

Wolverhampton Girls' High School

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



In the development of this policy consideration has been given to the impact on protected characteristics under the Equality Act and the workload of members of staff.

Policy to be adopted: Autumn Term 2025

Policy Review date: By the end of the Autumn Term 2026

Role/Agency	Name	Phone	E-mail
Headteacher	Mrs Trudi Young	01902 551515	headteacher@wghs.org.uk
DSL	Mrs Katharine Warner	01902 551515	kwarner@wghs.org.uk
Deputy DSL/s	Mrs Elaine Clarke Ms Laura Bould Mrs Sophie Milovsorov Miss Jess Price Mr Andrew Bagnall Mrs Anne-Marie Morton	01902 551515	
Chair of Governors	Mrs Anne Ward	01902 551515	N/A
Safeguarding Link Governor	Mrs Manjit Bhogal	01902 551515	N/A
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Education Safeguarding Officer	Kelly Jones	01902 555937	Kelly.jones@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Children's Disability Team	Social Care	01902 550911	childrenandyoungpeople's.disabilityservice@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Adult's Disability Team	Social Care	01902 553653 or 556780	Contact through Wolverhampton city council website
Designated Officer/LADO	Kelly Matthews	01902 550661	LADO@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Prevent – Community Safety Team	Wolverhampton Prevent Team	01902 551214	Safer@wolverhampton.gov.uk
FGM	Police	101 or 999	

West Midlands Police	Police	101 Option 3 for WMP or 999	
Wolverhampton Virtual School Head	Darren Martindale	01902 551039	Darren.Martindale@wolverhampton.gov.uk
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1 Our strong safeguarding culture

1.1 Why it is important

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and it is the duty of Wolverhampton Girls' High School to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This is our core safeguarding principle.
- In adhering to this principle we focus on providing a safe and welcoming environment for all of our children regardless of age, ability, culture, race, language, religion, gender identity or sexual identity. All of our children have equal rights to support and protection.
- One of the cornerstones of our safeguarding culture is this policy and the procedures contained within it. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors, all of whom are trained upon its contents and on their safeguarding duties. We update this policy at least annually to reflect changes to law and guidance and best practice.
- This policy should be read alongside our other safeguarding related policies, which are set out in Appendix Two.

1.2 What it means for our students

- We work with our local safeguarding partners to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support to the child.
- All of our staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Any students or staff involved in a child protection or safeguarding issue will receive appropriate support.
- Our strong safeguarding culture ensures that we treat all students with respect and involve them in decisions that affect them. We encourage positive, respectful and safe behaviour among students, and we set a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately.
- Identifying safeguarding and child protection concerns often begin with recognising changes in students' behaviour and knowing that these changes may be signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

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

2 Safeguarding legislation and guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2025);
- Working Together to improve school attendance (2024);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023);
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015);
- The Teacher Standards 2012;
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002; and
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

3 Roles and responsibilities

Chair of Governing Body	Mrs Anne Ward
Nominated Governor for Safeguarding	Mrs Manjit Bhogal
Headteacher	Mrs Trudi Young
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Katharine Warner
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Mrs Elaine Clarke Miss Jessica Price Mrs Sophie Milovsorov Miss Laura Bould Mrs Anne Marie Morton Mr Andrew Bagnall

3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The designated safeguarding lead takes **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at Wolverhampton Girls' High School. The DSL duties include:

- ensuring child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately by staff;
- working with the Governing Body to ensure that the school's child protection policies are reviewed annually and that the procedures are reviewed regularly;
- acting as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff on child protection and safeguarding matters;

- maintain written records of all concerns, discussions, and decisions, including the rationale for those decisions;
- acting as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners;
- making and managing referrals to children’s social care, the police, or other agencies;
- taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings;
- liaising with the “case manager” and the designated officer(s) at the local authority if allegations are made against staff;
- making staff aware of training courses and the latest local safeguarding arrangements available through the local safeguarding partner arrangements;
- ensuring that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and processes to act on any safeguarding concerns that are highlighted; and
- transferring the child protection file to a child’s new school.

3.2 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s):

Our Deputy DSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL and support the DSL with safeguarding matters on a day to day basis. The ultimate lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL.

3.3 The Safeguarding Governor

- The role of the safeguarding governor is to provide support and challenge to the DSL and the leadership of the school on how they manage safeguarding so that the safety and wellbeing of the children can continuously improve. The role includes:
 - understanding the requirements of the Governance Handbook and Keeping Children Safe in Education ;
 - supporting and challenging the DSL on the standards of safeguarding at the school (including online safety);
 - confirming that consistent and compliant safeguarding practice takes place across the school; and
 - reporting to the Governing Body about the standard of safeguarding in the school.
- The DSL and the safeguarding governor meet on a regular basis to discuss safeguarding issues, monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding and to agree steps to continuously improve safeguarding practices in the school.

4 Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children are at greater risk of abuse, both offline and online and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising it and disclosing it. This increased risk can be caused by many factors including social exclusion, isolation, discrimination and prejudice. To ensure that all of our students receive equal protection, we give special consideration to children who:

- are vulnerable because of their race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender identity or sexuality;
- are vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;
- are at risk of sexual exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, or being drawn into extremism;
- live in chaotic or unsupportive home situations;
- are young carers;
- are asylum seekers;

- have experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit;
- live transient lifestyles or live away from home or in temporary accommodation;
- are affected by parental offending, parental substance abuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs; and
- do not have English as a first language.
- Are missing or absent from education and/or frequently;
- Whose parent/carers has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

5 Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- (a) Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children, which can include:
- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
 - being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
 - the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
 - communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- (b) Our staff are trained to be aware of and identify these additional barriers to ensure this group of children are appropriately safeguarded.

6 Children who are absent from education

- 6.1 Children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include sexual abuse or exploitation, child criminal exploitation, mental health problems, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Our staff are alert to these risks.
- 6.2 We closely monitor attendance, absence and exclusions and our DSL will take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day.

7 Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse – children harming other children - is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; it will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. It is more likely that boys will be perpetrators of child-on-child abuse and girls victims. Despite the single sex environment at Wolverhampton Girls' High School, any allegation will be treated seriously and investigated.

All staff should be clear about the school's policy and procedures for addressing child-on-child abuse.

Child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including:

- **physical abuse** such as hitting, biting, kicking or hair pulling;
- **sexual violence and harassment** such as rape and sexual assault or sexual comments and inappropriate sexual language, remarks or jokes;
- **upskirting**, which involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their knowledge;
- **youth produced sexual imagery** including pressuring others to share sexual content;
- **teenage relationship abuse** - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner;
- **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).

7.1 Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted.

7.2 Minimising risk

We take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of child-on-child abuse:

- Promoting an open and honest environment where children feel safe and confident to share their concerns and worries;
- Using assemblies to outline acceptable and unacceptable behaviour;
- Using RSHE and PSHE to educate and reinforce our messages through stories, role play, current affairs and other suitable activities; and
- Ensuring that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.

7.3 Investigating allegations

- All allegations of child-on-child abuse should be passed to the DSL immediately who will make an immediate risk and needs assessment, investigate and manage the allegation as follows:
 - **Gather information** – children and staff will be spoken with immediately to gather relevant information;
 - **Decide on action** – if it is believed that any child is at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to children's social care. The DSL will then work with children's social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police. In other cases, we may follow our behaviour policy alongside this Child Protection Policy; and
 - **Inform parents/carers** – we will usually discuss concerns with the parents/carers. However, our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the student and so if the school believes that notifying parents/carers could increase the risk to a child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents/carers are contacted.
- Where allegations of a sexual nature are made, the school will follow the statutory guidance set out in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

7.4 Supporting those involved

- The support required for the student who has been harmed will depend on their particular circumstance and the nature of the abuse. The support we provide could include counselling and mentoring or some restorative justice work.

- Support may also be required for the student that caused harm. We will seek to understand why the student acted in this way and consider what support may be required to help the student and/or change behaviours. The consequences for the harm caused or intended will be addressed.

8 Serious violence

All staff are made aware of indicators that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These include increased absence, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts could also indicate that children have been approached by or are involved with individuals associated with criminal gangs.

9 Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs exploiting children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

All staff are aware of indicators that children are at risk from or experiencing criminal exploitation. The main indicator is increased absence during which time the child may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs or money.

County lines exploitation can affect any child under the age of 18 years. It can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual, can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence. County lines exploitation can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults and is typified by some form of power imbalance such as age, gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

10 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Sexual exploitation involves an adult or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of a child or groups of children. Children can be unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship, gifts, drugs, alcohol or even accommodation.

Victims of sexual exploitation can be boys or girls and it can have an adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health.

We include the risks of sexual exploitation in our PSHE and RSE curriculum. It is often the case that the child does not recognise the coercive nature of the exploitative relationship and does not recognise themselves as a victim.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL. Staff must always act on any concerns that a child is suffering from or is at risk of sexual exploitation.

11 Mental Health

All staff are made aware that they are well placed to observe students 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. 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. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they must take immediate action and speak to the DSL immediately. If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL who will decide a course of action. This could include Tier 2 support in school from the wellbeing team, school Counsellor or Reflexions or a referral to outside agencies, such as CAMHS or Base 25 for further support.

12 Youth produced sexual imagery

- 'Sexting' refers to the sending or posting of sexual images of children via mobile phones and other devices or over the internet. It is also known as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.
- If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
 - Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
 - Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
 - Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
 - Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved
 - You should explain that you need to report the incident and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.
- All youth produced sexual imagery incidents will be managed as follows:
 - The incident will be referred to the DSL immediately and the DSL will discuss it with the appropriate staff. If necessary, the DSL may also interview the children involved;
 - Parents/Carers will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents/carers would put a child at risk of harm; and
 - At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm we will refer the matter to the police and/or children's social care.

13 Online safety

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, our school aims to:

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

The 4 key categories of risk

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

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

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

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

- o Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- o Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- o Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DFE's Searching, Screening and Confiscation.
- o Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.
- o Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community
- o Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- o Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

Artificial intelligence (AI)

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

Wolverhampton Girls' High recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

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

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools while they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school. Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education. Add any additional procedures you may have in place for dealing with safeguarding concerns related to AI – for example where indecent images have been shared that are AI-generated.

14 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

15 Honour-Based Violence

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses actions taken 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. Our staff are aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors and we take them into consideration when deciding what safeguarding action to take. If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

15.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.
- FGM is carried out on females of any age, from babies to teenagers to women. Our staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators, including concerns expressed by girls about going on a long holiday during the summer break. If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of FGM or who has suffered FGM, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Teachers are also under legal duty to report to the police where they discover that FGM has been carried out on a child under 18. In such circumstances, teachers will personally report the matter to the police as well as informing the designated safeguarding lead.

15.2 Forced Marriage

- 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. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure or abuse. Forced marriage is illegal. In addition, since February 2023 it has also become a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used.
- Our staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators, which may include being taken abroad and not being allowed to return to the UK.
- Forced marriage is not the same as arranged marriage, which is common in many cultures.
- If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of forced marriage, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

16 Radicalisation and Extremism

Extremism is defined as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Whilst Islamic fundamentalism is the most widely publicised, extremism and radicalisation can occur in other cultures, religions and beliefs, including the far right and white supremacy. Our staff are trained to identify those at risk of being radicalised or drawn into extremism.

If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of radicalisation or being drawn into extremism, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Referral to Channel will be considered for those susceptible to radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism.

17 Staff/student relationships

Staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards students is unacceptable and that it is a criminal offence for them to engage in any sexual activity with a student under the age of 18.

We provide our staff with advice regarding their personal online activity and we have clear rules regarding electronic communications and online contact with students. It is considered a serious disciplinary issue if staff breach these rules.

Our Staff Code of Conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by all staff members. This stipulates that staff must not have any form of sexual relationships with a student (up to and including 31st August of Year 13).

18 Allegations against staff/ person in a position of trust

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, our set procedures outlined in the Statement of Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff and Volunteers must be followed along with the full procedure for managing such allegations are set out in Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education

- 18.1 Allegations must be reported to the Headteacher, unless the complaint is about the Headteacher, in which case concern should be reported to the Chair of Governors.
- 18.2 Allegations made against staff who no longer work at the school will be reported to the police and/or the LADO by the Headteacher.
- 18.3 All external parties using the school facilities are required to comply in full with the provision of assurances as outlined within the Lettings Policy. Any allegations regarding an individual or organisation using the school premises for the purpose of running activities, must be shared with the Headteacher, who in turn will ensure such incidents are reported to the LADO.

19 Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague

It is important that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about a colleague's practice. All such concerns should be reported to the Headteacher, unless the complaint is about the Headteacher, in which case concern should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

- 19.1 Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.
- 19.2 The school's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure allows staff to raise concerns or make allegations and for an appropriate enquiry to take place.

20 Staff training

Our staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date and empowered to provide exceptional safeguarding to our students.

- 20.1 New staff, governors and volunteers receive a briefing during their induction which covers this Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and our staff Code of Conduct, how to report and record concerns and information about our Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy DSLs.
- 20.2 Staff and governors, undertake Basic Awareness Safeguarding Training on an annual basis

21 Safer Recruitment

The Governing Body and our Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring we follow recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might harm children. When doing so we check and verify the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the local safeguarding partner arrangements. The School may carry out online checks on shortlisted candidates.

- 21.1 We ensure that our volunteers are appropriately checked and supervised when in school. We check the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks where required by Keeping Children Safe in Education. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school day.
- 21.2 When using supply staff, we will obtain written confirmation from supply agencies or third party organisations that staff they provide have been appropriately checked and are suitable to work with children. Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained confirming their suitability to work with children.
- 21.3 The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

22 Site security

Visitors are asked to sign in at the school reception and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. If visitors have undergone the appropriate checks, they can be provided with unescorted access to the school site. Visitors who have not undergone the required checks will be escorted at all times.

23 Child protection procedures

23.1 Recognising abuse

- Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education⁴) refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

23.2 Taking action

Any child could become a victim of abuse. Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary call 999;

- complete a record of concern form and report your concern to the DSL as soon as possible; and
- share information on a need-to-know basis only and do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family.

23.3 If you are concerned about a student's welfare

- Staff may suspect that a student may be at risk. This may be because the student's behaviour has changed, their appearance has changed or physical signs are noticed. In these circumstances, staff will give the student the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK.
- All staff should be aware that a student may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, they may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a student. It is important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with students which facilitate communication.
- If the student does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below.

23.4 If a student discloses to you

If a student tells a member of staff about a risk to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will:

- remain calm and not overreact;
- allow them to speak freely;
- not be afraid of silences;
- not ask investigative questions;
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me';
- not automatically offer physical touch as comfort;
- let the student know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL;
- tell the student what will happen next;
- complete a record of **concern form** and pass it to the DSL as soon as possible; and
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves, unless this is an allegation against a member of staff/person in a position of trust, in which case it should be reported verbally to the Headteacher.

23.5 Notifying parents/carers

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a student with their parents/carers. If the school believes that notifying parents/carers could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents/carers are notified.

24 Referral to children's social care

The DSL or Deputy DSLs will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a student is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The student (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents/carers will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

25 Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care or the police if they are convinced that a direct report is required or if the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the deputies, the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors are not available, and a referral is required immediately.

26 Confidentiality and sharing information

Child protection issues necessitate a high level of confidentiality. Staff should only discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy DSLs in their absence), Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

26.1 Sharing information

- The DSL or Deputies will normally obtain consent from the student and/or parents/carers to share child protection information. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL or Deputies or Headteacher may share information *without consent* and will record the reason for deciding to do so.
- Information sharing will take place in a timely and secure manner and only when it is necessary and proportionate to do so and the information to be shared is relevant, adequate and accurate.
- Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.
- The GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child. If any member of staff receives a request from a student or parent/carer to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the Data Protection Officer.

26.2 Storing information

- Child protection information will be stored separately from the student's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held. It will be stored and handled in line with our Retention and Destruction Policy.
- Our Records Management Policy is available to parents/carers and students on request.

27 Special Circumstances

27.1 Looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

27.2 Work Experience

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard students undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise students on work experience which are in accordance with statutory guidance.

27.3 Children staying with host families

- The school may make arrangements for students to stay with host families, for example during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. When we do, we follow the guidance set out in the statutory guidance to ensure hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.
- Schools cannot obtain criminal record information from the Disclosure and Barring Service about adults abroad. Where students stay with host families abroad we will agree with the partner schools a shared understanding of the safeguarding arrangements. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the arrangements are sufficient to safeguard our students and will include ensuring students understand who to contact should an emergency occur or a situation arise which makes them feel uncomfortable. We will also make parents/carers aware of these arrangements.
- Some overseas students may reside with host families during school terms and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable.

27.4 Private fostering arrangements

- A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent/carer or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents/carers. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent/carer, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.
- Where a member of staff becomes aware that a student may be in a private fostering arrangement they will tell the DSL and the school will notify the local authority of the circumstances.

Attendance and Safeguarding at Alternative Provisions

- If a child is attending any form of Alternative Provision, the school will ensure that safer recruitment checks have been completed for all staff that work there. A letter of assurance will be required.

- At least half termly, full checks will be made to ensure that attendance and safeguarding protocols meet our expectations. These checks will be conducted face to face.
- Daily attendance checks will be made whilst the child attends the alternative provision.

Appendix One - Four categories of abuse

It is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead. It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

28 Physical abuse

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

28.1 Indicators of physical abuse

The following may be indicators of physical abuse:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, bites, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- An injury that is not consistent with the account given
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying
- Isolation from peers

29 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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.

29.1 Indicators of emotional abuse

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- The child consistently describes him/herself in negative ways
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Delayed physical, mental or emotional development

- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies
- Self-harm
- drug or solvent abuse
- Running away
- Appetite disorders – anorexia nervosa, bulimia; or
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

30 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

30.1 Indicators of sexual abuse

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
- Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation
- Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching
- Bruises or scratches in the genital area
- Reluctance to go home
- Refusal to communicate
- Depression or withdrawal
- isolation from peer group
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- self-harm
- substance abuse
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'

31 Neglect

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

31.1 Indicators of neglect

The following may be indicators of neglect:

- Constant hunger or stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food
- Frequent tiredness
- Frequently dirty or unkempt
- Poor attendance or often late
- Poor concentration
- Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones or to develop intellectually or socially
- Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings
- The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers

Appendix Two - Related Safeguarding policies

- Behaviour Policy;
- Physical Restraint Policy;
- Special Educational Needs Policy and Procedure;
- Anti-bullying Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- Substance Use and Misuse Policy;
- First Aid Policy;
- Medical Needs Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Policy;
- Relationship and Sex Education Policy;
- Safer Working Practice for adults who work with children;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure;
- Complaints Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure;
- Staff Induction Policy;
- Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff and volunteers;
- Health and Safety Policy; and
- Procedures for Emergency Evacuation of the School Premises.