

Abingdon Schools Group - Summary Safeguarding Information

The Abingdon Schools Group (ASG) recognises its responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. This policy is based on guidance from [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026](#). It will be reviewed and updated at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.

Remember: even concerns or worries that appear insignificant can help build a bigger picture; if in any doubt, talk or email one of the contacts below. Report any concern, no matter how small, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or one of the Safeguarding team.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding children is **EVERYONE's** responsibility. Different types of abuse and safeguarding concern are detailed in the main policy. If you see or hear anything that worries you, no matter how small, please contact a member of the Safeguarding Team:

Abingdon School

Helen Keevil Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Head Pastoral 07778 936395, 01235 849130
helen.keevil@abingdon.org.uk

Or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs):

Fran Smethurst (Safeguarding Manager) 01235 849138 fran.smethurst@abingdon.org.uk (also supports Abingdon Prep School and The Manor)

James Hallinan (Head of Boarding)

Andrew Crisp (Head of Middle School) 01235 849015 andrew.crisp@abingdon.org.uk

Carrie Berry (Senior Nurse) 01235 849059 carrie.berry@abingdon.org.uk

Keely Ewart Brookes (Head of Academic Support) 01235 849088

Dani Heywood-Lonsdale (Assistant Head of Sixth Form Pastoral) 01235 849069

Natalie Hunt (Head of Wellbeing) 01235 840144 natalie.hunt@abingdon.org.uk

Mark Johnson (Assistant Head of Crescent House) (Digital/Filtering & Monitoring Lead DDSL) 01235 849053
mark.johnson@abingdon.org.uk

Adam Jenkins (Head of Lower School) 01235 849051 adam.jenkins@abingdon.org.uk

Shared Safeguarding Mailbox (to DSL & all DDSLs): safeguarding.team@abingdon.org.uk

Pupils and staff at Abingdon Senior School can also report any incidents or worries via the confidential Whisper service (text 07860021323 or via <https://swgfl.org.uk/whisper/abd1/>)

Head: **Mike Windsor**, 01235 849023, head@abingdon.org.uk

Abingdon Preparatory School

Richard Sutton, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Head Pastoral, 07471 030183,
richard.sutton@abingdonprep.org.uk

or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL):

Rachel Pairman (Deputy Head) 01865 392301 rachel.pairman@abingdonprep.org.uk

Lenka Sowter (Year 3 teacher) 01865 391570 lenka.sowter@abingdonprep.org.uk

Sarah Eastaugh (Head of Learning Support and Deputy DSL with responsibility for EYFS) 01865 391570
sarah.eastaugh@abingdonprep.org.uk

Head: **Nicky Black** (Head) 01865 392303 head@abingdonprep.org.uk

The Manor Preparatory School

Varun Footring, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Head Pastoral, 01235 858480, 07904 951265, vfootring@manorprep.org

or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL):

Pippa McConnell (Head of Pre-Prep and Deputy DSL with responsibility for EYFS), 01235 858485, 07552 848843, pmcconnell@manorprep.org

Neil Jackson (Head of Years 5 and 6), 01235 858453, 07435 987404, njackson@manorprep.org

Shared Safeguarding Mailbox for Varun Footring, Pippa McConnell, Neil Jackson and Rachel Hamlyn:
mp-safeguarding@manorprep.org

'Manor Fun' Holiday Club

Beth Davis, 01235 858458, bdavis@manorprep.org

Harrison Read, 01235 858458 hread@manorprep.org

Richard Valentine, 01235 858458 rvalentine@manorprep.org

Head: **Rachel Hamlyn**, 01235 858460, 07793 769863, head@manorprep.org

Abingdon School Enterprises

Andy Prendergast (Lead ASE DDSL and Operations Director and with DDSL responsibility for ASE activities within Tilsley Park) 07776 658788 andy.prendergast@abingdon.org.uk

Rebecca Lees (DDSL with responsibility for ASE activities within the Sports Centre)

Katie Brewer (DDSL with responsibility for other Commercial Events, Hires and Conferences)

The **Safeguarding Governor** is **Dr Kate Wheeler** safeguarding.governor@abingdon.org.uk

The **Chair of Governors** is **James Sporle** james.sporle@abingdon.org.uk

Key External Safeguarding Contacts:

Local Authority Designated Officer

Jo Lloyd

Sandra Barratt
Amie Pilcher

TEL: 01865 810603

EMAIL: ado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Website:

<https://www.oscp.org.uk/practitioners-volunteers/schools-safeguarding-team/>

**Local Authority Children's Social Services:
Education Safeguarding Advisory Team
(ESAT)**

TEL: 01865 810603

EMAIL: esat.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

ESAT (Education Safeguarding Advisory Team):

Jo Lloyd and Lynne Hammond (designated lead for Vale of White Horse)

Supported by: Kirstie Harvey, Helen Harnew on early years and alternative provision.

**Local Authority Children's Social Services:
Locality Community Support Services (LCSS)**

Locality Community Support Service Worker (LCSS):

Emma Walker

emma.walker@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

MASH seeks to enable the sharing of information so that risks to children can be identified at an early stage. It is a link between universal services such as schools and GPs and statutory services such as police and social care.

Anyone can make a referral to children's social care if they have a concern about a child.

TEL: 0345 050 7666

Website (including link to contact form):

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/business/information-providers/multi-agency-safeguarding-hub>

<https://www.oscp.org.uk/concerned-about-a-child/>

Local Authority Children's services: OUT OF HOURS
EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM (EDT) TEL: 0800 833 408

**Support and Advice about Extremism
(Prevent)**

Police

TEL: 0800 011 3764

EMERGENCY: 999

NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER: 101

Report online: <https://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism>

[Thames Valley Policy Website on Prevent](#)

Local Authority

Contact MASH (as above)

TEL: 0345 050 7666

<https://www.oscp.org.uk/safeguarding-themes/prevent/>

	Department for Education NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER: 020 7340 7264 EMAIL: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	Weston House 42 Curtain Road, London, EC2A 3NH TEL: 0800 028 0285 EMAIL: help@nspcc.org.uk
NSPCC Report Abuse in Education Advice Line	TEL: 0800 136 663 EMAIL: help@nspcc.org.uk
Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza	Freephone: 0800 528 0731 http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/
Disclosure and Barring Service	ADDRESS: DBS customer services PO Box 3961 Royal Wootton Bassett SN4 4HF TEL: 03000 200 190 EMAIL: customerservices@dbb.gov.uk
Teaching Regulation Agency	ADDRESS: Teaching Regulation Agency Ground Floor South Cheylesmore House 5 Quinton Road Coventry CV1 2WT TEL: 0207 593 5393 EMAIL: misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk , Report Teacher Misconduct: https://www.gov.uk/report-teacher-misconduct
OFSTED Safeguarding Children	TEL: 0300 123 4666 (Monday to Friday from 8am to 5pm) EMAIL: CIE@ofsted.gov.uk
Independent Schools Inspectorate	TEL: 0207 6000100 EMAIL: concerns@isi.net

Safeguarding Disclosures

If any child makes a disclosure (tells you) about any type of abuse or any incident, this **must** be properly recorded and reported to the DSL. The Safeguarding Policy gives more detail on this. Briefly:

1. Listen carefully to the child.
2. Never make any promises: don't promise confidentiality or an immediate solution.
3. Make a careful note of all information. Please report to the DSL (or one of the Deputy DSLs) immediately (this can be done by recording the disclosure on CPOMs which is seen by the relevant DSL).
4. Record any further statements in writing. Use the child's own words.

British Values

At the Abingdon Schools Group, we believe in actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

It is the role and duty of **all** staff to promote these fundamental values and to do all they can to prevent pupils being drawn into radicalisation and terrorism. Report any concerns at all to the DSL.

**Abingdon Schools Group Designated Safeguarding Leads,
September 2026**

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APPENDIX 1 – FORMS OF ABUSE AND SAFEGUARDING ISSUES (from KCSIE 2026) **35**

Abuse:

- physical
- emotional
- sexual
- neglect

Safeguarding Issues:

- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Sexual harassment
- Child-on-child sexual violence and/or harassment
- Sharing of nudes and/or semi-nudes and self-generated intimate images
- Upskirting
- Serious violence
- Specific safeguarding issues
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- County lines
- Modern slavery
- Cybercrime
- Mental health
- So-called 'honour-based' or faith-based abuse (including FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Radicalisation
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness
- Children who go missing from school
- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children and the court system
- Children with family members in prison
- Young carers
- Children with Special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND),
- Children with certain health or medical conditions
- Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual or trans
- Children who are questioning their gender

APPENDIX 2 - KEY INTERNAL SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS **45**

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy applies to the Abingdon Schools Group (Abingdon Senior School, Abingdon Prep School and The Manor - referred to for the purposes of this Policy as “the School”). This includes an EYFS setting at the Prep School and The Manor and Boarding provision at the Senior School. This policy is reviewed and updated annually (as a minimum) and is available on the School website.

This policy applies to all members of staff in the School, including all permanent and temporary employees whether teaching or support staff, casual workers, self-employed staff and contractors, volunteers and relevant external service providers. Arrangements in this policy also apply to all aspects of The Manor’s out of school care and holiday activities (“Manor Fun”) and to relevant aspects of Abingdon School Enterprises commercial operations.

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice and should be read in conjunction with these and with relevant national and school procedures:

- [Keeping Children Safe In Education](#) (September 2026) (“KCSIE”)
 - [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006](#) (September 2018)
 - [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners](#) (March 2015)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (2026) (“WT”)
 - [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#) (July 2018)
- [EYFS Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers \(September 2026\)](#)
- [Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales](#) (2023)
 - [The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and child care providers](#)
 - [The use of social media for on-line radicalisation](#) (July 2015)
- [Relationships education, relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#) (2026)
- The DDCMS / UKIS guidance ["Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people"](#) (December 2020)
- The Charity Commission guidance [Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees](#) (June 2022)
- [Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings code of practice: safeguarding guidance for providers](#) (2020)

This policy also takes into account the procedures and practice of Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP <https://www.oscp.org.uk/>) and specifically their Education Advisory Safeguarding Team (ESAT) as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the three [Oxfordshire Safeguarding Partners](#).

This policy aims to:

- Provide clear direction to all staff and others about expected codes of behaviour and reporting when dealing with Safeguarding issues in accordance with both national guidance and local ESAT procedures which reflect what is considered to be safe and professional practice, including the process for community-based Family Help assessments and the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children’s social care for assessment and for statutory services
- Ensure that Safeguarding concerns are identified early so that informed prompt action can be taken in order that referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child.
- Ensure that parents are aware of our policies and procedures.
- Make clear the School’s commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures.

It is essential that everybody working within the School understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in ensuring children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm. ASG is committed to safeguarding children and aims to create a culture of vigilance. All staff should ensure all decisions are made in the best interests of the child. The ASG Governing Board will ensure the school safeguards and promotes the welfare of pupils and works together with agencies to identify, assess and support children likely to suffer or suffering abuse, harm or neglect.

The ASG Governing Board will be mindful of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010. The School will not unlawfully discriminate against pupils, students or staff because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). The School will respect the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to contained within the Articles and protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (the Convention) that are deemed to apply in the UK.

2. CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

The School has a duty to ensure it takes a child centred approach: considering at all times what is in the best interests of the child and taking action to enable all children in the School to achieve the best outcomes. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances so everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action, whether these be teachers, support staff, self-employed staff, regular contractors, casual workers or volunteers within the Abingdon Schools Group. The School adopts a 'whole school' approach to safeguarding, ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.

Parents, staff and others are encouraged to raise any concerns directly with the School, if necessary, using this safeguarding policy for concerns about the safety and/or welfare of children. Other agencies detailed in this policy (contact details at the start of this policy) including the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) can be contacted directly by parents, staff and others if they wish.

2.1 Definitions of safeguarding

"Child" or "children" refers to anyone under the age of 18. The School will take the same approach to safeguarding any pupils within the School who are over 18. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children 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

2.2 Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Abuse can be:

- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- sexual abuse; and/or
- neglect or exploitation

Staff are referred to [Appendix 1](#) of this policy for further detail of the types of abuse and possible signs of abuse, as well as further information regarding specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal and/or sexual exploitation and modern slavery.

All School staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another therefore staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with the DSL (or deputy).

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 - including physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and stalking), criminal exploitation (including financial exploitation), serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline.

Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes (including

deepfakes), especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that often overlap and can put children at risk of harm (including but not limited to those listed below). The following behaviours and indicators can be signs that children are at risk:

- drug taking and/or alcohol misuse
- unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
- serious violence
- criminal exploitation (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or seminudes (including deepfakes).

Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in **Appendix 1**.

3. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD AND RECORD KEEPING

3.1 Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School, and can occur between children outside School. All staff, but especially the DSL and any deputies, should consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. The School will, as part of the wider assessment of children, consider whether environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The School will share as much information with Children's Social Care as possible as part of the referral process to enable consideration of all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

3.2 Early Help - Support Before Statutory Intervention

The School is in a position to identify concerns early, provide help and prevent concerns from escalating. The School has arrangements for listening to children to provide early help. Any child may benefit from universal services and community-based Early Help or the targeted early help level of Family Help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life from the Foundation Years through to later teenage years. Staff are made aware, through the school's safeguarding training, to be particularly alert to the potential need for early help and additional support for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health, and care plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves
- Has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or from home
- Has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiples suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of being permanently excluded from Schools misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism
- Has a family member in custody, or is affected by parental offending;
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- Is misusing alcohol or other drugs themselves
- Is at risk of 'honour' or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage; or
- Is a privately fostered child

In the first instance, staff who consider that a pupil may benefit from early help should discuss this with the School's DSL. The DSL will consider the appropriate action to take in accordance with the [Oxfordshire Safeguarding Partnership's threshold of needs document](#). The DSL will support staff in liaising with external agencies and professionals in an inter-agency assessment, if appropriate. If early help is appropriate, the matter will be kept under review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the pupil's situation does not appear to be improving.

3.3 What staff should do if they have concerns about a child

Staff are advised to have an attitude of **"it could happen here"** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.

If a member of staff has any concerns about a child, suspects or hears any allegation or complaint of abuse, exploitation, or neglect from a child or any third party, they must act immediately and follow the relevant procedure detailed below.

In all cases staff should:

- listen carefully
- avoid asking leading questions
- reassure the individual that the allegation/complaint will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- ensure that the individual is not made to feel ashamed for making the report or given the impression that they are creating a problem by making the report
- not guarantee absolute confidentiality (as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child) and explain that the information needs to be passed to the appropriate person who will ensure that the correct action is taken.
- be aware that the individual may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful
- make an accurate factual record as soon as possible including details of:
 - o dates and times of the observation or incident
 - o dates and times of any discussions in which they were involved
 - o any injuries
 - o explanations given by the child or adult
 - o any immediate action taken
 - o actual words or phrases used by the child (using quotation marks)

Records are logged and stored on CPOMS,

- at the Manor this can be accessed at the following URL: <https://login.cpoms.net/>. If staff do not have access to CPOMS, separate Manor School Record of Concern forms are available and can be provided by a member of the Manor Safeguarding Team.
- at Abingdon School or Abingdon Prep School, if staff do not have access to CPOMS please contact the relevant Head of Department or a member of the DSL team to log.
- report it to the DSL or a DDSL either via recording it on CPOMs or directly.

Staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe; they should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

If a child does not need the support of statutory children's services, the DSL (or a deputy) will liaise with other agencies, setting up an inter-agency assessment for Community Based Early Help or Family Help as appropriate in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. If a child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse, the DSL should contact Children's Social Care for reconsideration or assessment for statutory services. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL and children's social care as appropriate.

- All concerns, discussions, and decisions (together with reasons) made under these procedures should be recorded in writing. The record should include:
- clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken including consultation with other agencies and discussions with the child's parents
- the decision reached
- the outcome.

The information should be kept confidential and stored securely, ensuring that the file is only accessible to those who need to see it, and is shared in accordance with the guidance set out in Parts 1 and 2 of KCSIE.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the School will ensure the pupil's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. This is particularly important in the context of harmful behaviours, such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. The School manages this by ensuring that there are systems in place that are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback. The School operates its processes with the best interests of the pupil/s at their heart. Where the allegation relates to harmful sexual behaviours, if possible, the disclosure should be managed with two members of staff present (preferably one of them being the DSL or their deputy).

Safeguarding records are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) which places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. The guidance, [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers](#) and this [Data Protection in Schools Guidance from the DfE](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. Fears regarding sharing information under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR should not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the

safety of children, and neither the DPA 2018 or the UK GDPR prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. If in doubt about what information can and should be shared, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead ("DSL").

3.4 What staff should do if a child is in danger or risk of harm

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority Children's Social Care and if appropriate the police, (see when to call the police: guidance for schools and colleges (npcc.police.uk)) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local MASH referral process. If staff (including governors, supply staff, agency staff and volunteers) believe that a child is in immediate danger or suffering harm, they should make an immediate referral to Children's Social Care (MASH or the child's social worker if applicable) and/or the Police. Anyone can make a referral. Any such referral must be made immediately and in any event within 24 hours (one working day) of staff being aware of the risk. Usually this will be done by the DSL or a DDSL. However, in the absence of the DSL or DDSL, staff should refer directly. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible that a referral has been made. The local authority social worker should acknowledge receipt to the referrer within 24 hours and make a decision about the next steps and type of response required. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL and Children's Social Care as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing (as above).

The School's local safeguarding children executive is the [Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#) (OSCP); details of the 3 safeguarding partners are on their [website](#). The [Education Safeguarding Advisory Team](#) (ESAT) are part of OSCP who liaise directly with schools with regard to concerns. A copy of their local procedures can be found on their [website](#). Contact details for the ESAT can be found at the start of this policy.

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details of the assessment process, and further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, School staff should do everything they can to support that assessment, supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as required. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves

3.5 What staff should do if a child is seen as at risk of radicalisation

Staff should follow the School's normal referral processes when there are concerns about children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism, as set out above. This may include a [Prevent referral](#) or referral to Children's Social Care depending on the level of risk, normally via the DSL. However, if staff have concerns that there is an immediate/significant risk of a child being drawn into terrorism contact they should contact the police directly or contact MASH on 0345 050 7666. The DSL should always be informed of any direct referral. Information relevant to [Prevent](#) is available to all staff and visitors.

The School, in recognition that pupils may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism or other forms of extremism, carries out appropriate risk based assessments (following consultation with local partners, such as the Police) of the potential risk in the local area. Such risk assessments are discussed with the Head, DSL and deputies and discussed with the governor responsible for safeguarding as required to ensure the School's safeguarding arrangements are sufficiently robust to help prevent and protect children from being drawn into terrorism and are regularly revised.

3.6 What staff should do if they discover an act of Female Genital Mutilation ("FGM")

Staff may become aware of cases of FGM and students at Abingdon School are taught about the issues surrounding FGM as part of the PCSHE programme. Teachers must report to the Police cases where they

discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. They should discuss any such case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. Staff are referred to [Appendix 1](#) of this policy for the procedure to be followed where they suspect that a person may be at risk of FGM.

3.7 What staff should do if they have concerns that children are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime

All staff should be aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from School, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

If staff have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger), they should, where possible, speak with the School's DSL to agree a course of action, although staff can make a direct referral to Children's Social Care.

3.8 How should staff respond to an incident of nudes and semi-nudes being shared by pupils

All members of staff in an education setting have a duty to recognise and refer any incidents involving nudes and semi-nudes and will be equipped with the necessary safeguarding training and support to enable them to recognise concerns.

For this purpose, 'sharing nudes/semi-nudes' means the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams by children under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media (including Snapchat), gaming platforms, chat apps (including WhatsApp and iMessage) or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes may happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and/or via closed social media accounts. The images, videos or live streams may include more than one child. They may also be digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including what are sometimes described as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes'.

Any direct disclosure by a child will be taken seriously and staff will ensure the child is feeling comfortable and will only ask appropriate and sensitive questions, in order to minimise further distress or trauma to them. If staff are notified or become aware of an incident of nudes or semi-nudes being shared by a pupil or of a pupil, they should refer the incident to the DSL as soon as possible. The DSL will follow the DDMSC / UKIS guidance "[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)" (December 2020) when responding to a report of sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes. This will include:

- Holding an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This may include the staff member(s) who heard the disclosure and the safeguarding or leadership team who deal with safeguarding concerns.
- Carrying out interviews with the children involved (if appropriate).
- Informing parents and carers at an early stage and keeping them involved in the process in order to best support the pupil unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put the child at risk of harm. Any decision not to inform them should be made in conjunction with other services such as children's social care and/or the police, who would take the lead in deciding when they should be informed.
- Carrying out a risk assessment to determine whether there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm at any point in the process
- If not, the incident can be handled in school in accordance with the "sharing nudes" guidance and the School's Child Protection and Behaviour policies.
- If it is determined that there is a risk of harm, the DSL must make a referral to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

All incidents relating to nudes and semi-nudes being shared need to be recorded, whether they have been referred externally or not. Schools must record the reason for not reporting incidents externally and ensure it is signed off by the Head. Records will be kept in line with statutory requirements set out in *KCSIE* and local safeguarding procedures. No copies of imagery will be taken or retained.

This guidance does not apply to the sharing of images of children under 18 by an adult over 18 as this constitutes child sexual abuse. In the event that staff become aware of such an incident, they should notify the DSL immediately, who should always inform the Police as a matter of urgency.

3.9 What staff should do if a child goes missing from education

Children who go missing from education, particularly persistently, can be a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and/or criminal exploitation. It is therefore important that the School's response to such absence supports identifying such abuse and helps prevent the risk of them going missing in the future.

Abingdon Senior School	At Abingdon Senior School, a staff member with concerns about pupil absence or children missing education should report this to the DSL (or the Head of Wellbeing in her absence). The DSL at the Senior School (or Head of Wellbeing in her absence) will report appropriate concerns to the local authority. If a child at the Senior School does not arrive for registration, the teacher concerned should alert the Attendance Secretary and copy in the DSL. If a child with a pastoral flag is missing for a lesson registration, the teacher should use the register alert button. Abingdon Senior School's Attendance and Registration Policy (available on their website) contains full registration procedures and expectations).
Abingdon Prep School	At Abingdon Prep School, a staff member with any concerns about an absence should report this to both the Head and the DSL. The Head at the Prep School (or DSL in her absence) will report any appropriate concerns to the Local Authority. Abingdon Prep School's Attendance and Registration Policy (available on their website) contains full registration procedures and expectations).
The Manor	At The Manor, staff should report attendance concerns to the DSL, who is also the Senior Attendance Champion. The DSL will report any appropriate concerns to the local authority. The Manor's procedures for monitoring and supporting positive attendance are outlined in their Attendance Policy (available on their website). When a child is absent from school, the procedures in the Attendance Policy will be followed. Please also refer to this policy for full registration procedures and expectations.

The Schools will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended). This will assist the local authority to:

- a) fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing from education; and
- b) follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse, neglect or radicalisation.

When a pupil leaves any of the Schools in the ASG, the relevant School confirms with their next school that they have started attending. If confirmation cannot be obtained, the local authority Children Missing Education Team is informed to ensure the child is not missing education.

School attendance registers at all Schools in the ASG are carefully monitored to identify any trends regarding absence. The School will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the School and the local authority.

Staff are aware that action should be taken in accordance with this policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare. Where reasonably possible, the School will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil (more than two for those in the EYFS) to provide the School with additional options to make contact with a responsible adult particularly when a child missing from education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

3.10 What staff should do if a child needs a social worker (Children in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need 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.

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. As outlined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, local authorities, with their safeguarding partners and any relevant agencies, should develop, agree and publish local protocols for assessments and support. This should set out who can act as lead practitioner in supporting children and their families under section 17 (which is not limited to social workers).

Local authorities should share with the School the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL 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. 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).

3.11 What staff should do if a child requires mental health support

The School has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of its pupils. 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. Each School aims to prevent health problems by promoting resilience as part of a whole school approach to social and emotional wellbeing of our pupils.

Abingdon Senior School	The senior school has a Head of Wellbeing, who is also a trained Deputy DSL, and a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy that staff can refer to with any concerns they may have about a child.
Abingdon Prep School	At APS, staff can refer any concerns to Richard Sutton.
The Manor	At The Manor, the DSL is also the Designated Senior Mental Health Lead. Staff can refer any concerns to the DSL and should refer to The Manor's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for further information on referral routes.

Staff can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the DfE [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) guidance. Public Health England has also produced a range of resources to support school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing, and resilience among young people.

4. CHILD ON CHILD ALLEGATIONS (INCLUDING CHILD ON CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT)

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online.

All staff should recognise that racism, misogyny, faith-targeted abuse, and other forms of discriminatory behaviour may have a significant impact on a child's welfare, wellbeing and sense of safety and should be considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate. All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their school it does not mean it is not happening. It may be the case that abuse is not being reported. As such it is important that when staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse (whether these concerns are thought to have taken place on or off-site) they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). As part of this, the Schools should also try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example, at the end of or immediately after school).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Examples of which are listed below. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. All staff should be aware that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and alleged perpetrator.

As well as knowing how to respond to concerns, all staff should know that child-on-child abuse is preventable. As well as knowing how to recognise behaviours and indicators of risk early, staff should know that timely, evidence-based support can be key to preventing children from going on to commit abuse or violence.

Child on child abuse is abuse by one or more children against other child. It can be standalone or as part of wider abuse and can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. It is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, misogyny and other prejudice-based incidents
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and seminudes
- upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

The School acknowledges that, even if there have been no reported cases of child on child abuse in relation to pupils within the School, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported. The School will ensure that children are aware of how they can report abuse, and that they are aware of the procedures that the School will follow once a report has been made. These procedures will be well promoted and in a format that is easily accessible and easily understood by children. At all schools assemblies are held to explain or highlight in an age-appropriate way who is there to support them,, who they can talk to if they have any concerns, including the Safeguarding Teams, and the processes involved . The School recognises that a child is likely to disclose an allegation to someone they trust: this could be any member of staff. By making such a disclosure the pupil is likely to feel that the member of staff is in a position of trust. The School also recognises that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally and that instead they may show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to. It is also recognised that an incident may come to a member of staff's attention through a report of a friend, or by overhearing conversations. It is therefore important that all staff are clear on the

School's policy and procedures with regards to child on child abuse, and can recognise the indicators and signs of child on child abuse and know how to identify it and how to respond to reports.

The School recognises that a first disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported. It is not necessarily representative of a singular incident. Staff will take all reports of abuse seriously regardless of how long it has taken for the child to come forward. Staff will act immediately and will support the victim when they raise a concern.

The School also recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child-on-child group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. The School will consider extra pastoral support for those children. The School also recognises that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident of abuse because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. The School recognises that children can be particularly vulnerable in residential settings and are alert to the potential for child on child abuse.

Abingdon Senior School will comply with its obligations as set out in the National Minimum Standards for Boarding in relation to safeguarding at all times, further details are contained in section 14 of this policy.

The School takes a whole school approach to minimising the risk of child on child abuse and all staff are trained to recognise the signs of such abuse. The RSE and PSHCE programme (Abingdon Senior and Prep School) and the RSHE and Learning for Life programme (The Manor) teaches pupils at an age-appropriate level about the issues involved in child on child abuse, seminars are held with parents and carers and a comprehensive age appropriate programme involving pupil consultation is in place. Child on child abuse can often involve complex scenarios and the School will provide appropriate support to both victims and perpetrators whilst recognising that the victim should never be made to feel that they are the problem in making a report or disclosure. In dealing with child on child abuse, the School is mindful of and uses the ESAT (Education Safeguarding Advisory Team) guidance: <https://www.oscp.org.uk/practitioners/multi-agency-procedures-and-resources/child-on-child-abuse/>

Where an issue of pupil behaviour or bullying gives 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm', staff should follow the procedures below rather than the relevant School's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour policies:

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School during the investigation. The School will take advice from the OSCP on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils involved including the alleged victim and perpetrator(s). Where the threshold has been met, a MASH report will be made and, where appropriate a police report. If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the Police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of the OSCP, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupils involved are supported during the interview by an appropriate adult and until the investigation is completed. Confidentiality will be an important consideration for the School and advice will be sought as necessary from the Local Authority and/or Police. The School will have regard to the procedures set out in KCSIE 2026 and the SVSH at all times.

4.1 Child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence

The School recognises the escalatory nature of misogyny and the benefits of early identification to support their approach to minimising the risk of harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual harassment and sexual violence. The umbrella term 'harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB) is widely used in child protection and applies to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both. HSB should always be considered within a child protection context. **There is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence in the School. It is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated.**

Children who are victims of harmful sexual behaviours (HSB), sexual harassment or sexual violence wherever it happens, may find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the School. Whilst any report of HSB, sexual harassment or sexual violence should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is *more likely* girls will be the victims of sexual harassment and sexual violence and *more likely* it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with disabilities are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Ultimately, it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

Police may be informed of any harmful sexual behaviours which are potentially criminal in nature, such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia. Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults will always be passed

to the police. Where a report has been made to the police, the School will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator(s) and their parents or carers. If the DSL decides to make a referral to children's social care and/or a report to the police against a victim's wishes, the reasons should be explained to the pupil and appropriate specialist support offered. The DSL may also decide that the children involved may benefit from early help, and may make the necessary referral in accordance with the ESAT referral process. In the event of disclosures about child on child abuse, all children involved (both victim and perpetrator) will be treated as being at risk, and safeguarding procedures in accordance with this policy will be followed. Victims will be supported by the School's pastoral team and support from external agencies will be sought, as appropriate.

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL will 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 should consider:

- the victim;
- whether there may have been other victims;
- the alleged perpetrator(s); and
- all the other children (and, if appropriate, staff) at the School, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms.

Risk assessments will be recorded (written or electronic) and kept under review. In relation to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, the DSL (and indeed all staff) will reassure any victim that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. The victim will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report nor will they be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment; nor would a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or have their experience minimised. The School will consider the age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse. The School acknowledges that, by the very nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment, a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and alleged perpetrator(s). The DSL will consider the risks posed to pupils and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe and to ensure their educational attainment is not adversely affected as far as possible. This may include careful consideration of the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing School premises (including during any before or after school-based activities), and School transport. The School will also consider the risks posed to the victim from other health needs, including physical, mental and sexual health problems and will consider recommending additional support.

The School will keep a written record of all concerns, discussions and decisions made. The School will reflect on reported concerns, including the decisions made and actions taken, in order to identify any patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour which may indicate an unacceptable culture, or any weaknesses in the School's safeguarding system which may require additional training or amendments to relevant policies. Where a pattern is identified the School will decide on an appropriate course of action.

In the event that a report is proven to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to Children's Social Care may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Head will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it in accordance with the School's behaviour policy.

5. SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE REGARDING STAFF INCLUDING SUPPLY STAFF AND OTHER STAFF (INCLUDING THE HEAD, GOVERNORS, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLY TEACHERS)

The School's procedures for managing allegations against staff (including trainee teachers, supply staff, volunteers and contractors) who are currently working in the School whether in a paid or unpaid capacity follows DfE statutory guidance and OSCP/ESAT arrangements and applies when staff (including volunteers) have (or are alleged to have):

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a pupil, or may have harmed a child; and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicated that they may pose a risk of harm if they were to work regularly or closely with children; and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, including behaviour that may have happened outside of school.

Allegations that do not meet the above harms threshold test should be dealt with using the School's procedure for handling low level concerns set out in Section 6 of this policy. If a member of staff is in any doubt as to whether a concern or allegation may meet the harm threshold they must report to the Head rather than following the low level concerns procedures set out in Section 6.

5.1 What staff should do if they have safeguarding concerns about another staff member (including supply staff)

If staff have safeguarding concerns about another staff member (including trainee teachers, supply staff, agency staff, volunteers and contractors), then this should be referred to the Head. Where there are concerns about the Head, this should be referred to the Chair of Governors. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head, staff are referred to the procedures below regarding managing allegations of abuse against staff (including supply staff, agency staff, volunteers, and contractors) and refer the matter directly to the local area designated officer(s) (LADO) at the local authority.

The School's procedures for managing allegations against staff also apply to staff who are not directly employed by but are working in the School. This includes supply teachers provided by an employment agency or business ('the agency') or third party organisations supplying staff to provide teaching, medical or pastoral support to pupils within the school. The School will usually take the lead but the relevant agencies or third party employers should be fully involved (because they have their own policies and procedures) and co-operate with any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social care.

Further information on allegations against members of staff employed by third parties who have hired the Foundation's premises are available under section 12.5 of this policy, Abingdon School Enterprise's Safeguarding Statement, in the Foundation's [Lettings Policy](#) and in The Manor's Terms and Conditions for hirers of facilities.

Supply Teachers

In no circumstances will the School decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. The School will discuss with the agency (or agencies where the supply teacher is working across a number of schools) whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

The School will advise supply teachers being investigated to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support. The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the School during the investigation. When using an agency, the School should inform the agency of its process for managing allegations but also take account of the agency's policies and their duty to refer to the DBS as personnel suppliers. This should include inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about its policies.

Where the agency dismisses or ceases to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first, the School must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (via the Teaching Regulation Agency).

Estates and Operations Contractors

The School will ensure that contractors are aware of this safeguarding policy and procedures, and that this will be referred to and followed if an allegation is made regarding a member of their staff. The School will require that

staff provided by these organisations use its procedures to report concerns. Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep School's procedures for managing estates contractors attending the School site is managed by the School's Estates Department. At The Manor, this is managed by the HR Officer and Senior Site Manager, in liaison with the Deputy Head Pastoral and the Abingdon Schools Group Operations Manager.

5.2 Procedure for Managing Allegations

Former Staff/Historic allegations

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the Police. Historical or non-recent allegations of abuse should be referred to the Police and also the local authority designated officer (LADO) in line with the local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. The LADO will coordinate with children social care and the Police.

Current staff

All concerns regarding anyone working with children in the school which may meet the above reporting criteria (the "harm threshold") are to be reported straight away to the Head. If an allegation which may meet the harm threshold is mistakenly reported to the DSL, the DSL will inform the Head as soon as possible. Where the Head is absent or is the subject of the allegation or concern, reports should be made to the Chair of Governors. Where the Head is the subject of the allegation or concern, the Head must not be informed of the allegation prior to contact with the Chair of Governors. If there is any conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Head (or to the Chair of Governors in their absence), a staff member should report this directly to the LADO. In all cases, staff may consider discussing any concerns with the DSL (if the allegation does not concern the DSL) and may make any referral via them.

Following an allegation or concern, before the Head contacts the LADO, the School will conduct a **basic enquiry** in line with local procedures to establish the facts in order to determine whether there appears to be any foundation to the allegation. However, the School will not undertake their own investigation of the allegation/s without prior consultation with the LADO or, in the most serious cases, the Police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations.

Having established the basic facts, the Head should inform the LADO within one working day of all allegations coming to the School's attention (or that have been made directly to the Police and/or children's social care) which appear to meet the harm criteria. The Head should discuss with the LADO the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the Police. Where the Head deems there to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence, or it is an emergency situation, the Head should contact children's social care and as appropriate the Police immediately. All discussions should be recorded in writing, and any communication with both the individual and the parents of the child(ren) agreed. The DSL is responsible for ensuring the child or children are not at risk.

When dealing with allegations about a staff member the School will deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently, in line with the disciplinary procedure, and will support the person subject to the allegation. The Head will monitor the case to ensure it is handled in line with these expectations.

Where the Head is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community, or the member of staff's family, they will discuss these concerns with the LADO and make a risk assessment of the situation. It may be necessary for the DSL to make a referral to Children's Social Care.

When to inform the individual who is the subject of the allegation will be considered on a case by case basis with guidance from the LADO, and if appropriate, the police and/or children's social care. Subject to any objection, the case manager/senior responsible officer (SRO) will ensure that the individual who is subject of the allegation is informed as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course or action. The case manager/senior responsible officer (SRO) will appoint a named representative to keep the individual informed of the progress of the case and will consider what other support is appropriate for the individual.

Suspension

The Head should give careful consideration as to whether the circumstances of the case warrant suspension from contact with children at the School or whether alternative arrangements should be put in place until the allegation is resolved and will seek advice from the LADO. The following alternative arrangements should be considered by the case manager before suspending a member of staff:

- redeployment within the School so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned;
- providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children;
- redeploying to alternative work in the School so the individual does not have unsupervised access to children;
- moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the member of staff, but this decision should only be made if it is in the best interest of the child or children concerned and takes account of their views. It should be made clear that this is not a punishment and parents should be consulted; or,
- temporarily redeploying the member of staff to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school where available.

These alternatives allow time for an informed decision regarding the suspension. This will, however, depend upon the nature of the allegation.

Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. It should be considered only in cases where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the School is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. The case manager/senior responsible officer (SRO) will give due weight to the views of the LADO, *WT* and *KCSIE* when making a decision about suspension (including with respect to considering alternatives). Where the individual is suspended, the case manager/senior responsible officer (SRO) will confirm the decision within one working day, and will ensure the suspended member of staff knows who their point of contact is in the School and shall provide them with their contact details. The case manager/senior responsible officer (SRO) will also record the rationale and justification for the suspension, including what alternatives were considered and why they were rejected.

Where a member of boarding staff or any other member of staff resident on the school site is suspended pending an investigation, the case manager will consider whether arrangements for alternative accommodation away from children should be made.

Management and Communication of the Investigation

Where further enquiries are required to enable a decision about how to proceed, the LADO and Head should discuss how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. In straightforward cases, the investigation should usually be undertaken by a senior member of staff at the School. Where there is lack of resource, or the nature or complexity of the allegation requires it, an independent investigator may be appointed to undertake the investigation. The School's published staff disciplinary procedure will be followed.

The Head will ensure that, where relevant, parents are informed as soon as possible and kept informed about progress of the case, subject to any advice from children's social care or the Police. Parents and others will be made aware that there are restrictions on publishing information which may lead to the identification of the teacher subject to the allegation.

The School has a duty of care to its staff, and whilst the welfare of a child is paramount, the School must also offer appropriate welfare support to the adult subject to the investigation and potentially their family. The School will also make every reasonable effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst an allegation is being investigated or considered. Information will also not ordinarily be shared with other staff or with children or parents who are not directly involved in the investigation.

The outcome of the investigation of a staff safeguarding allegation will record whether it is:

- substantiated (sufficient evidence to prove it)
- unsubstantiated (insufficient evidence either to prove or disprove it)
- false (sufficient evidence to disprove it)
- malicious (sufficient evidence to disprove it and that there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation) or
- unfounded (to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made).

Reviews are conducted at fortnightly or monthly intervals, depending on the complexity of the case. The first review will take place no later than four weeks after the initial assessment and subsequent review dates will be set at the review meeting.

Allegations that are Substantiated

Where an allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the School ceases to use their services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services.

The School has a legal duty to report promptly to the Disclosure and Barring Service any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. Further, where an investigation leads to the dismissal or resignation prior to dismissal of a member of teaching staff specifically, the School must consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency and a prohibition order may be appropriate (because that teacher has displayed unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence). The Head will discuss with the LADO whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service or Teaching Regulation Agency should be made.

In all cases where there are concerns or allegations of abuse, the School will make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission whenever the Commission's guidelines deem it appropriate to do so.

Allegations found to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious

If there is no further action, the Head and the LADO should record the decision and justification for it and agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned, and by whom. Allegations found to be malicious or false will be removed from the individual's personnel records unless the individual gives consent for retention of the information. In all other circumstances a written record will be made of the decision and retained on the individual's personnel file in accordance with KCSIE 2026 and a copy will only be provided to the individual concerned.

Allegations found to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious will not be included in employer references. If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the DSL should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to Children's Social Care may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Head will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against a pupil who made it in accordance with the School's behaviour policy; or whether the Police should be asked to consider if action might be appropriate against the person responsible even if they are not a pupil.

Review of Practice

On conclusion of the case, the Head should also review the circumstances of the case with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the School's safeguarding procedures or practices to help prevent similar events in the future.

5.3 Whistleblowing and what staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices in the School

The School aims to ensure there is a culture of safety and raising concerns and an attitude of 'it could happen here'. Where staff have concerns about poor or unsafe practices and potential failures in the School's safeguarding systems, these should be raised in accordance with the School's whistleblowing procedures detailed below. There will be no disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith.

There is a link to the Whisper anonymous reporting service (text 07860021323 or via <https://swgfl.org.uk/whisper/abd1/>) on the Abingdon Senior School sites for pupils and staff who are feeling upset or worried or wish to raise a concern. At the Abingdon Senior School this will be accessible by the DSL and nominated Deputy DSL(s).

Abingdon Prep School has a Listening Service where pupils can make a confidential arrangement to speak to a number of staff about any concerns or worries they have. At The Manor, children are regularly encouraged to speak to any member of staff about any concerns or worries they have, and they are made aware of key pastoral staff. If a safeguarding disclosure arises then the procedure for allegations should be followed. Remember that in matters of safeguarding you cannot guarantee confidentiality.

Concerns can also be raised directly with the Head or with the Safeguarding Governor in confidence at any of the schools if the issue concerns the school's DSL. The Chair of Governors can be contacted if the issue concerns

the Head.

More details on the non-safeguarding aspects of whistleblowing (malpractice, fraud, financial irregularities, bribery etc) are detailed in the ASG's individual Whistleblowing Policies:

- **Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep School:** [Whistleblowing Policy](#)
- **The Manor:** [Whistleblowing Policy](#)

If staff and volunteers feel unable to raise an issue with the School or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may use other whistleblowing channels, such as the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line. Contact details for the NSPCC helpline can be found on the Key Contacts page at the end of this policy.

6. LOW LEVEL CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS (I.E. THAT DO NOT MEET THE HARMS TEST) ABOUT TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF (INCLUDING THE HEAD, GOVERNORS, SUPPLY STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS)

A low-level concern is any concern 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 allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

A 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A concern may be a low-level concern, no matter how small, even if it does no more than give a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse (for example, grooming-type behaviours).

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

- being over-friendly or overly familiar with children
- having clear favourites
- taking photographs of children on personal devices
- messaging children on personal social media accounts
- engaging with a child on a one to one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using intimidating, inappropriate, offensive or sexualised language
- humiliating a child

The School takes all concerns about safeguarding seriously and recognises that addressing low-level concerns is important to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the School's values and expected behaviour of its staff are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff. The School has a Staff Behaviour Policy ([Code of Conduct](#)) the aim of which is to provide clear guidance about the standards of appropriate behaviour and actions of its staff so as to not place pupils or staff at risk of harm or of allegation of harm to a pupil. All staff are expected to comply with the standards contained within this Staff Behaviour Policy at all times.

Staff should **always raise** low level concerns when they are worried:

- at the Senior School, staff should refer to the separate [Low Level Concerns Policy](#) and follow the procedure outlined. Staff can make a report about themselves or about others using the school's internal low level concerns reporting form linked in the procedure.
- at the Prep School, staff should refer to the shared document ["PREP SCHOOL Low level concerns - how to handle them"](#) and follow the procedure outlined
- at the The Manor, staff should refer to the Manor's Low Level Concerns Policy (available in the internal All Policies drive) for further information.

If a concern is raised by a third party, the DSL or Head will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking to the person who has raised the concern (if known), to the individual involved and any witnesses. The concern will be recorded in accordance with the policy. The School will address unprofessional behaviour at an early stage and will support the individual to correct it.

The School will also reflect on reported concerns in order to identify any patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour which may indicate an unacceptable culture, or any weaknesses in the School's safeguarding system which may require additional training or modified policies. Where a pattern is identified, the School will decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures, or, where the pattern moved from a concern to meeting the harm threshold, it will then follow the above procedure and refer the matter to the designated officer.

Where a low-level concern relates to a person employed by a teaching supply agency, a third party supplier or a contractor, the individual's employer will be notified about the concern, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

7. SAFER RECRUITMENT

The School is committed to safer recruitment processes to create a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children in the School whilst deterring and preventing people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities, within the School.

Members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the School including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches, are subject to the necessary statutory child protection checks before starting work, for example, right to work checks, additional overseas checks (if necessary), verifying identity, taking up references, checking work history and confirming medical fitness for the role. For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with 'barred list' information will be appropriate. A DBS certificate will be obtained from the candidate before or as soon as practicable after appointment. Alternatively, if the applicant has subscribed to it and gives permission, the School may undertake an online update check through the DBS Update Service.

Full details of the School's safer recruitment procedures for checking the suitability of staff, Governors and volunteers to work with children and young people is set out in the Schools' individual Recruitment and Selection policies:

- Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep's [Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)
- The Manor's [Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)

Visiting Speakers

The School forms part of a much wider community and frequently invites speakers to expand and enrich our pupils' experience and knowledge. External speakers provide information to pupils at different stages of their education, encourage pupils to think about their place in the world, widen their understanding and provide motivational inspiration through the sharing of experiences. The School's responsibility is to ensure that pupils can critically assess the information received and to ensure that the breadth of speakers invited represent British values, which include democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance. In order to achieve this, all schools have procedures in place to ensure the suitability of speakers to the schools. These include a check of suitability and a review of the speakers invited by the Deputy Head Pastoral at the Senior School, the Deputy Head Pastoral at the Prep School and the Educational Visits Coordinator at The Manor, in liaison with the Deputy Head Pastoral. Visiting speakers will always be signed in to the schools in accordance with the [Visitors' Policy](#) and the [Guidelines for Visiting Speakers](#) (Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep) and the Visitors and Visiting Speakers Policy (The Manor) and given information in advance on relevant safeguarding procedures and the Prevent duty.

Estates and Operations Contractors

The School will ensure that contractors are aware of this safeguarding policy and procedures. Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep School's procedures for managing estates contractors attending the School site is managed by the School's Estates Department. At The Manor, this is managed by the HR Officer and Senior Site Manager, in liaison with the Deputy Head Pastoral and the Abingdon Schools Group Operations Manager.

8. MANAGEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Abingdon Senior School's DSL is Helen Keevil (DSL) who is a member of the senior school leadership team. Abingdon Prep School's DSL is Richard Sutton who is a member of the prep school's leadership team. The Manor School's DSL is Varun Footring who is a member of the school's leadership team.

ASG also has a Safeguarding Committee which comprises all three school DSLs, the Safeguarding Manager and the Safeguarding Governor and is attended by the Director of HR and supported by the Head of Compliance. All three schools have Deputy DSLs and these are the people to whom reports should be made in the absence of the DSL. This ensures there is the required cover for the role at all times. The DSL and DDSLs contact details can be found on [Appendix 2](#) at the end of this policy.

The subsidiary company, Abingdon School Enterprises Limited (who manage the Abingdon School and Abingdon Prep School's hiring and letting) has its own Deputy DSLs, Andy Prendergast, Rebecca Lees and Katie Brewer. The Manor manages their hiring and letting internally with oversight from their DSL.

The DSL's role is to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters in the School. The DSL's responsibility is to maintain an overview of safeguarding within the School, to open channels of communication with local statutory agencies, refer incidents to third parties (including the local authority children's services, the DBS, Channel and the police) where appropriate, to support staff in carrying out their safeguarding duties and to monitor the effectiveness of the School's policies and procedures in practice. All DSLs in the ASG work with the governors to review and update the School's safeguarding policy.

Where a pupil leaves the School, including for in-year transfers, the DSL will also ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school (separately from the main pupil file) 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. The DSL will ensure secure transit and obtain confirmation of receipt. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school.

The DSL regularly reviews the School's and their own practices and concerns about welfare and safeguarding matters. This includes the personal and professional duty of all staff to report welfare and safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or in the absence of action, directly to local children's services.

During term time, the DSL and/or a DDSL will always be available in person (during school hours) for staff in the School to discuss any safeguarding concerns. For out of hours/out of term activities, the School's arrangements include an on call rota of DSL cover. Key contact phone numbers are included at the start of this policy and in the appendix. Please leave a message and contact details if the phone is not answered.

The DSL or Deputy DSL liaise with the Oxfordshire ESAT and the other safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. "[NPCC - When to call the police](#)" can assist the DSL or Deputy DSL understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do. The DSL or DDSL will also be responsible for liaising with the Designated Senior Mental Health Lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health. At The Manor, the DSL is also the Designated Senior Mental Health Lead.

Whilst the Head should seek to ensure that the policies and procedures adopted are understood and followed by all staff, and the Governors are ultimately responsible for ensuring staff are competent, supported and regularly reviewed in relation to safeguarding, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with each school's DSL and this responsibility should not be delegated. Full details of the DSL's role can be found at Annex B of KCSIE 2026, which is issued separately each year to each DSL and DDSL.

In addition, the school must seek to provide a safe environment. The Estates Department at Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep is responsible for this aspect of Safeguarding through its Works, Maintenance and Health and Safety programmes. At The Manor, this area is overseen by the Director of Finance and Operations, in liaison with the Senior Site Manager, School Nurse and Deputy Head Pastoral.

9. TRAINING

Induction and training is in line with KCSIE 2026 and advice from [OSCP](#), particularly the [Education Safeguarding Advisory Team](#) and the LADO.

9.1 All Staff

All new staff will be provided with induction training that includes:

- the child protection policy (including the policy and procedures to deal with child on child abuse and prevent training);
- the role and identity of the DSL and any DDSLs
- the behaviour policy (including measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- the staff code of conduct including the School's whistleblowing procedure, low level concerns procedure and the acceptable use of technologies policy, staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media
- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;
- Part one of KCSIE (governing bodies and proprietors, working with their senior leadership teams and especially their designated safeguarding lead, should ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children read Part One of this guidance. Governors, DSLs and members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will be provided the whole of KCSIE.

Copies of the above documents are provided to all staff during induction and to temporary staff and volunteers.

All staff are also required to:

- Read at least Part One of KCSIE and confirm that they have done so. Each time Part One of KCSIE is updated by the Department for Education, staff will be updated on the changes via inset sessions and email. Abingdon Senior School School's Policy Acceptance software is used to ask staff to confirm that they have read and understood this document. At The Manor, a separate survey is sent to staff to confirm that they have read and understood this document.
- Understand key information contained in Part One. The School will ensure staff understanding through initial safeguarding training, regular updates (normally at inset) on changes to KCSIE and by whole school communication.
- Receive training in safeguarding and child protection regularly, in line with advice from KCSIE, EYFS guidance, the OSCP and ESAT. Training will include online safety and harmful sexual behaviours (including child-on-child sexual violence and harassment). It will also include Prevent awareness training to equip staff to raise concerns appropriately by ensuring all staff have the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism; are able to challenge extremist ideas; and know how to refer children and young people for further help.
- Undertake regular informal updates, at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively, including online. The School provides these via, for example, emails, e-newsletters, and staff meetings.

Staff working in the EYFS will have training delivered in the same way as all staff but with additional specific meetings focusing on matters particular to EYFS. An appointed Deputy DSL with responsibility for EYFS will attend EYFS staff meetings regularly to support staff in putting this training into practice.

The governing body will 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 the School are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training is updated at least annually.

The governing body is aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA), the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR, and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. They are also aware of the [data protection guidance to schools](#) from the DFE. Under the Human Rights Act 1998, it is unlawful for the School to act in a way that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Convention. Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach conventions set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Convention. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

9.2 DSL(s)

The DSL receives updated child protection training at least every two years to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This includes local inter-agency working protocols, participation in child protection case conferences, supporting children in need, identifying children at risk of radicalisation, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children, training in the OSCP/ESAT's approach to *Prevent* duties and harmful sexual behaviours. Further details of the required training content for the DSL are set out in Annex B of *KCSIE*.

In addition to their formal training, the DSL's knowledge and skills are updated at least annually to keep up with any developments relevant to their role. In particular, the School will support the DSL in developing their knowledge and skills to understand the views of children including to encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes, as well as having an awareness of the difficulties children may face in approaching staff with a disclosure.

The DDSs are trained to the same level as the DSL. The DSL and Deputy DSLs are all issued a job description for their role which includes reference to Annex B of [KCSIE 2026, "The Role of the DSL"](#).

10. OVERSIGHT OF SAFEGUARDING, INCLUDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Dr Kate Wheeler is the governor designated to take a lead in relation to responsibility for the safeguarding arrangements in the School. She is a member of the governing body and visits all schools in the ASG regularly to discuss the schools' safeguarding arrangements and policies, in addition to reviewing any areas of concern with the relevant DSL and Heads. She is available to contact via the details in [Appendix 2](#). The School issues a [job description](#) to its safeguarding governor.

The School considers its obligation to review safeguarding practices as a matter of its everyday concerns. A review of the School's child protection policies takes place at least annually, including an update and review of the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation, including lessons learnt. This review takes place at the Michaelmas Term Board of Governors meeting. In addition, the Compliance, Pastoral and Safeguarding' Committee receives termly safeguarding reports and updates. A Safeguarding Committee comprising the three School DSLs, the Safeguarding Manager and the Safeguarding Governor also meets termly. The School draws on the expertise of staff, including the DSL and deputies, in shaping the School's safeguarding arrangements and policies.

In addition, the School will seek advice and feedback from ESAT on its safeguarding arrangements via regular ESAT School audits. If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the School will work with the Local Authority Designated Officer and other relevant agencies 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.

11. THE SCHOOL'S ARRANGEMENTS TO FULFIL OTHER SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES

11.1 Teaching children how to keep safe including mobile phones, online safety and filtering and monitoring

The School ensures that all pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through the curriculum and PSHCE (Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep)/Learning for Life (The Manor) to help children to adjust their behaviours, both inside and outside of school, in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to radicalisation. This includes teaching pupils about the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet and the risks posed by adults or young people, who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults. The School also highlights the harm that can arise from online misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories online. The School recognises that a "one size fits all" approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.

Internet safety (including when children are online at home) is an integral part of the School's PCSHE/Learning for Life curriculum and also embedded in the School's Relationships and Sex Education ("RSE") program. All schools in ASG have pupil specific policies regarding the appropriate use of ICT and internet resources. The School has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate material online when using the School's IT system.

The School's systems are more fully detailed in their relevant policies:

- Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep's [ICT Staff Policy](#)
- The Manor's [Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy](#)

Copies of these policies must be must read and understand by all staff upon appointment. They include details on the use of mobile and smart technology in School, including the School's management of the associated risks, and the School's IT arrangements to ensure that children are safe from harmful and inappropriate content, including terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet through the School's systems. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but 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, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, for example: making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying.
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams. If you feel pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

The Manor's Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy and Abingdon's IT Acceptable Use Policy covers the use of mobile phones, cameras and other digital recording devices e.g. iPads.

Children below sixth form are not permitted to access mobile phones at the School. With the exception of sixth formers, Mobile Phones are only permitted in school with limited circumstances:

- at The Manor if children use the Joint Bus Service, and these must be left in the appropriate place (at the school office at The Manor),
- in Abingdon Lower and Middle School, for the journey to school and these must be left with the Head of Lower School or locked in a locker in their House Room or Boarding House for Abingdon Middle School for the duration of the school day.

Specific arrangements may apply at Abingdon School for reasonable adjustments or for sports fixtures taking place during the day. Mobile phone rules at the Senior School are covered by the [School Mobile Phone Rules](#) and at the Prep School by the [Mobile Devices Policy](#) and at the Manor School by the Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions Policy. These systems will be reviewed periodically (including with specific reference to the boarding community).

The School recognises however that children may have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G) outside school which means that children may be at risk of harm including consensually and/or non-consensually sharing indecent images, sexually harassment via mobile and smart technology, exposed to cybercrime and/or viewing and share pornography and other harmful content. An annual report to Governors on online safety and online security ensures Governors review annually the effectiveness of school online safety and filtering and monitoring systems. In considering this review, the School will follow the government guidance [Meeting Digital and IT Standards in Schools and Colleges](#) (September 2026). Parents are also periodically reminded of the School's stance with regard to ICT use, filtering and monitoring. One of the Governors has a remit that includes oversight of IT and the filtering and monitoring systems. At Abingdon Senior School a Deputy DSL, Mark Johnson, has specific responsibility for Digital Safeguarding and works closely with the IT team on the management of safeguarding in this area. At The Manor, this filtering and monitoring systems are overseen by the DSL, Varun Footring.

11.2 Relationships and Sex Education ("RSE")

Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory although the School has flexibility to decide how it discharges its duties within the first year of compulsory teaching. The School will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#) when making arrangements for and teaching RSE.

Abingdon School and Abingdon Prep School have separate policies to cover their RSE programmes that are linked below:

Abingdon Senior School's [Relationship and Sex Education Policy](#).

Abingdon Prep School's [Relationship and Sex Education Policy](#).

The Manor's [Relationships, Health and Sex Education \(RSHE\) Policy](#)

Relationships and Sex Education forms part of the School's PSHCE (Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep) and Learning for Life (The Manor) programmes and the relevant policies are approved and reviewed by the Governors on an annual basis.

11.3 Children We Care For (CWCF)

The governing body ensures that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe any children on roll who are looked after by a local authority. Each school in the ASG has a designated member of staff who has responsibility for their welfare and progress:

Abingdon Senior School: Natalie Hunt

Abingdon Prep: Richard Sutton

The Manor: Varun Footring

Each school ensures that the designated member of staff receives appropriate training in order to carry out their role.

11.4 Arrangements for visiting speakers

The School has clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers are appropriately supervised and suitable; all visiting speakers are agreed and vetted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The School's responsibility to pupils is to ensure that they can critically assess the information they receive as to its value to themselves, and that the information is aligned to the ethos and values of the School and British values.

The School is required to undertake relevant checks before agreeing to a Visiting Speaker being allowed to attend the School. This will take into account any vetting requirements considered appropriate in the circumstances and may include a DBS check if relevant. Visiting speakers will be expected to understand that, where appropriate, their session should actively promote the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and at no point undermine these. Visiting speakers will always be signed in to the schools and required to show appropriate ID in accordance with the [Visitors' Policy](#) and the [Guidelines for Visiting Speakers](#) (Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep) and the Visitors and Visiting Speakers Policy (The Manor) and given information in advance on relevant safeguarding procedures and the Prevent duty. Whilst on the School site, Visiting Speaker will be supervised by a School employee. The School keeps a formal register of visiting speakers.

11.5 Site Security

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are safe; this includes ensuring the safety of any visitors to the school. The School ensures that thorough risk assessments are in place for all areas of the school, including for planned activities with associated risks.

The School will not accept the behaviour of any individual, parent or anyone else, that threatens school security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the school site. Concerns of this nature should be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately. Further information can be found in The Visitors' Policy and in The Manor's Risk Assessment Policy, Security Policy and Lockdown Policy.

11.6 Use of the school premises for non-school activities

Abingdon Senior School and Abingdon Prep School have a wholly owned subsidiary, Abingdon School Enterprises Limited (ASE), whose role it is to manage the use of school premises for non-school activities. The School works closely with ASE to ensure appropriate safeguarding and health and safety measures are in place for the use of the school premises for external lettings and community use, including ensuring appropriate safeguarding measures are in place for Abingdon School's boarding pupils where relevant, and to ensure that all third parties have adequate safeguarding measures in place if required. At The Manor, facilities hire is managed internally.

When hiring or renting out The School's facilities to organisations for the purposes of working with children, the School (via ASE at Abingdon School and Abingdon Prep) will seek assurance that the body concerned has the appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The School (via ASE) will also ensure that safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement. The DfE guidance on 'After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers' details the safeguarding arrangements that the School (via ASE) expects these providers to have in place, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

ASE has its own trained DDSLs, Andy Prendergast, Rebecca Lees and Katie Brewer who liaise with the School's team of DSLs as appropriate. The Safeguarding Manager, Fran Smethurst, liaises very closely with ASE and provides advice, support and expertise on safeguarding matters. An ASE DDSL also attends the termly Foundation Safeguarding Meeting. At The Manor, the DSL Varun Footring has responsibility for reviewing and approving safeguarding assurances received from hirers.

12. EARLY YEARS PROVISION SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

12.1 DSL for the EYFS

Sarah Eastaugh is a Deputy DSL at Abingdon Prep School and **Pippa McConnell** is a Deputy DSL at the Manor School. They also have responsibility for the EYFS; they attend specialist training courses by the OSCP/ESAT, and will liaise with the wider safeguarding team on safeguarding matters and liaise with the relevant staff concerning training within the EYFS.

12.2 Disqualification from working in childcare

Where staff work in, or are involved in the management of, the School's early years or provision of care of pupils under the age of eight, the School will take steps to check whether those staff are disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006. These checks will be undertaken pre-appointment, and from time to time during employment. At The Manor, this is undertaken annually.

This forms part of the School's safer recruitment practices, further details of which can be found in the [School's Safer Recruitment Policy](#) at Abingdon School and Abingdon Prep School and The Manor's [Recruitment and Selection Policy](#). The School records all checks of staff employed to work in or manage relevant childcare on the Single Central Register. This includes the date disqualification checks were completed.

Where a member of staff is found to be disqualified or if there is doubt over that issue then, pending resolution, the School will remove them from the work from which they are or may be disqualified. Suspension or dismissal will not be an automatic response; the School will consider if there is scope in principle to redeploy them with other age groups or in other work from which they are not disqualified, subject to assessing the risks and taking advice from the designated officer when appropriate.

12.3 Use of mobile phones and cameras

There are restrictions on the use of mobile phones and cameras in the EYFS setting and these can be found in Abingdon Prep School's [Mobile Devices Policy](#) and the Manor School's [Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy](#). There should be no personal mobile phones used in the EYFS setting at any time.

13. SAFEGUARDING SPECIFIC TO BOARDING (ABINGDON SENIOR SCHOOL ONLY)

The School recognises that children can be particularly vulnerable in residential settings and boarding staff are trained to be particularly alert to pupil relationships and the potential for child on child abuse, including the particular vulnerabilities of those from abroad and those sharing overnight accommodation. Boarding policies and procedures, including additional induction and refresher training provided to boarding staff make appropriate provision for responding to these issues.

The School's policies, procedures and boarding houses have regard to the [National Minimum Standards](#) for boarding schools. Arrangements are in place for alternative accommodation, away from children, to be made available by the school should a serious allegation of a child protection nature be made against a member of the Boarding House staff, or a member of staff who is not a member of the Boarding House staff but who lives on or in close proximity to the school site in school accommodation. If a member of the Boarding House staff is placed in alternative accommodation, then the school will ensure that there is sufficient adult supervision of the boarding houses, including overnight, and that this will be covered, as far as is practicable, by staff who are familiar with boarding.

In accordance with National Minimum Standards it is essential that the school has the following in place:

- For all persons over 16 (not on the roll of the school) who after April 2002 began to live on the same premises as boarders but are not employed by the school, there is a DBS check completed at the enhanced level.
- There is a written agreement between the school and any person over 16 not employed by the school but living in the same premises as boarders (for example, members of staff households). This specifies the terms of their accommodation, guidance on contact with boarders, their responsibilities to supervise their visitors, and notice that accommodation may cease to be provided if there is evidence that they are unsuitable to have regular contact with children. They must be required to notify an unrelated designated senior member of staff if they are charged with, or convicted of, any offence.
- It is the responsibility of any member of staff living among the boarding community to adhere to this and to inform the DSL if anyone falls into one of the above categories. If, at any stage, they intend to change their living arrangements, they must notify the DSL immediately so the necessary procedures can be carried out. The record of the DBS check and the written agreement will be held on file in the HR Department.
- It is essential that all persons visiting boarding accommodation (e.g. visitors, outside delivery and maintenance personnel) are kept under sufficient staff supervision to prevent them gaining substantial unsupervised access to boarders or their accommodation. Those staff who are involved in boarding should pay particularly close attention to this in order to ensure the safety of the boarders.

13.1 Guardianship arrangements

The school does not appoint educational guardians directly. It is the responsibility of parents to appoint an appropriate educational guardian for their child. If a close relation or family friend is appointed, rather than a professional agency, parents must ensure that the person nominated is fully able to fulfil the role of guardian. Guardians must be over the age of 25 and live within 90 minutes of the school. School staff may not be appointed as guardians under any circumstances.

The school is required by the NMS to take appropriate steps to ensure that any guardianship arrangement made by parents is promoting the welfare, physical wellbeing and emotional wellbeing of the boarder. Before a new boarder starts school, the Admissions Department check that the person or organisation that parents have nominated as the educational guardian is aware of this, and understands their responsibilities as set out in the Educational Guardian Guidance Notes. Any subsequent changes to educational guardians will be checked by boarding housemasters. Before and after each half-term or holiday visit to a guardian, a boarder's tutor will ask them if they have any concerns about the arrangement, and log these conversations centrally. Any concerns will be followed up by boarding housemasters, the Head of Boarding, and/or the Deputy Head (Pastoral). In particular, any safeguarding concerns raised by the boarder will be acted upon immediately and referred to any relevant agencies.

13.2 Private fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one where a child under the age of 16 is cared for and provided with accommodation by someone who is not a close relative for more than 28 days. This could apply if a boarder is remaining in the UK and staying with an educational guardian during the summer holiday. To ensure that the school alerts the local authority to any arrangements that may constitute private fostering, parents will be asked for information about who boarders will be staying with, and where they will be, at least 3 weeks before the summer holiday begins. Any arrangements that constitute or may constitute private fostering will be reported to the MASH using their referral form by the boarder's housemaster.

13.3 Independent Person

As required by the National Minimum Standards for Boarding, the school has identified a person other than a parent, outside the staff, and those responsible for the leadership and governance of the school, who children may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school. Their details are at the end of this policy. This person is known as the 'Independent Person'. The School will carry out the normal recruiting checks for volunteers in line with National Minimum Standards for Boarding, ISI regulations and KCSIE guidance, including appropriate checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service. The Independent Person will be included in the Single Central Register. The Independent Person will be subject to the School's policies on Safeguarding and Child Protection, the School's Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing and any other policies relevant to their role.

If in doubt, consult the DSL. Don't sit on information.

Deputy Heads Pastoral and Designated Safeguarding Leads of Abingdon School, Abingdon Prep School and Abingdon Senior School

Last internal review: September 2025
Last governor review: December 2025
Next governor review: December 2026

APPENDIX 1 – FORMS OF ABUSE AND SAFEGUARDING ISSUES (from KCSIE 2026)

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

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

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include 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 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.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing, causing or inciting a child 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, such as acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object (e.g. rape or assault by penetration), and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching over clothing. Sexual abuse may also include noncontact 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 as well as offline, 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. Children can be sexually abused within the family, an institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not. 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. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity and there are specific offences which make clear that sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence, regardless of whether they agreed to that activity.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Safeguarding Issues

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). The umbrella term 'harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB) is widely used in child protection and applies to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both. HSB should always be considered within a child protection context.. Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Behaviour that is problematic, abusive or violent is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. Advice on stages of typical sexual development and behaviour for different age groups can be found in Sexual development and behaviour in children | NSPCC Learning.

When assessing HSB, the ages and developmental stage of the children involved is critical. Sexual behaviour between children may be considered harmful if there is a significant age difference, typically more than two years' difference or if one is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child may also abuse an older child, especially if they hold power over them, e.g., due to a disability or physical size. Advice on responding to children who display sexualised behaviour is available in Responding to children who display sexualised behaviour. It is effective safeguarding practice for the DSL (and their deputies) to have a good understanding of HSB. HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum. Early intervention in inappropriate behaviour such as misogyny can help to prevent escalation to more serious abuse such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. Children who display HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Sexual harassment: is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names; sexual "jokes" or taunting; physical behaviour, such as deliberating brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, or upskirting, and sharing of unwanted explicit content (for example displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature); and online sexual harassment, which might include consensual or non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos (often referred to as the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes, or self-generated intimate images and videos (including using AI) – see below); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats. Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. Further information can be found in the DFE's [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in Schools and Colleges](#) advice.

Child-on-child sexual violence and/or harassment: Sexual violence and sexual harassment (as defined above) can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and harassment, and it is more likely that it will be perpetrated by boys. It can however occur between children of any sex. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. **There is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence; it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated.** Children who are victims of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment wherever it happens, will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Further information can be found in the DFE's [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in Schools and Colleges](#) advice.

The School will respond to all signs, reports and concerns of harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence. This includes incidents occurring outside of the school premises, and/or online. All staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here', and this is especially important when considering child-on-child abuse.

Sharing of nudes and/or semi-nudes and self-generated intimate images and videos (including using AI): the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes can happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and closed social media accounts and may include images or footage of more than one child or young person.

Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics' or may be referred to by adults or professionals as 'youth produced/involved sexual imagery', 'indecent imagery', 'image based sexual abuse' or 'sexting' or as self-generated intimate images and videos. When young people are asked 'What does sexting mean to you?' they are more likely to interpret sexting as 'writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know'. Similarly, many parents think of sexting as flirty or sexual text messages rather than images. This advice only covers the sharing of sexual imagery by young people. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools and other agencies when responding. This includes those generated using AI. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management. On this basis this advice uses the terms "sharing self-generated intimate images and videos, or AI-generated intimate images and videos" instead of 'sexting.' This is to ensure clarity about the issues this advice addresses.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated. Such images may be created and shared consensually by young people who are in relationships, as well as between those who are not in a relationship. It is also possible for a young person in a consensual relationship to be coerced into sharing an image with their partner. Incidents may also occur where:

- children and young people find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer
- children and young people digitally manipulate an image of a young person into an existing nude online
- images created or shared are used to abuse peers e.g. by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame

For this reason, incidents can either be classified as 'aggravated' or 'experimental'. The DDCMS / UKIS guidance "[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)" sets out the classification of incidents, and how each should be handled. All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery should be responded to in line with section 3 of this policy.

Upskirting: is a criminal offence and typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Anyone of any sex can be a victim.

Serious violence: Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation. Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). The designated safeguarding lead should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict. The School plays a key role in protecting children from violence, safeguarding victims, as well as those who may be at risk of, or are involved in committing violence (who may also be victims themselves). Staff should be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence. These risks are higher for children with disrupted education (e.g. suspensions, permanent exclusions, time in alternative provision) or a history of offending. Schools should also try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example, immediately after school or during the commute to and from school). The Schools will consult staff and pupils to identify where they feel unsafe, unsafe local hotspots and coordinate with local safeguarding partners. There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved in committing serious violence. These may include:

- increased absence from school or college
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- a significant decline in educational performance
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries,
- unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male
- having been suspended, spent time in Alternative Provision or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery
- having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence
- having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence

Child sexual exploitation (CSE): CSE is a form of child sexual abuse (see above) which occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years (including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex) who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. It can include both contact (penetrative and

non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media). Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

CSE can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The below CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends, and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

The DfE has published guidance on this entitled "[Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)".

CSE may occur alone, or may overlap with CCE, and/or county lines, as well as other forms of abuse.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE): CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see below), forced to shoplift or pickpocket. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals (especially when they are older children). It is important in these circumstances that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

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

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

CCE may occur alone, or may overlap with CSE, and/or county lines, as well as other forms of abuse.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

County lines: County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults exploited to sell drugs and move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes. Children are

increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the ways of identifying indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- who go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- that have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

Modern Slavery: 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. 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 National Referral Mechanism is available in the statutory guidance "*Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims (June 2021)*".

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). Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network, or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying, or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets, and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL (or a deputy), 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: Cyber Choices, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.gov.uk.

Mental health: all staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. 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.

If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which education staff are well placed to recognise. These could include: significant changes in behaviour, ongoing difficulty sleeping,

withdrawing from social situations, not wanting to do things they usually like, and physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

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

Not every child who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, education staff can identify children who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following this policy, and speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

The DfE has published advice and guidance on *Preventing and Tackling Bullying, and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools*. In addition, Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary and senior school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people including its guidance *Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing*. Its resources include social media, forming positive relationships, smoking and alcohol.

If staff feel that a child is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

So called 'honour based' or faith-based abuse: encompasses 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. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take.

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can also be found on pages 38-41 of the Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM. To give an example of indications that a girl has already been subjected to FGM:

- A pupil may have difficulty walking, sitting, or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- A pupil may have frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems or spend longer than normal in the bathroom due to difficulties urinating.
- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from School and/or noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the pupil's return.
- A pupil is reluctant to undergo medical examination.

If staff have a concern that a pupil may be at risk of FGM, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy) who will (where appropriate) activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with Police and Children's Social Care.

There is a statutory duty on teachers to personally report to the Police where they **discover** (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. If the teacher is unsure whether this reporting duty applies, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL in accordance with this policy. Where a teacher suspects that a pupil is at risk (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or it involves a pupil over 18, teachers should follow the School's local safeguarding procedures.

Further information can be found in the [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation and the FGM resource pack](#), particularly section 13.

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

children from forced marriage. There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of forced marriage, details of which can be found on pages 13-14 of the Multi-agency guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage. School staff can also contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fm@fco.gov.uk.

Radicalisation: Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. It can also call for the death of members of the armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home). As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a Prevent referral. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders in colleges should familiarise themselves with the Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales. Staff should contact the DSL or the Deputy DSL, who should be aware of the local procedures in place, before making a Prevent referral.

In the event of a child leaving, the DSL should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives at the new school.

Domestic Abuse: The Domestic Abuse Act introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional, and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act). Domestic Abuse may lead to other safeguarding concerns and should therefore be managed under this policy.

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 domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

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. Experiencing or witnessing 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.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child on child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

The School is registered with [Operation Encompass](#), a police and education early information safeguarding partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support to children experiencing domestic abuse. The DSLs are also Operation Encompass trained. Their helpline is 0204 513 9990.

Homelessness: Being homeless, or at risk of homelessness presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The School should be aware of potential indicators of homelessness including household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse,

and anti-social behaviour, as well as a family being asked to leave a property. If staff are made aware or suspect that a pupil may be at risk of homelessness they should talk to the DSL in the first instance. Whilst referrals to the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not and should not replace a referral to the LADO where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, in accordance with this policy.

Children who go missing from school: A child going missing from School is a potential indicator of a range of safeguarding issues including abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, CSE and CCE. It 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 FGM, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Staff must follow the School's procedures for dealing with children who go missing, particularly persistently. The School's procedure for dealing with children who go missing can be found in section 3.8 of this policy.

The School shall inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended). This will assist the local authority to:

- a) fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing from education; and
- b) follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse, neglect, or radicalisation.

School attendance registers are carefully monitored to identify any trends. The School will inform the local authority and the local authority where the child is normally resident of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the School and the local authority.

Action should be taken in accordance with this policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare. The School's policy supports identification of abuse and provides preventative measures against the risk of the child going missing in the future. This applies when issues are first emerging as well as where children are already known to the local authority children's social care and need a social worker.

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 and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

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 5-11 year olds and 12-17 year olds available on the gov.uk website. The guides explain each step of the process and 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 child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. The School may refer some parents and carers to this service where appropriate.

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 provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Young Carers: The School recognises that where children have caring responsibilities this can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. Early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive

support at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health services.

Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND): Pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. These children may not outwardly show signs of abuse and/or may have difficulties in communication about abuse or neglect, or bullying.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration;
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying), without outwardly showing any signs;
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges;
- the need for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others
- that these children are more likely to be dependent on adults for care, and
- these children may have issues over cognitive understanding - being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in School or the consequences of doing so

Staff will support such pupils in expressing any concerns they may have and will be particularly vigilant to any signs or indicators of abuse, discussing this with the DSL as appropriate.

Children with certain health or medical conditions: The fact that there has been an incident relating to the management of a child's medical condition or allergy would not in itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners. The DSL will consider a safeguarding referral where an incident highlights concern that the child or young person might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their medical condition. This might occur where relevant information about a child or young person's medical condition is not provided to the School, or where they are repeatedly sent without essential medication, thereby putting the child at risk. The School will work collaboratively with healthcare professionals to ensure that any safeguarding concerns arising from a child's medical condition are identified and addressed promptly.

Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual: A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm; however, they can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are. Schools and colleges should consider how to address vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying and take steps to prevent it, including putting appropriate sanctions in place.

Children who are questioning their gender: In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of children who are questioning the way they feel about being a boy or a girl, including the physical attributes of their sex and the related ways in which they fit into society - referred to as "gender-questioning". The School will take time to understand the thoughts and feelings of children who are questioning their gender and staff will be appropriately professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences.

When supporting a gender questioning child, the School will not initiate any action. The School will take time to understand the thoughts and feelings of children who are questioning their gender and be appropriately professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences.

Staff should remain aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs for example relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment, including discriminatory bullying. In making decisions about supporting social transitions, staff will comply with their distinct but interacting obligations under safeguarding legislation and equality and human rights law. The DSL will be involved in all cases where a child is questioning their gender. Staff will not adopt any changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by a school or college and a child's parents or carers have been involved. Parents will be involved in the vast majority of cases. In the rare circumstances where involving parents or carers would constitute a greater risk to the child than not involving them, the DSL will determine what action is needed to safeguard the child, before the parents or carers are contacted or any decisions are taken.

The School complies with its obligations under the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 regarding the provision of toilets and washing facilities. The School does not permit children to use toilets designated for the opposite biological sex. The School has regard to the provisions set out in Part two of KCSIE regarding single-sex spaces, changing rooms, and (where applicable) boarding and residential accommodation.

Further information is in the School's [Policy for Supporting Pupils who are Questioning their Gender](#).

APPENDIX 2 - KEY INTERNAL SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Governors	Chair of Governors Mr James Sporle 01235 849023 james.sporle@abingdon.org.uk Nominated Safeguarding Governor Dr Kate Wheeler 01235 849023 kate.wheeler@abingdon.org.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead ("DSL") & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads ("DDSLs")	Abingdon Senior School DSL Helen Keevil 07778 936395 or 01235 849130 helen.keevil@abingdon.org.uk Deputy DSLs - Abingdon Senior School Fran Smethurst (Safeguarding Manager) 01235 849138 fran.smethurst@abingdon.org.uk Andrew Crisp (Head of Middle School) 01235 849015 andrew.crisp@abingdon.org.uk Carrie Berry (Senior Nurse) 01235 849059 Carrie.berrycarrie.berry@abingdon.org.uk James Hallinan (Head of Boarding) 01235 849046 james.hallinan@abingdon.org.uk Keely Ewart-Brookes (Head of Academic Support) 01235 849088 keely.ewart-brookes@abingdon.org.uk Natalie Hunt (Head of Wellbeing) 01235 840144 natalie.hunt@abingdon.org.uk Dani Heywood-Lonsdale (Assistant Head of Sixth Form Pastoral) 01235 849013 @abingdon.org.uk Mark Johnson (Assistant Head of Crescent House, Digital Safeguarding Lead) 01235 849053 mark.johnson@abingdon.org.uk Adam Jenkins (Head of Lower School) 01235 849051 adam.jenkins@abingdon.org.uk Shared Safeguarding Email: safeguarding.team@abingdon.org.uk Abingdon Prep School DSL Richard Sutton (Assistant Head Pastoral) 01865 391570 07471 030183 richard.sutton@abingdonprep.org.uk Deputy DSLs - Abingdon Prep School

	Nicky Black (Head) , responsible for safer recruitment 01865 392303 head@abingdonprep.org.uk Rachel Pairman (Senior Deputy Head) 01865 392301 rachel.pairman@abingdonprep.org.uk Lenka Sowter (Head of Middle Section) 01865 391570 lenka.sowter@abingdonprep.org.uk Sarah Eastaugh (Head of Learning Support and DDSL with responsibility for EYFS) 01865 391570 sarah.eastaugh@abingdonprep.org.uk The Manor DSL Varun Footring, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Head Pastoral, 01235 858480 or 07904 951265, vfootring@manorprep.org Deputy DSLs - The Manor School Pippa McConnell (Head of Pre-Prep and Deputy DSL with responsibility for EYFS) 01235 858485 or 07552 848843 pmcconnell@manorprep.org Neil Jackson (Head of Years 5 and 6) 01235 858453 or 07435 987404 njackson@manorprep.org Shared Safeguarding Mailbox for Varun Footring, Pippa McConnell, Neil Jackson and Rachel Hamlyn: mp-safeguarding@manorprep.org ‘Manor Fun’ Holiday Club Beth Davis, 01235 858485, bdavis@manorprep.org Harrison Read, 01235 858485 hread@manorprep.org Richard Valentine, 01235 858485 rvalentine@manorprep.org DSL Trained Staff - Abingdon School Enterprises Limited Andy Prendergast (Lead ASE DDSL and Operations Director and with DDSL responsibility for ASE activities within Tilsley Park) 01235 849148 or 07776 658788 andy.prendergast@abingdon.org.uk Rebecca Lees (DDSL with responsibility for ASE activities within the Sports Centre) Katie Brewer (DDSL with responsibility for other Commercial Events, Hires and Conferences)
Designated Person for Looked After Children / Children We Care for	Abingdon Senior School Natalie Hunt TEL: 01235 849015 EMAIL: natalie.hunt@abingdon.org.uk Abingdon Prep School Richard Sutton 01865 391570 07471 030183 richard.sutton@abingdonprep.org.uk

	The Manor Varun Footring 01235 858480 or 07904 951265. vfootring@manorprep.org
Head	Head Abingdon Senior School Michael Windsor 01235 849023 head@abingdon.org.uk Head Abingdon Prep School Nicky Black 01865 392303 head@abingdonprep.org.uk Head The Manor Rachel Hamlyn 01235 858460 07793 769863 head@manorprep.org
School Counsellors	Abingdon Senior School: The school counsellors are always available to listen to your concerns. They are next to the Health Centre. Pupils can contact them directly via: school.counsellor@abingdon.org.uk 07866 581113 Abingdon Prep School: A counsellor is available to pupils and this is organised and coordinated by Richard Sutton, DSL. richard.sutton@abingdonprep.org.uk The Manor: A counsellor is available to pupils and this is organised and coordinated by Ellie Michell (School Nurse): schoolnurse@manorprep.org
Independent Person/Listener	At Abingdon Senior School, who is happy to listen to any concerns from boarding pupils: Mr John Sparks 07802 326530 Email johnmspark7@gmail.com
Whisper	At Abingdon Senior School, concerns can be raised anaoyously using the Whisper App. These are seen by the DSL (or nominated Deput(ies) only: 