volunteers may wish to have their personal mobile phones at work for use in case of emergency. However, safeguarding of children within the

setting is paramount and it is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore the following policy applies:

- Personal mobile phones and cameras should only be used outside of working hours and never whilst children are present.
- Personal mobile phones and cameras should be stored appropriately with personal belongings, away from the children.
- If a staff member, student or volunteer **must** use their mobile phone this should be away from the children and ensuring that staff supervision levels are not compromised.
- In circumstances such as outings and off-site visits, staff will agree the appropriate use of personal mobile phones in the event of an emergency.
- Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and may constitute evidence relating to a criminal offence, the 'Allegations of Abuse' process will be followed (please refer to St. Michael's School 'Safeguarding Policy').

### **STORAGE OF IMAGES**

St Michaels has a duty of care to safeguard images so that they cannot be used inappropriately, or outside the agreed terms under which consent has been obtained. Printed images must be maintained securely for authorised setting use only, and disposed of either by return to the child, parents, or by shredding. Unless needed for educational or archive purpose all printed images should be destroyed after three years from the date they were produced. Likewise, electronic images will be stored on the school server during the time that the child is in school and up to a maximum of three years following the end of the year in which the child would have been in Form 6. Images that have been used for educational or marketing purposes may be kept for longer and will become part of the school archive.

### **TRANSFER OF IMAGES**

Whilst every effort will be made to ensure the security of images of children, there is a risk, however small, that images may be lost while in the process of being transferred by either traditional or electronic methods. Therefore, there is the risk that an individual who would use them inappropriately may obtain the images. To reduce the possibility of this happening, all photographic images will be treated carefully by all staff and the transfer of images will be kept to a minimum.

### **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with the review of the Safeguarding Policy. Other revisions will be made, as and when required, in response to changes to the Independent Schools Standards Regulations or as a result of a review of practice in school.

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST TEACHERS AND OTHER PERSONS WORKING IN OR ON BEHALF OF THE SCHOOL**

The procedures set out below will be followed when an allegation is made about any person working on behalf of the school; the allegation may initiate from a child, parent/carer or another member of school staff. All staff (including volunteers) are made aware of their duty to raise concerns (whistle blow) about the attitude or actions of colleagues (see Staff Safe Practice Code of Conduct – APPENDIX 3 and also Section 13 Allegations involving a member of staff.) Where an allegation is made against any person (teacher, Headmaster, other staff, volunteer, governor) working in or on behalf of the school that he or she has:

- a. behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child (poor or unsafe practice)
- b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- c. has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children
- d. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

or where potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime are identified the school will follow the [Southend Essex and Thurrock Child Protection Procedures \(2022\)](#). Detailed records will be made to include decisions, actions taken, and reasons for these. All records will be retained securely by the Headmaster.

Whilst the school acknowledges such allegations, as all others, may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be founded. Therefore, all allegations will be investigated properly, in line with agreed procedures (see below) without any unnecessary delays.

### **Initial Action**

- The person who has received an allegation or witnessed an event will immediately inform the Headmaster and make a written record. If the Headmaster is not available the report should be made to the Chair of Governors, but the Headmaster should be kept informed.
- In the event that an allegation is made against the Headmaster the matter must be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors, without the Headmaster being informed. The Chair of Governors will then proceed as the Headmaster.
- The Headmaster will take steps, where necessary, to secure the immediate safety of children and any urgent medical needs.
- The member of staff will not be approached at this stage unless it is necessary to address the immediate safety of children.
- The Headmaster may need to clarify any information regarding the allegation; however, no person will be interviewed at this stage.
- The Headmaster/Chair of Governors will report the allegation (whether it came to the attention of the Headmaster/Chair of Governors or was made directly with the Police) to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Allison Francis (see front page Useful Contacts) to discuss the decision in relation to the agreed threshold criteria in the SET procedures within one working day. During this discussion, consideration will be given to the nature, content and context of the allegation and a course of action, including any involvement of the police, will be agreed. Discussions will be recorded in writing, and communication with both the individual and the parents of the child/children agreed. GDPR cannot be allowed to stand in the way of safeguarding children. The school will consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant suspension of the individual or whether alternative arrangements should be put in place. The school will give due weight to the views of the LADO and this policy when making a decision about suspension. (In borderline cases discussions with the LADO will be held informally and without naming the school or individual.)
- In cases of serious harm, the Police will be consulted from the outset.
- Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of pupils, parents and staff.
- The Headmaster will inform the Chair of Governors of any allegation.

In line with restrictions on the reporting or publishing of allegations against teachers (from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012) the school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity. The restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence, or the DfE/Teaching Regulation Authority (TRA) publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.

The quick resolution of any allegation is a clear priority to the benefit of all concerned. At any stage of consideration or investigation, steps will be taken to eradicate all unnecessary delays. No investigation of the allegation will be undertaken without prior consultation with the LADO, or in the most serious cases the Police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. In response to an allegation staff suspension is not the default option. An individual will only be suspended if there is no reasonable alternative. If suspension is deemed appropriate, the reasons and justification will be recorded by the Headmaster (or Chair of Governors) and the individual notified of the reasons. The school will provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation (including provision for mediation and dispute resolution) and provide the individual with a named contact if they are suspended. The school will seek and follow advice from Peninsula HROnline to support the Headmaster and the individual through the process.

### **Subsequent action**

The school will report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), within one month of leaving the school any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used for regulated activity and the DBS referral criteria are met, that is, they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child.

Ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. Reports will include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. The school recognises that failure to make a report constitutes an offence. The school also recognises that compromise agreements cannot be used to prevent a referral being made to the DBS when it is legally required nor can an individual refuse to cooperate with the investigation.

The Governing body accepts that it has a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information they hold already but understands that they do not have to find it from other sources. The school recognises that it will be asked, as part of routine inspection, to confirm that it has disclosed to inspectors all instances of action in relation to safeguarding concerns.

The school also recognises that it has a duty to make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned); and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are: 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that might bring the profession into disrepute', or a 'conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence'.

Allegations that are found to have been malicious will be removed from personnel files and any that are proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be referred to in employer references.

In dealing with any allegation the school will seek to demonstrate its culture of valuing staff and of reflective practice. Following the resolution of any substantiated allegation the Headmaster (in conjunction with the individual and other senior staff, if appropriate) will review the situations that led up to the allegation being made and will work with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This should include issues arising from any decision to suspend the member of staff, the duration of the suspension and whether or not suspension was justified. Lessons should also be learnt from the use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. The LADO and case manager should consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

Pupils that are found to have made malicious allegations will be treated in line with the school's Behaviour and Discipline and Exclusion policies. The school will consider appropriate sanctions, which could include temporary or permanent exclusion (as well as referral to the police if there are grounds for believing a criminal offence may have been committed).

### **Low-level Concerns Policy**

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college 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 serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

This is linked with Appendix 3 Staff code of Conduct. Concerns may be graded Low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for allegation; and the person has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct - appendix 3, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one
- basis in a secluded area or behind a
- closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised,
- intimidating or offensive language.

At this school concerns should be raised with the Headmaster who should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

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

Depending on the circumstances the head may wish to involve the DSL or more likely the Deputy head and take a more collaborative decision-making approach. The Headmaster should be the ultimate decision maker

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in respect of all low-level concerns though. If the Headmaster is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, they should consult with their LADO.

Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Staff should be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing, including:

- name of individual sharing their concerns

- details of the concern
- context in which the concern arose
- action taken

NB if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible

Records must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Schools and colleges should decide how long they retain such information, but it is recommended that it is kept at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

**APPENDIX 6** (This appendix has made use of Appendix C KCSIE 2022)

## **ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The DSL should be a member of the SLT. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description. This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. They should be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or to support other staff to do so, and to contribute to the assessment of children.

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads**

St Michael's school has 10 deputy designated safeguarding leads. This is to ensure that different areas of the school are covered by well-trained individuals. The deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

### **Managing referrals**

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required
- support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- refer cases to the Channel Program in the appointment as DSL, written confirmation that part of the duties of the post involve contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer on any matter that the

DSL considers cannot be properly dealt with internally. Consideration could also be given to providing the DSL with access to external advice from an appropriate company or legal service. 98

- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. [When to call the police](#)

## Working with others

The designated safeguarding lead refers to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;

- support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;

This may involve including g lead is expected to:

- act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners;
- liaise with the Headmaster to inform him of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware

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of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#).

- as required, liaise with the "case manager" and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
- liaise with staff, especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, and SENCOs, and Mental Health Lead on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; and
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff and promote supportive engagement with parents and or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- work with others to ensure that the school's filtering and monitoring systems are functional and effective.

## Training

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements.
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young

carers;

- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation;
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals; • understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college;
- can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online;
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and Section 17 (10) Children Act 1989: those unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health and development without local authority services, those whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of such services, or disabled children.
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them. In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role. The school is a member of safeguarding pro.

## **Raising Awareness**

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure the school's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately; • ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the governing body regarding this;
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this; and • link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and SMT. Their role could include ensuring that the school or college, 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.

## **Information sharing and managing the child protection file**

The DSL ensures that the child protection files are up to date. Hard copy information is securely stored, and the main bulk of information is stored on Engage safeguarding software. Each child has a separate child

protection file. Records include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern; details of follow up and resolution; notes of action, decisions, outcomes and with regard to decisions, the rationale for those decisions must be included. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc. The content of the files can only be accessed by DSLs.

Where pupils leave the school (including for in-year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN, are aware as required. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

#### **Availability During term time**

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

St Michael's School Effective September 2024 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy