



# St Mary's Church of England Primary School

*'Encourage one another and build each other up'*  
*Thessalonians 5:11*

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Autumn 2025

Date Agreed: **September 2025**

Term to be further reviewed: **Autumn 2026**

V1.1 - reviewed December 2025, changes made for technical accuracy, updated legislation and further clarification of changes in KCSIE 2025. Further LGC ratification not required.

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## **SAFEGUARDING AT A GLANCE (STAFF AND PARENTS)**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Any concern about a child's welfare, no matter how small, must be shared immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm, staff will contact First Response or the police without delay and then inform the DSL as soon as possible.

Staff should listen, reassure and take children seriously, never promise confidentiality, and record concerns promptly and factually, using the child's own words where possible.

If a member of staff believes a concern is not being acted upon appropriately, they must escalate. Staff may make a referral to Children's Social Care at any time and will be supported to do so.

## **POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES**

All at our school are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We are fully committed to ensuring that consistent, effective safeguarding procedures are in place to support families, children and staff at school. All concerns are passed through the members of staff who are wholly aware and trained in dealing with them efficiently and effectively. Our deputy designated safeguarding leads, are confident in liaising with appropriate external agencies to access further support where it is necessary. We encourage children to talk about their worries and to report their concerns to us in a number of ways. Child welfare is of paramount importance.

This Child Protection Policy will be reviewed by the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead on a regular basis to ensure it remains current and incorporates all revisions made to local or national safeguarding guidance. This policy will be fully reviewed as a minimum once a year during the autumn term and provided to the local governing committee for approval and sign off at the first autumn term meeting. Any revisions during the year will be detailed to the local governing committee but will only need further approval if the changes made are substantial in nature.

Role	Name	Contact Details
Head of School/Lead DSL	Hayley Cupit	stmarys@ipat.uk 01455 552818
Deputy DSL	Amy Hollis	As above
Deputy DSL (from November 2025)	Ellie Johnson	As above
Designated Governor for Child Protection/ Safeguarding	Keith Burnham	As above
<a href="#">Leicester and the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships Procedures Manual.</a>	<a href="#">Report Your Concerns about a Child or Young Person</a>	<a href="#">LCC report neglect or abuse</a>
LA Safeguarding Children in Education Officer	Charlotte Davis	0116 3057750 <a href="mailto:Charlotte.davis@leics.gov.uk">Charlotte.davis@leics.gov.uk</a>
LA Child Protection Contact/LADO	<a href="mailto:CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk">CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk</a> LADO service is available office hours only: Monday-Thursday, 8.30am - 5.00 pm and Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm	Allegations Line: 0116 3054141 <a href="mailto:CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk">CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk</a> emails for referral forms. Outside of office hours, contact the Leicestershire First Response Children's Duty Team: 0116 305 0005
First Response	For urgent concerns about a child who needs a social worker or police officer today	0116 305 0005
Police (to report a crime and immediate risk of	101	In an emergency 999 (only)

harm or abuse to child)		
NSPCC help/whistleblowing line	line is available 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday	0800 028 0285- email: <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a>

## **1. PURPOSE AND AIMS**

- 1.1 Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school and takes into account statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education and local guidance issued by the Leicestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 1.2 We will ensure that all parents/carers are made aware of our responsibilities regarding child protection procedures and how we will safeguard and promote the welfare of their children through the publication of this school child protection policy. These duties and responsibilities, as set out within the Education Act 2002 sec 175 and 157, DfE Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and HM Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 are incorporated into this policy.

## **2. CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT**

- 2.1 We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We will endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We will be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.
- 2.2 The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, supply staff, volunteers, and local governing committee members. They are consistent with those Leicester and the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships procedures.

## **3. MAINTAINING A CHILD CENTRED AND COORDINATED APPROACH TO SAFEGUARDING:**

- 3.1 Everyone who works at this school understands they are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children and accepts safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all our staff, including supply staff and volunteers will ensure their approach is child-centred and will be supported to consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
- 3.2 We recognise no single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

- 3.3 Safeguarding children is defined as: *The actions we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.*

#### **4. SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN**

4.1 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.
- **NB Definition:** 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18.

#### **5. WHOLE\_SCHOOL APPROACH TO SAFEGUARDING:**

- 5.1 We understand the importance every member of our staff has through their contact with children in and outside of our school environment. We understand the particular importance of the roles and relationships they have which places them in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
- 5.2 As a school we have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- 5.3 We will make every effort to identify children who may benefit from early help and put in place support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life.
- 5.4 Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in this child protection policy and raise concerns with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy without delay.
- 5.5 All our staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral, especially if they were involved in being alert to or receiving a disclosure of risk, harm or abuse or harassment from a child.
- 5.6 Our senior designated safeguarding lead will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties. They will liaise closely with other services such as children's social care, police, early help, and health where required, as the designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a

complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.

## **6. SAFEGUARDING IS NOT JUST ABOUT PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM DELIBERATE HARM. IT ALSO RELATES TO THE BROADER ASPECTS OF CARE AND EDUCATION INCLUDING:**

- children' health and safety and emotional well-being, and their mental and physical health or development.
- Meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Meeting the legal duties of the school under the Equality act (we will not unlawfully discriminate against children based on protected characteristics; we will carefully consider how we support children regarding particular protected characteristics; we will take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting children or students).
- Where a child receives elective home education and has an EHCP, the LA should review the plan working with parents and carers.
- The use of reasonable force.
- Meeting the needs of children with medical conditions.
- Providing first aid.
- Educational visits and off- site education.
- Alternative Provision placements (AP)
- Intimate care and emotional wellbeing.
- On-line safety and associated issues including filtering and monitoring in accordance with DfE monitoring standards.
- Appropriate arrangements to ensure school security, considering the local context.
- Keeping children safe from risks, harm, exploitation, sexual violence and sexual harassment between children (KCSiE 2025 Annex A).

## **7. SAFEGUARDING CAN INVOLVE A RANGE OF POTENTIAL ISSUES**

### **7.1 Such as:**

- Neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and exploitation.
- Contextualised, also known as extra-familial, abuse.
- Bullying, including online bullying (by text message, on social networking sites etc) and prejudice-based bullying and being aware of the ease of access to mobile phone networks.
- The approach to online safety, including appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks for home use.
- Going frequently missing and who are 'absent from education' going 'missing from care or home' and the risks this poses on repeat occasions and for prolonged periods.
- Domestic Abuse including teenage relationship abuse.
- Domestic Abuse including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

- Racist, disability- based, homophobic, bi-phobic, or transphobic abuse.
- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls.
- Risk of extremist behaviour and/or radicalisation and susceptible to being at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
- Child sexual exploitation, human trafficking, modern slavery, sexual or criminal exploitation.
- A young carer.
- Has a mental health need and has an effect on school attendance and progress.
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Privately fostered.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending.
- Child-on-Child Abuse (broadened by KCSiE 2025 to include children abusing other children, other varying form of bullying including online and sexually harmful behaviour, sexual violence, and sexual harassment Further defined in KCSiE 2025 Part Five).
- Harm outside the home: extra familial harm.
- The impact of new technologies, including 'sexting' and accessing pornography.
- The impact of generative artificial intelligence
- Exposure to misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories
- Issues which may be specific to a local area or population, are showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang activity or involvement and associations with organised crime groups or county lines.
- In possession of a knife and or involved in knife crime, youth violence, criminal child exploitation (CCE).
- Is in family circumstances which present challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse/harm.
- Is at risk of or from serious violence and violent crime.
- Persistent absence from education, including persistent absence for part of the school day.
- At risk of suspension or permanent exclusion
- Particular issues affecting children including domestic abuse and violence, female genital mutilation, and honour-based abuse.
- Being subject to any conduct where the purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats, or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages (Law change on Forced Marriage, February 2023).

- 'Upskirting'- The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as Up-skirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. Upskirting is a criminal offence and reportable by all teachers (KCSiE Annex A).
- 7.2 All our staff and volunteers are aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and know what to look for. This is vital for early identification so that support can be put in place. Our staff and volunteers are also aware of the specific safeguarding issues that indicate or inform of concerns or incidents linked to child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation. They know to report concerns directly to the designated safeguarding lead or a member of the senior leadership team should the designated safeguarding lead not be available for children who may be in need of help or protection.
- 7.3 Our staff recognise that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Children may also feel embarrassed, humiliated, or could be being threatened not to tell, so not feel able to share what is happening to them. Alternatively, we recognise children may not want to make a disclosure or talk about what is happening 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 child and agree a way forward to support the child and determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate good opportunities for communication.
- 7.4 All staff should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead, or deputy at the earliest opportunity.
- 7.5 As a school we are aware that abuse, neglect, 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 all staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).
- 7.6 All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of our school environment.
- 7.7 All our staff have received information and training regarding the risks that can take place outside the child's family. This is known as extra-familial harm and these can take a variety of different forms. Children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.
- 7.8 Our staff are aware that technology offers many opportunities but is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. Children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and

misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

- 7.9 All our staff have 'an understanding of the expectations, applicable to their roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring' of ICT systems and regular monitoring of school's equipment and networks.

## **8. ONLINE SAFETY**

- 8.1 Our school approach to online safety, including appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks is reflected in this Child Protection Policy including awareness of the ease of access to mobile phone networks. (See KCSiE 2023 Paragraph 138).
- 8.2 Our Senior DSL and the DSL team has the lead responsibility in this area, which is overseen and regularly reviewed by the local governing committee, along with considering the number of / age range of their children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm, and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.
- 8.3 Our local governing committee will ensure they maintain oversight of online safety and the arrangements put in place to ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks. The appropriateness of any filtering and monitoring systems will in part be informed by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty as required by KCSiE 2025 paragraph 140-150.
- 8.4 This will include:
- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
  - review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
  - block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
  - have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet the school safeguarding need.
  - review and discuss the standards with the leadership team, IT staff and service providers to ensure the school/college meets the standard published by the [Department for Education filtering and monitoring standards](#).
- 8.5 Our Multi Academy Trust has established, through a tender process, the long-term ICT support of all the schools, part of which is the oversight and daily maintenance of the filtering and monitoring system.
- 8.6 Our MAT's Board of Trustees will ensure a review is maintained to ensure the standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers these standards and whether more needs to be done to support our school in meeting and maintaining this standard and communicating these to staff, our children,

parents, carers and visitors to the school who provide teaching to children as part of the learning and educational opportunities we provide.

- 8.7 Our Senior DSL and the DSL team will always act in the 'best interest of the child' and remain mindful of the importance, with parents and carers, about safeguarding concerns held for children and in particular children's access to online sites when away from school.
- 8.8 We will support the understanding of harmful online challenges and hoaxes and share information with parents and carers about where they can get help and support. Our school recognises that online harms include exposure to misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories. We also recognise emerging safeguarding risks linked to generative artificial intelligence (AI), including the creation and sharing of harmful or sexualised content (including deepfakes), AI-assisted grooming and inappropriate use of AI tools by children. Concerns relating to these harms are responded to through the same safeguarding processes as any other concern.
- 8.9 All forms of abuse or harassment will be reported in accordance with national safeguarding guidance, and we will take a 'zero tolerance' approach to harassment and abuse as informed in KCSiE 2025.
- 8.10 As a school, should an incident or disclosure be made by a child, our staff will always reassure the child (child who has been harmed) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe, but we recognise that not every child who has been harmed will view themselves as such. We will also be mindful of the use of other terminology such as 'alleged child who has displayed harmful behaviour(s)' or 'child who has displayed harmful behaviour(s)' as in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the child who has displayed harmful behaviour as well.
- 8.11 We will do our best to ensure children understand the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them rather than criminalise them. In doing this we will discuss with relevant statutory safeguarding agencies to ensure all concerns or incidents are addressed fully, and where required different types of assessment and services are put in place where required and in accordance with the Pathway to Provision v 9.1.

## **9. IDENTIFYING CONCERNS**

- 9.1 All members of staff, volunteers and governors will be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Our staff know how to identify children who may be being harmed and then how to respond to a child who discloses abuse, or where others raise concerns about them. Our staff will be familiar with procedures to be followed and will receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates.

- 9.2 Staff understand that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition, and that in most cases multiple issues will overlap with each other. Staff who regularly come into contact with children are aware of the DfE guidance [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)
- 9.3 The four main categories of child abuse are as follows:
1. Physical Abuse
  2. Emotional Abuse
  3. Sexual Abuse
  4. Neglect

## 10. INDICATORS OF ABUSE, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION:

- 10.1 **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. 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. 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.
- 10.2 **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- 10.3 **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 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 over protection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children 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.

- 10.4 **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children to look 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. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child-on-child abuse) in education and **all** staff should be aware of it and of their school or colleges policy and procedures for dealing with it.
- 10.5 **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, because 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 (the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- 10.6 **Child Criminal Exploitation:** occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The child who has been harmed may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual.
- Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Criminal exploitation often happens alongside sexual or other forms of exploitation.
- Child Criminal Exploitation is broader than just county lines and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms, to commit theft, shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.
- 10.7 **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):** is a type of sexual abuse. It happens when a child or young person is coerced, manipulated or deceived into sexual activity in exchange for things that they may need or want like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection.

## **11. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES:**

- 11.1 All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk.
- 11.2 Our school ethos demonstrates that the effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of a system where we listen and hear what they say. Every individual within our school will play their part, including working with professionals from other agencies, particularly social workers, to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children and keep them safe. We will take opportunities to teach children about important safeguarding issues in a way that is age appropriate.
- 11.3 Our school always puts children at the centre of our 'safeguarding arrangements' listening to and hearing the child's voice. Our children receive direct instruction on how to share concerns, through PSHE lessons and in other areas of the curriculum, as well as NSPCC workshops. In particular, children are guided to understand that all staff in school can be considered as a 'trusted adult' and that any staff member can be talked to at any point when worries occur. Where trends emerge in the type of concerns being raised, particularly with emerging social media platforms or digital technologies, then these are analysed and shared with staff. Where these trends occur across our MAT, then MAT leaders ensure that these are shared with each school.
- 11.4 Our school continues to reflect on KCSiE 2025 Part Five Child on Child sexual violence and sexual harassment and Annex A of the same document. These are kept in mind whenever any emerging concerns need to be seen through the considerations contained therein.
- 11.5 Our school ethos demonstrates that the effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of a system where we listen and hear what they say. Every individual within our school will play their part, including working with professionals from other agencies, particularly social workers, to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children and keep them safe. We will take all opportunities to teach children about important safeguarding issues in a way that is age appropriate.
- 11.6 Our school uses a trained Emotional Literacy Support Advisor (ELSA) to help create a nurturing environment to support our children in feeling safe to share worries.
- 11.7 Our school is led by senior members of staff and local governing committee / trust members whose aims are to provide a safe environment and vigilant culture where children and young people can learn and be safeguarded. If

there are safeguarding concerns, we will respond with appropriate action in a timely manner for those children who may need help or who may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

- 11.8 Where staff members have concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger) they will decide what action to take in conjunction with the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead. Although we advocate that any staff member can make a referral to children's social care or First Response, especially where a child is identified as being in immediate danger, they should however ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a member of the senior leadership team is informed as soon as possible.
- 11.9 We also ensure that all our staff are clear that whilst they should discuss and agree with the DSL any actions to be taken, they are able to escalate their concerns and contact First Response, First Response Consultation Line or social care to seek support for the child if, despite the discussion with the DSL, their concerns remain. Staff are also informed of the MAT's whistle blowing procedures and the contact details for the Local Authority LADO and NSPCC helpline.

## **12. ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS AND OTHER AGENCIES**

When a child is placed with an alternative provision provider, the school remains responsible for the safeguarding of that child. The school will maintain oversight and information-sharing arrangements in line with current Department for Education alternative provision guidance, including ensuring the provider has appropriate safeguarding checks and that the school receives timely safeguarding information.

- 12.1 At school we work closely with other agencies including statutory safeguarding partners to support vulnerable children and the contact our staff have with social care and social workers. For example, this may be by holding regular meetings in school, taking part in partnership forums/events, or accessing multi-agency training. Our school also offers to facilitate meetings for individual children and families in school to support easier local access and involvement by children, parents and or carers.
- 12.2 Where our school places a child with an alternative provision provider, we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that child and ensure we are satisfied that the provider can meet the needs of the children.
- 12.3 Children who attend alternative education often have complex needs, it is important governing bodies/trusts and designated safeguarding leads ensure children are fully always supported, and the alternative setting is aware of any additional risks of harm that children may be vulnerable to. Information sharing for children who receive education provision outside of a mainstream setting is vital to support the child and ensure the learning environment where they are placed has all necessary information for the child before they

access the provision. The working together principles are key to keep the child safe and understanding the vulnerabilities needing to be supported. This must include up to date contact details for the professionals working with the child and family.

- 12.4 Our school obtains written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been conducted on individuals working at the establishment, i.e., those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.
- 12.5 Where we have used an AP, the school has completed regular safeguarding checks and has liaised closely with the provision, making adjustments to plans in supporting some of our most vulnerable and complex children as needed, always putting the child first.
- 12.6 The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is familiar with national and local guidance, will share concerns, where appropriate, with the relevant agencies.
- 12.7 This will include, as appropriate, the LA Safeguarding Children in Education Officer, the First Response Children's Duty team, the Early Help (Children & Family Wellbeing) Service, social workers, family support workers, colleagues in local health services, colleagues in adjacent educational settings and local law enforcement services.
- 12.8 Our school should always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend.
- 12.9 Considering KCSiE 2025 paragraph 377, our school is responsible for ensuring that outside organisations have appropriate safeguarding procedures in place for the provision on offer. Outside organisations receive an induction about the school's safeguarding procedures and understand that the primary responsibility for the safeguarding of children whilst on site remains with the school. The school will follow the procedures outlined in this policy when receiving an allegation related to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the school premises for the purpose of running activities for children (e.g., community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities). This will include informing the LADO where appropriate.

### **13. CPD, CULTURE AND ETHOS**

- 13.1 All staff, whether permanent, temporary or supply, receive an induction on first entry into school which includes a comprehensive explanation of the school's safeguarding procedures. The names and locations of all DSLs are shared at this point, along with how to access and use the school's digital reporting system. All staff, including those in non-child facing roles, receive

annual safeguarding training delivered either in-school or by our MAT during INSET. Further safeguarding training modules are set on the IAmCompliant interactive platform.

- 13.2 Our school, and our MAT operate comprehensive safer recruitment practices as set out in KCSiE 2025 section three. The school maintains a single, central record (SCR) in which all information resulting from these practices is stored. These records are regularly audited by senior school and Trust leaders. Any recruitment process that takes place in school is overseen by at least one member of staff who has had safer recruitment training. This training is renewed on a regular basis. Our MAT central team has a member of staff dedicated to support all recruitment in our school who acts to ensure that all pre and post appointment checks and record keeping meets and exceeds the requirements in KCSiE.

#### **14. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DSL/DSL TEAM**

- 14.1 The Senior DSL and deputies (DSL team) maintain a key role in raising awareness amongst staff about the needs of children who have or who have had a social worker and the barriers that those children might experience in respect of attendance, engagement and achievement at schools or college. This includes children under kinship care and those children who have had a parent or carer in prison.
- 14.2 The Senior DSL along with the Designated Teacher can inform the local governing committee of the number of children in their cohort who have or who have had a social worker and appropriate information is shared with teachers and staff on individual children's circumstances.
- 14.3 The Designated Teacher and Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead maintain data for children who have looked after status and for children who have been involved in the care system.
- 14.4 The Designated Teacher maintains good links with the Virtual School Head to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children. The role of virtual school heads was extended in June 2021, to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker. The Virtual School Head should identify and engage with key professionals, helping them to understand the role they have in improving outcomes for children. This should include Designated Safeguarding Leads, social workers, Head of Schools, governors, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators, mental health leads, other local authority officers.
- 14.5 Arrangements are put in place for the Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Designated Teacher whereby they meet regularly to discuss children and vulnerabilities and to offer support to each other.

- 14.6 Under the section on additional safeguarding vulnerabilities of children with SEND, the SEND Code of Practice is a source of information and what support is available from specialist organisations including SENDIASS. We also liaise with Local Authority teams for Inclusion, Attendance and Gypsy / Roma Travellers as well as Family Help when considering the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities of children with SEND.

## **15. THE SEVEN MAIN ELEMENTS OF OUR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

15.1 There are seven main elements to our policy:

- Providing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse in and outside of school.
- Supporting children who have social care involvement in accordance with his/her child in need plan, child protection plan or are subject to Local Authority Care.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding children, child protection processes and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe in and outside of school.
- Working in partnership with agencies and safeguarding partners in the 'best interest of the child.'
- Ensuring we have appropriate policies and procedures to deal with child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the school or college premises and/or online, forms of harassment and harmful sexual behaviour. Filtering and monitoring arrangements for online safety and harms are included.

## **16. PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

- .1 We recognise that because of the day-to-day contact our school staff have with children they and we are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse.
- .2 Our school will therefore:
  - .2.1 Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to and heard.
  - .2.2 Ensure children know that there are trusted adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried.
  - .2.3 Ensure that every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers, and colleagues from other agencies.

- .2.4 Include opportunities in the RSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.:
- .2.5 Recognise and manage risks including online safety, radicalisation and extremism, sexual exploitation, child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, the sharing of nude and semi-nude images which has replaced what was termed as sexting.
- .2.6 Support the development of healthy relationships and awareness of domestic violence and abuse, recognising that domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may involve a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional harm and 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.
- .2.7 Recognise how pressure from others and safeguarding vulnerabilities can affect their behaviour.
- .2.8 Recognise the link between mental health, school attendance and children 'absent from education' and the impact on learning, progress, and educational attainment.
- .2.9 Know that as a school we will act swiftly to address any concerns related to serious violence, gang and knife crime or child on child sexual violence or sexual harassment incidents.
- .2.10 Ensure our behaviour policy includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, harmful online challenges, hoaxes, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying and use of social media platforms and networks.
- .2.11 Maintain an online safety policy which addresses statutory filtering and monitoring standards, and that considers remote learning, and use of mobile and smart technology and is reviewed regularly to take into account any new threats. Such policies refer to the DfE guidance for Generative Artificial Intelligence.
- .2.12 Respond as required of schools and safeguarding agencies to address any 'harm outside the home' also known as 'extra familial harm.' Schools are a place of protection and where children and young people can share concerns, seek support, are places of safety and where children and young people can form safe and trusted relationships. Through creating a whole-school ethos and sharing excellent communication with safeguarding partners and services, children and young people can feel assured they will be listened to, heard, and offered support to enable them to share sensitive information and strengthen their resilience.

- .2.13 Know the importance of working together with parents, carers, and external services to form strong and trusted partnerships which can advocate trauma informed and trauma aware responses, and where trusted relationships can be formed and go on to create safe places and spaces within the community, so children and young people know how to access a place of safety outside of the school/college environment if needed.
- .3 As a school we engage with harm outside the home by working with partners in tackling harm outside the home, by being vigilant, making referrals when necessary, communicating with families and signposting to early help when needed. We also use our curriculum to raise awareness to all children, what they need to be aware of and who they can share concerns with. We offer trips such as 'The Warning Zone' and 'Bikeability' to educate children on keeping safe outside of school.  
  
<http://www.childexploitationeastmidlands.org.uk>
- .4 Children are taught about safeguarding at school. We use CORAM: SCARF as our PSHE / RSHE curriculum which is age appropriate language and discussion. As a MAT, we also partner with the NSPCC 'Speak out, stay safe' curriculum where we take part in workshops. All classes have either worry monsters or worry boxes where children can share worries which are then responded to.
- .5 We will take all reasonable measures to ensure any risk of harm to children's welfare is minimised inside and outside of the school environment.
- .6 We take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, working to local policies and procedures in full working partnership with agencies.
- .7 We ensure robust child protection arrangements are in place and embedded in the daily life and practice of the school.
- .8 We promote children's health and safety.
- .9 We promote safe practice and challenge unsafe practice.
- .10 We ensure that procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff including volunteers, supply staff and contractors. KCSiE Part Four has two sections, the second section addresses low-level concerns.
- .11 We provide first aid and meet the health needs of children with medical conditions.
- .12 We ensure school site security.
- .13 If ever needed, we are ready to address drugs and substance misuse issues.

- .14 If ever needed, we are ready to support and plan for young people in custody and their resettlement back into the community.
- .15 We work with all agencies regarding missing children, anti-social behaviour/gang activity and violence in the community/knife crime and children at risk of sexual exploitation.
- .16 We ensure that all staff understand that they have a duty to safeguard children inside/outside the school environment including school trips, extended school activities, vocational placements, and alternative education packages.

## **17.ADDITIONAL MEASURES**

- 17.1 We regularly review any arrangements we have in place for children who receive off- site education or have alternative learning experiences in place to ensure appropriate checks have been carried out and continue to be managed. We make visits to the providers and all have to prove they meet our recruitment and safeguarding checks.
- 17.2 Staff remain vigilant and share information with the DSL, DSL team and staff with all children, but also those with mental health problems, through both professional discussions and if there is a concern there is any form of neglect etc this is reported on our electronic system 'Smoothwall Safeguard'.
- 17.3 The KCSiE acknowledges that children who are LGBT may be targeted and informs homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are not phobias, they are not fears; they are forms of discrimination of or hate towards LGBT people or those perceived to be LGBT and must not be tolerated. Guidance may change as the 'children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning' section is currently under review pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation (DfE, 2023b). As a school we remain vigilant and offer support through a trusted adult with whom they can be open with if and when needed.
- 17.4 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 child who has been harmed (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.
- 17.5 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.

## **18. PROCEDURES FOR IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING CASES**

- 18.1 We will follow the procedures set out by the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (LRSCP) and take account of guidance issued by the DfE in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 to:
- 18.1.1 Ensure we have a Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is a member of the school/college leadership team, and a Deputy Safeguarding Lead for child protection/safeguarding who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
  - 18.1.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead role is written into their job description and clarifies the role and responsibilities including as defined in KCSiE 2025 Annex C.
  - 18.1.3 Ensure we have a nominated governor responsible for child protection/safeguarding.
  - 18.1.4 Ensure that we have a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC).
  - 18.1.5 Ensure every member of staff (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) and the governing body knows the name of the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead, their deputies responsible for child protection, and their role.
  - 18.1.6 Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or to children's social care/police if a child is in immediate danger.
  - 18.1.7 Ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of the early help process and understand their role in making referrals or contributing to early help offers and arrangements.
  - 18.1.8 Ensure that there is a whistleblowing policy and culture where staff can raise concerns about unsafe practice, and that these concerns will be taken seriously.
  - 18.1.9 Ensure that there is a complaints system in place for children and families.
  - 18.1.10 Ensure that parents understand the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection and safeguarding by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus and on the school's website.
  - 18.1.11 Notify Children's Social Care if there is an unexplained absence for a child who is subject to a child protection plan and where no contact can be established with the child, or a parent or appropriate adult linked to the child.

- 18.1.12 Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at child protection conferences.
- 18.1.13 Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately; documenting and collating information on individual children to support early identification, referral, and actions to safeguard.
- 18.1.14 Ensure all records are kept securely within the school's two-factor authenticated digital records system (Smoothwall Safeguard)
- 18.1.15 Ensure that we follow robust processes to respond when children are missing from education or missing from home or care.
- 18.1.16 Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- 18.1.17 Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.
- 18.1.18 Apply confidentiality appropriately.
- 18.1.19 Apply the LLRSCB escalation procedures if there are any concerns about the actions or inaction of social care staff or staff from other agencies.

## **19. SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

- 19.1 We recognise that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a positive sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation, and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure, and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication. We also recognise that there are children who are more vulnerable than others, which include children with special educational needs and or disabilities.
- 19.2 All staff including volunteers are advised to maintain the attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is a concern, and when concerned about the welfare of the child should always act in the best interests of the child.

19.3 Our school will endeavour to support the children through:

- 19.3.1 Developing the content of the curriculum across all appropriate subjects so that children are guided to understanding 'what is not right' and who to talk to when that happens. Promoting a 'growth mindset' is central to all lessons in school to allow children to work on their character traits (muscles).
- 19.3.2 Maintaining a school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive, and secure environment, and which gives children a sense of them being valued.
- 19.3.3 The school behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy and child-on-child abuse policy which is kept up to date with national and local guidance and which is aimed at supporting vulnerable children in our school.
- 19.3.4 Our school will proactively ensure that all children know that some behaviours are unacceptable and will need to be addressed but as members of our school they are valued and will be supported through the time required to deal with any abuse or harm that has occurred, or outcomes from incidents.
- 19.3.5 Liaison with other agencies that support the children such as Children's Social Care (in line with the [Thresholds for access to services](#), updated in September 2021); [Leicestershire Inclusion Service](#) and [Education Psychology Service](#), and the [Children and Family Wellbeing Service](#), etc.
- 19.3.6 Ensuring that, where a child leaves and is subject to a child protection plan, child in need plan or where there have been wider safeguarding concerns, their information is transferred to the new school immediately or within **5 working days** and that the child's social worker is informed.
- 19.3.7 Ensuring that the vulnerability of children with special educational needs and or disabilities is recognised and fully supported by close monitoring of those children by the school SENDCo in partnership with parents.
- 19.3.8 Where a child discloses a concern or informs of an incident that has involved them in an incident involving sexual violence and or sexual harassment the staff member will ensure the child (child who has been harmed) is taken seriously, kept safe and never be made to feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment.
- 19.3.9 The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed immediately, and actions taken in accordance with the school child-on -child/ sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in school and college policy.

## **20. STAFF AND SAFE RECRUITMENT**

- 20.1 The leadership team, local governing committee and our MAT central team will ensure that all safer working practices and recruitment procedures are followed in accordance with the guidance set out in KCSiE 2025 Part Three.
- 20.2 The leadership team, local governing committee and our MAT central team will be appropriately trained in safer working practices and access safer recruitment training.
- 20.3 Statutory pre-employment checks and references from previous employers are an essential part of the recruitment process. We will ensure we adopt the appropriate necessary procedures to carry out the checks required and where any concerns arise, we will seek advice and act in accordance with national guidance.
- 20.4 The The leadership team, local governing committee and our MAT central team have in place recruitment, selection, and vetting procedures in accordance with KCSiE 2025 Part Three and maintains a Single Central Record (SCR), which is reviewed regularly and updated in accordance with KCSiE 2025 Part Three paragraphs 209 to 351.
- 20.5 Staff will have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and will be aware of the School Employee Code of Conduct, which includes contact between staff and children outside the work context. Concerns regarding low-level concerns will be included in our Code of Conduct from 1 September 2025 in line with KCSiE Part Four Section two.
- 20.6 Newly appointed staff and volunteers will be informed of our arrangements for safer working practices by the appropriate line manager before beginning working and contact with children.
- 20.7 In the event of any complaint or allegation against a member of staff, the Head of School (or the Designated Safeguarding Lead) if the Head of School is not present, will be notified immediately. If it relates to the Head of School, the MAT CEO will be informed without delay. We will respond to all allegations robustly and appropriately in collaboration with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), LADO Allegation Officers or HR Service.
- 20.8 Staff may find some of the issues relating to child protection and the broader areas of safeguarding upsetting and may need support which should be provided by the school and the MAT Human Resources Team.
- 20.9 Advice and support will be made available by the Safeguarding and Compliance Lead (SCL), LADO and LCC HR where appropriate to the leadership team.
- 20.10 All new staff, supply staff when used, volunteers, and visitors have arrangements made to receive an induction. School also ensures all safer

recruitment and safeguarding checks are made with agencies being used and that they comply with the schools safeguarding procedures (KCSiE 2025 Part Three Safer Recruitment).

Please Note: KCSiE 2025 Part Three: Alternative Provision – Where a school places a children with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that children and should be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the children.

- 20.11 Schools should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been conducted on individuals working at the establishment, i.e., those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

## **21. LINKS TO OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY POLICIES**

- 21.1 This policy, together with the following, should be read alongside and in conjunction with other policies and statutory guidance regarding the safety and welfare of children, including those adopted from Leicestershire County Council and the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (LRSCP).

- 21.2 The above together with the following will make up the suite of policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in this school.

- IPAT Admission Statement
- IPAT Complaints Policy
- IPAT Complaint Report Template
- IPAT Policy for Attendance and Punctuality
- IPAT Policy for Bereavement Support
- IPAT Policy for Compliance with the Single Equality Duty
- IPAT Policy for Data Protection
- IPAT Health and Safety Policy
- IPAT Management of Outdoor Learning, Off-Site Visits and Adventurous Activities Policy IPAT Policy for a Missing Child
- IPAT Policy for Preventing Extremism
- IPAT Policy for children Exclusion
- IPAT Policy for children Health and Well-Being
- IPAT Policy for Remote Education
- IPAT Policy for Separated Parents
- IPAT Policy for the Use of Reasonable Force
- IPAT Virtual Live Lesson Protocols
- IPAT Policy for Volunteers
- IPAT Policy for Whistleblowing
- IPAT Safeguarding Statement

Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Policy, Procedures and Practice Guidance link:

<https://llrscb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

## **22. RAISING AWARENESS - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 22.1 All staff and volunteers: Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone in our school who comes into contact with children and their families have a role to play in safeguarding children. All staff in our school consider, always, what is in the best interests of children.
- 22.2 All staff within our school are particularly important as they are able to identify concerns early and provide help to children to prevent concerns from escalating.
- 22.3 All staff contribute to providing a safe environment in which children can learn by maintaining constant vigilance throughout the school day, including the children's transition times between arrival to, and departure from, school.
- 22.4 Risk assessments and site visits are put in place so staff are able to contribute to enabling a safe environment both in and when out of schools on trips or extended learning opportunities.
- 22.5 All our staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in this. This includes being able to identify emerging problems to recognise children who may benefit from early help. Staff know in the first instance to discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and understand they may be required to support other agencies and professionals in assessments for early help.
- 22.6 All our staff are aware of the early help process and understand their role in this. This includes being able to identify emerging problems to recognise children who may benefit from early help. Staff know in the first instance to discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and understand they may be required to support other agencies and professionals in assessments for early help.
- 22.7 Our school operates an 'open door' policy for all parents and encourages parents to share concerns at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 22.8 We acknowledge the importance of children and social workers meeting during the school day where required and the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead will work with social care and safeguarding partners to ensure children subject to child protection, child in need and LAC plans are kept safe, and the child's needs are met.
- 22.9 We signpost children, parents, and carers to support, in school and through our website, posters, newsletters and during meetings.

## **23. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

- 23.1 All our staff are aware of systems within our school and these are explained to them as part of staff induction, which include our child protection policy; the employee code of conduct and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.
- 23.2 Our school utilises an induction checklist when staff are inducted which includes the above, but also other policy and procedural information.
- 23.3 All our staff receive safeguarding and child protection training which is updated every three years. In addition to this training all staff members receive child protection and safeguarding updates when required, but at least annually.
- 23.4 This training is conducted during school INSET days and is delivered by the school's Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Trust's Safeguarding Lead or by a specialist external service depending on the volume of changes made to the KCSIE each year.
- 23.5 All our staff are aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act (1989) and understand the role they may have in these assessments.
- 23.6 All our staff know what to do if a child is raising concerns or makes a disclosure of abuse and/or neglect. Staff will maintain a level of confidentiality whilst liaising with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and children's social care. Our staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a disclosure or allegation, recognising this may not be in the best interest of the child.

## **24. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 24.1 All staff have a key role to play in identifying concerns and provide early help for children. To achieve this, they will:
  - 24.1.1 Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
  - 24.1.2 Ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or have concerns.
  - 24.1.3 Plan opportunities within the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to assess and manage risk appropriately and keep themselves safe.
  - 24.1.4 Lead and ensure robust arrangements and procedures are in place to effectively manage and regularly monitor the school online safety, and specifically appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and

school networks which are reflected in this Child Protection Policy, including awareness of ease of access to mobile phone networks. In agreement with our MAT.

- 24.1.5 Attend training to be aware of and alert to the signs of abuse.
- 24.1.6 Maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” with regards to safeguarding.
- 24.1.7 Record their concerns if they are worried that a child is being abused and report these to the DSL as soon as practical that day. If the DSL is not contactable immediately a Deputy DSL should be informed.
- 24.1.8 Be prepared to refer directly to social care, and the police if appropriate, if there is a risk of significant harm and the DSL or their Deputy is not available.
- 24.1.9 Follow the allegations procedures if the disclosure is an allegation against a member of staff.
- 24.1.10 Follow the procedures set out by the LRSCP and take account of guidance issued by the DfE KCSiE 2025.
- 24.1.11 Support children in line with their child protection plan, child in need plan, LAC Care Plan.
- 24.1.12 Treat information with confidentiality but never promising to “keep a secret.”
- 24.1.13 Notify the DSL or their Deputy of any child on a child protection plan or child in need plan who has unexplained absence.
- 24.1.14 Understand early help and be prepared to identify and support children who may benefit from early help, to include children who are frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care, has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a children referral unit, has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- 24.1.15 Liaise with other agencies that support children and provide early help.
- 24.1.16 Ensure they know who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are and know how to contact them.
- 24.1.17 Have an awareness of the Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour Policy, the Staff Behaviour Policy (or Code of Conduct), procedures relating to the safeguarding response for children who go missing from education and the role of the DSL.

## **25. SENIOR LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- 25.1 Contribute to inter-agency working in line with HM Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance 2023.
- 25.2 Provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified.
- 25.3 Ensure all staff, supply staff and volunteers are alert to the definitions of abuse and indicators, and through access to regular training opportunities and updates.
- 25.4 Ensure staff are alert to the various factors that can increase the need for early help.
- 25.5 Working with Children's Social Care, support their assessment and planning processes including the school's attendance at conference and core group meetings as appropriate.
- 25.6 Carry out tasks delegated by the MAT such as training of staff and volunteers, safer recruitment and maintaining of a single central register.
- 25.7 Provide support and advice on all matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection to all staff regardless of their position within the school.
- 25.8 Treat any information shared by staff or children with respect and follow agreed policies and procedures.
- 25.9 Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff including low-level concerns are dealt with in accordance with guidance from Department for Education (DfE) KCSiE 2025 Part Four 'Allegations made against/Concerns raised in relation teachers including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors in Sections One and Two.
- 25.10 Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (LRSCP) and Leicestershire County Council (LCC).

## **26. TEACHERS (INCLUDING ECTS) AND HEAD OF SCHOOLS – PROFESSIONAL DUTY**

- 26.1 The Teachers Standards 2012 (updated 13 December 2021) remind us that teachers, newly qualified teachers and Head of Schools should safeguard children and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of our professional duties.
- 26.2 The Children and Social Work Act of 2017, places responsibilities for Designated Teacher to have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

## **27. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

- 27.1 We have a Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children and child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. The Snr Designated Safeguarding Lead is a senior member of the school leadership team, and their responsibilities are explicit in their job description.
- 27.2 We also have at least two Deputy Safeguarding Lead, who will provide cover for the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead when they are not available. Our Deputy Safeguarding Lead has received the same training as our Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead. They will provide additional support to ensure the responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding children are fully embedded within the school ethos and that specific duties are discharged. They will assist the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead in managing referrals, attending child protection conferences, reviews, core group meetings and other meetings of a safeguarding and protection nature to support the child/children.
- 27.3 The DSL team are clearly identified on posters around the school, including in the school entrance area.
- 27.4 All DSL's have completed the required training and are overseen by the Snr Designated Safeguarding Lead
- 27.5 We acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding children. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure there is a structured procedure within the school, which will be followed by all the members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.

## **28. THE SENIOR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD IS EXPECTED TO:**

- 28.1 Manage Referrals:
  - 28.1.1 Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies.
  - 28.1.2 Support staff who make referrals to children's social care and other referral pathways.
  - 28.1.3 Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child and will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- 28.2 Ensure arrangements are in place year-round for all staff and volunteers to seek advice, support and inform of safeguarding concerns, or incidents and

disclosures that inform children are at risk of harm, or abuse, harm or bullying or sexual harm or harassment has occurred.

- 28.3 Ensure appropriate systems are in place to manage and address online safety, access to mobile phone networks, especially for those children who are potentially at greater risk of harm, abuse, and exploitation and refer concerns where required linked to the PREVENT duty.
- 28.4 The Senior DSL and DSL team meet on a regular basis so each is fully informed and able to respond to the needs of children subject to safeguarding concerns.
- 28.5 Our school supports vulnerable children and children subject to safeguarding concerns (see KCSiE 2025 Part One and Annex A for specific areas of a safeguarding vulnerability) by ensuring that these children are placed on the active monitoring list within the school's digital records system. Such children are of particular focus on a daily basis in all activities related to safeguarding. For those of our children accessing Alternate Provision (AP) the Senior DSL remains responsible for oversight of children on placements or alternative education arrangements. This is through regular liaison with the AP, visits and regular discussions with professionals.

#### 28.6 **WORK WITH OTHERS:**

- 28.6.1 Liaise with the Head of School/principal (where the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead role is not carried out by the Head of School) to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations.
- 28.6.2 As required, liaise with the 'case manager' (as per Part Four of KCSiE 2025) and the LADO where there are child protection concerns/allegations that relate to a member of staff.
- 28.6.3 Liaise with the case manager and the LADO/LADO Allegation Officer where there are concerns about a staff member.
- 28.6.4 Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and deciding when to make a referral by liaising with other agencies and acts as a source of support, advice, and expertise for other staff.
- 28.6.5 Take part in strategy discussions or attend inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so and to contribute to the assessment of children.
- 28.6.6 Liaise with the local authority and other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and the local Leicestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and practice guidance.
- 28.6.7 The Head of School, designated safeguarding leads and governing body/trust are aware of the local arrangements put in place by

Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (LRSCP) and know how to access the LRSCP website and training.

28.7 The DSLs regularly contribute to developing the curriculum and learning experiences for children and staff. This happens through staff meetings, bulletins, staff notice board, briefings, and arranging additional classroom learning opportunities.

28.8 Our school actively seeks to link and partner with any external agencies or services which can support our efforts to keep children safe.

**28.9 UNDERTAKE TRAINING:**

28.9.1 Formal Designated Safeguarding Lead training will be undertaken at least every two years. Informal training and updating of knowledge and skills will be at regular intervals, undertaken at least annually.

28.9.2 The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for their own training and should obtain access to resources or any relevant refresher training.

28.9.3 The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead is also responsible for ensuring all other staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities access up to date and timely safeguarding training and maintains a register or database to evidence the training.

28.10 The DSL role is supported through appropriate supervision and reflective practice to strengthen safeguarding decision-making and to manage the emotional demands of safeguarding work.

**28.11 THE TRAINING UNDERTAKEN SHOULD ENABLE THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD TO:**

28.11.1 Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention through the thresholds to access services.

28.11.2 Have a working knowledge of how the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership operates, the conduct of a child protection conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.

28.11.3 Ensure that each member of staff has access to the child protection policy and procedures.

28.11.4 Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.

- 28.11.5 Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, including those with special educational needs and or disabilities and young carers.
- 28.11.6 Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns, decisions and referrals.
- 28.11.7 Understand the Prevent Duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting and preventing children from the risk of radicalisation and being grooming into extremist behaviours and attitudes (KCSiE 2025 Annex A and B).
- 28.11.8 Understand the reporting requirements for FGM
- 28.11.9 Understand and support children to keep safe when online and when they are learning at home.
- 28.11.10 Encourage a culture of protecting children, listening to children and their wishes and feelings.

#### **28.12 RAISE AWARENESS:**

- 28.12.1 Ensure that the child protection policies are known, understood, and used appropriately.
- 28.12.2 Ensure that the child protection policy is reviewed annually in consultation with staff members, and procedures are updated and reviewed regularly and implemented, and that the governing body is kept up to date and actively involved.
- 28.12.3 Work strategically to ensure policies and procedures are up to date and drive and support development work within the school.
- 28.12.4 Ensure that the child protection policy is available to parents and carers and uploaded to the school website and make parents/carers aware that referrals may be made about suspected abuse or neglect
- 28.12.5 Ensure all staff receive induction training covering child protection before working with children and can recognise and report any concerns immediately as they arise.

#### **29. CHILD PROTECTION FILE - THE SENIOR DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD IS RESPONSIBLE:**

- 29.1 For ensuring that when a child leaves the school or college their 'child protection,' 'child in need' file or 'confidential' file is transferred to the new school or college at the same time the child goes on roll of its new school or education provision.
- 29.2 For keeping a record of the number of children open and subject to CP, CiN and LAC concerns is maintained and shared with the governing body annually.

- 29.3 For keeping a record or data on the cohort of children having or have had a social worker and social care involvement will be maintained.
- 29.4 Our school will maintain, keep and store records, where a concern about a child has been identified in accordance with statutory guidance in KCSiE 2025.
- 29.5 The Senior DSL and DSL team ensure all concerns and incidents are reported, recorded and responded to using the Smoothwall Safeguard digital system. This system is used to generate a paper record for the transfer of information and individual case files, should a child move school or leave to go to either Elective Home Education, alternative education placement, or college in accordance with KCSiE 2025 Annex C .
- 29.6 Availability - During term time the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy) will always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Leads a member of the senior leadership team will be nominated to provide cover. Arrangements are also in place all year round for any out of school hours' activities in line with the guidance contained in DfE KCSiE 2025 Part Two and Annex C].

### **30. HEAD OF SCHOOL**

- 30.1 The Head of School will ensure that:
  - 30.1.1 The policies and procedures adopted by the local governing committee or MAT (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation), are understood, and followed by **all** staff.
  - 30.1.2 The school maintains an up-to-date Single Central Record (SCR) which is reviewed regularly and is compliant with statutory guidance.
  - 30.1.3 Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children.
  - 30.1.4 All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice with regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies.
  - 30.1.5 The Head of School will ensure all staff including supply teachers and volunteers have access to and read and understand the requirements

placed on them through: - the school Child Protection Policy; the Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

- 30.1.6 The Head of School will ensure there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to fully understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in KCSiE 2025.
- 30.1.7 Where there is an allegation made against a member of staff (either paid or unpaid, including volunteers) that meets the criteria for a referral to the LADO, then the Head of School or principal will discuss the allegation immediately with the LADO (within 24 hours) and ensure that cases are managed as per Part Four: Allegations made against/Concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers, and contractors in KCSiE 2025. If the allegation is against the Head of School, then the CEO of our MAT will manage the allegation – see below.

### **31. GOVERNING BODY AND MULTI- ACADEMY TRUST**

- 31.1 We recognise our MAT and our local governing committee has a strategic leadership responsibility for our school's safeguarding arrangements and must ensure they comply with their duties under legislation and must have regard to KCSiE 2025, ensuring policies, procedures and training in our school are effective and always comply with the law.
- 31.2 The MAT and our local governing committee will be collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day to day safeguarding practices by:
  - 31.2.1 Ensuring there is an individual member of the local governing body to take oversight responsibility for safeguarding and champion child protection issues in the school.
  - 31.2.2 Ensuring that the school has effective policies and procedures in line with statutory guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023) as well as with local LRSCP guidance and monitors the school's compliance with them.
  - 31.2.3 Ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to promote a child's welfare.

- 31.2.4 Recognising the importance of information sharing between agencies through the statutory guidance provided within KCSiE 2025 Annex C page 172 to 173 and paragraphs 56 to 57, 115 to 121, 375, to 390, 476, 540 and 544 and page 158, the additional clarification about GDPR and withholding information.
- 31.2.5 Ensuring cooperation with the local authority and other safeguarding partners.
- 31.2.6 Recognise the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead from the leadership team to take lead responsibility for child protection/safeguarding and ensure that a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is appointed and appropriately trained.
- 31.2.7 Ensuring that all staff, supply teachers and governors read and fully understand at least KCSiE 2025 Part One and or Annex A as a minimum and ensure that there are mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as required within the guidance.
- 31.2.8 Ensuring that the governing body understands it is collectively responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements, even though a governor will be nominated as the 'Safeguarding Governor' and person who will champion all safeguarding requirements.'
- 31.2.9 All members of the governing body will undertake safeguarding training to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective and support the delivery of robust 'safeguarding arrangements and act as the 'critical friend'. This training must focus on their strategic role and not on operational procedures.
- 31.2.10 The Chair of Governors and named Safeguarding Governor will access role specific training to enable them to comply and discharge their child protection/ safeguarding responsibilities including should any allegations be made against the Head of School.
- 31.2.11 The Governing body will collectively ensure there is a training strategy in place for all staff, including the Head of School, so that child protection training is undertaken and refreshed in line with KCSiE 2025 and LRSCP guidance.
- 31.2.12 Ensuring that staff undergo safeguarding child protection training at induction and that there are arrangements in place for staff to be regularly updated to ensure that safeguarding remains a priority.

- 31.2.13 Ensuring that temporary staff and volunteers who work with children are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities.
- 31.2.14 Ensuring there are procedures in place to manage allegations against staff and exercise disciplinary functions in respect of dealing with a complaint KCSiE 2025 Part Four Section One.
- 31.2.15 Ensuring that arrangements/procedures are in place to manage and provide clarity on the process for sharing 'low level' concerns, which should be referred to within the school/college Staff Code of Conduct, (Allegations and concerns about a staff member that after initial consideration by the 'case manager' do not meet the criteria for a referral to LADO).
- 31.2.16 Ensuring a response if there is an allegation against the Head of School by liaising with the MAT CEO, the LADO or other appropriate officers within the local authority.
- 31.2.17 Ensuring appropriate responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, including child sexual exploitation and going missing in future.
- 31.2.18 Be aware of the issues involving the complexity of serious violence and sexual violence and sexual harassment between children and ensure the school has policy, procedures and staff are trained (including the DSL and Senior Leadership) to recognise and respond to incidents and resources to manage actions and support for those involved.
- 31.2.19 Be alert and respond to harmful online challenges and hoaxes, including providing information and advice to parents and carers and informing where to get help and support.
- 31.2.20 Be alert to the growing concerns involving knife crime and ensure the school works closely with the police and safeguarding partners to raise awareness of the impact of such crime and adopt proactive practice to address concerns locally and within the community.
- 31.2.21 Ensuring appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children online and children are taught about keeping safe online through the curriculum.
- 31.2.22 Giving staff the opportunities to contribute and shape safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy.

- 31.2.23 When the school premises are used for non-school/college activities the MAT will seek assurances that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, and inspect them as needed, including liaising with the Head of School. This will apply regardless of whether or not children who attend the provision are on the school or college roll.
- 31.2.24 Any safeguarding concerns involving outside organisations will be addressed through our school safeguarding policies and procedures and in line with Leicestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures.
- 31.2.25 Prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, making decisions about additional checks and ensuring volunteers are supervised as required.
- 31.2.26 Ensure at least one person on an interview panel has completed safer recruitment training.
- 31.2.27 Inform any new prospective employees' candidate that our school will carry out online checks (KCSiE 2025 Part Three Safer Recruitment).
- 31.2.28 Recognising that certain children are more vulnerable than others, such as looked after children and children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 31.2.29 Be open to accepting that child abuse and incidents can happen within the school and be available to act decisively upon them.

## **32. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN – THE ROLE OF DESIGNATED TEACHER AND THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

- 32.1 A teacher is appointed who has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after. They have the appropriate training. The Designated Teacher will work with the Virtual School to ensure that the progress of the child is supported.
- 32.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also have details of the child's social worker and the name of the Head of the Virtual School. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely with the Designated Teacher, as we recognise that children may have been abused or neglected before becoming looked after. We will ensure their ongoing safety and wellbeing as well as supporting their education, through linking with their social worker, carers, and parents where appropriate.

32.3 We also recognise those children who were previously Looked-After potentially remain vulnerable and all staff will be informed of the importance of maintaining support for them through our school pastoral system. As a school we will continue to recognise the importance of working with agencies and take prompt actions where necessary to safeguard these children, who may remain vulnerable.

32.4 The Head of the Virtual school includes responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children in kinship care. Therefore, schools should recognise that these children may require additional support to be successful in school.

### **33. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

33.1 We recognise that children with special educational needs (SEN) and or disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges on and offline. Children with SEN and or disabilities are especially vulnerable when identifying concerns due to their impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

33.2 All staff are aware that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation for children with SEND and be more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. They may not always show outward signs and may have communication barriers and difficulties in reporting challenges, especially involving exploitation or incidents involving child- on -child harm, abuse, or harassment and particularly where that harassment or harm is of a sexual nature. Our staff's vigilance will be a supporting factor to keeping all children safe.

33.3 Staff should consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place. Further information can be found in the DfE:

- [SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years](#), and [Supporting children at School with Medical Conditions](#).

33.4 Our policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect, and exploitation in this group of children which include:

33.4.1 Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.

33.4.2 Children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming their ability to disclose incidents or the risk of harm they feel subject to,

33.4.3 Addressing individual behaviour concerns and incidents considering the child's SEN and disabilities.

33.4.4 Recognising and having in place additional support for example to teach, advise, mentor and support children with SEND from online harms, hoaxes, bullying, grooming and radicalisation and enable them to have confidence and the ability to stay safe online, either in schools or outside the school environment.

### **34. ACTING WHERE CONCERNS ARE IDENTIFIED**

34.1 Our staff recognise the difference between concerns about a child and a child in immediate danger.

34.2 If staff have concerns about a child, they will need to decide what action to take. A discussion should take place with the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead, to agree a course of action.

34.3 If a child is in immediate danger or risk of harm a referral will be made immediately to First Response and/or immediately to the police if at imminent risk of harm by the member of staff if required, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead being informed of the referral.

34.4 If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about alleged abuse, there are several actions that staff will undertake to support the child:

34.4.1 The key facts will be established in language that the child understands, and the child's words will be used in clarifying/expanding what has been said.

34.4.2 No promises will be made to the child, e.g., to keep secrets.

34.4.3 Staff will stay calm and be available to listen.

34.4.4 Staff will actively listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying.

34.4.5 Where questions are asked, this should be done without pressurising and only using open questions.

- 34.4.6 Leading questions should be avoided as much as possible.
- 34.4.7 Questioning should not be extensive or repetitive.
- 34.4.8 Staff will not put words in the child's mouth but will subsequently note the main points carefully.
- 34.4.9 A full written record will be kept by the staff duly signed and dated, including the time the conversation with the child took place, outline what was said, comment on the child's body language etc.
- 34.4.10 It is not appropriate for staff to make children write statements about abuse that may have happened to them or get them to sign the staff record.
- 34.4.11 Staff will reassure the child and let them know that they were right to inform them and inform the child that this information will now have to be passed on.
- 34.4.12 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be immediately informed unless the disclosure has been made to them.
- 34.4.13 Information should be shared with children's social care without delay, either to the child's own social worker or to First Response. Children's Social Care will liaise with the police where required, which will ensure an appropriate police officer response rather than a uniformed response.
- 34.4.14 The Police would only therefore be contacted directly in an emergency or if a child is in immediate risk of harm, abuse, or danger.

Staff should never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected child abuse by interviewing the child or any others involved, especially if a criminal act is thought to have occurred. The only people who should investigate child abuse and harm are Social Care, Police, or the NSPCC.

## **35. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 35.1 We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential; however, a member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to children; children will not be given promises that any information about an allegation will not be shared.
- 35.2 Where there is a child protection concern it will be passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or to children's social care. When a child is in immediate danger children's social care/the police will be contacted.

- 35.3 The Head of School or Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead will disclose personal information about a child to other members of staff, including the level of involvement of other agencies, only on a 'need to know' basis.
- 35.4 All staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. They are aware that the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 should not be a barrier to sharing of information where failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm. Staff should refer to the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools (DfE, 2024b).
- 35.5 We acknowledge further guidance can be found by visiting Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership website: <https://lrsb.org.uk/>

## **36. INFORMATION SHARING**

- 36.1 Effective sharing of information between practitioners and local organisations and agencies is essential for early identification of need, assessment, and service provision to keep children safe. Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) now known as Rapid Reviews (RRs) have highlighted that missed opportunities to record and thereby understand the significance of sharing information in a timely manner can have severe consequences for the safety and welfare and well-being of children (Working Together to Safeguard Children, December 2023).
- 36.2 We will adopt the information sharing principles detailed in statutory safeguarding guidance contained within:
- 36.2.1 DfE KCSiE 2025 has several sections which provide clarity on information sharing processes and GDPR including within Annex C which makes clear the powers to hold and use information when promoting children's welfare.
  - 36.2.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 paragraphs 28 to 33 and on pages 18 -20.
  - 36.2.3 Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers (which has been updated to reflect the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.
  - 36.2.4 Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) Policy and Practice Guidance.

36.2.5 All staff will receive specific GDPR training on a bi-annual basis, with additional training given where specific guidance changes in the interim.

## **37. RECORDS AND MONITORING**

- 37.1 Our school uses SmoothWall Safeguard to electronically record concerns and subsequent actions taken. These are stored in a clear and auditable chronology. The system allows for files to be exported, separately from the main children file, and transferred electronically to other schools using the same system or as password protected PDF files for those using other systems.
- 37.2 Any concerns about a child will be recorded in writing within 24 hours. All records will provide a factual and evidence-based account and there will be accurate recording of any actions. Records will be signed, dated and, where appropriate, witnessed. Where an opinion or professional judgement is recorded this should be clearly stated as such. As well as keeping records of concerns, discussions and decisions, designated safeguarding leads should keep record of the rationale for any decisions made.
- 37.3 At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school be asked to or consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person; this type of behaviour could lead to the staff member being taken into managing allegations procedures. The body maps should be used in accordance with recording guidance and to support clarity for example of areas of injury, marks and bruising and or touching.
- 37.4 Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services e.g., First Response or the child's social worker if already an open case to social care.
- 37.5 A chronology will be kept in the main school file prior to the commencement of a concern file. Staff, particularly pastoral staff, will record any minor concerns on the chronology and will take responsibility for alerting the Designated Safeguarding Lead should the number of concerns rise or, in their professional judgement, become significant.
- 37.6 Our school will ensure all our files will be available for external scrutiny for example by a regulatory agency or because of a serious case review or audit.

## **38. WHY RECORDING IS IMPORTANT**

- 38.1 Our staff will be encouraged to understand why it is important that recording is comprehensive and accurate and what the messages from serious case reviews are in terms of recording and sharing information. It is often when a chronology of information is pieced together that the level of concern escalates or the whole or wider picture becomes known.
- 38.2 Our school uses the digital Smoothwall Safeguard system.
- 38.3 We acknowledge without information being recorded it can be lost. This could be crucial information, the importance of which is not always necessarily apparent at the time. On occasions, this information could be crucial evidence to safeguard a child or be evidence in future criminal prosecutions.

### **39. THE CHILD PROTECTION (CP), CHILD IN NEED (CIN) OR CONFIDENTIAL FILE**

- 39.1 A 'child protection' or 'confidential' record should be commenced in the event of:
- A referral to First Response/Children's Social Care.
  - Any child open to social care.
  - A concern is raised in the electronic system by a staff member.
- 39.2 All 'child protection' or 'confidential' file should contain the following:
- A page header with all relevant children information.
  - A chronology.
  - A record of concern in more detail and body map, where appropriate.
  - A record of concerns and issues shared by others.
- 39.3 The school will keep electronic records of concerns about children even where there is no need to refer the matter to First Response/Children's Social Care (or similar) immediately, but these records will be kept within the electronic system being used.
- 39.4 Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly by the Snr Designated Safeguarding Lead, to evidence and support actions taken by staff in discharging their safeguarding arrangements. Original notes - if recorded on paper - will be retained (but clearly identified as such) as this is a contemporaneous account; they may be important in any criminal proceedings arising from current or historical allegations of abuse or neglect.
- 39.5 The 'confidential' file can be active or non-active in terms of monitoring i.e., a child is no longer LAC, subject to a child protection plan or EHAF and this level of activity can be recorded as a 'tag' on the electronic record. If future concerns

arise, they can be re-activated and indicated as such on the front sheet and on the chronology as new information arises.

#### **40. TRANSFER OF CHILD'S CHILD PROTECTION FILE, CHILD IN NEED, LAC, OR CONFIDENTIAL FILE (STATUTORY REQUIREMENT):**

- 40.1 Our school will adopt the file transfer guidance contained in KCSiE 2025 and ensure when a child moves school/education provision their child protection/confidential file is sent securely to their new educational setting when the child starts/ leaves the school/academy.
- 40.2 For those children subject of social care and safeguarding agency involvement will ensure the file is able to evidence the child's journey and include key information as described in KCSiE 2025 should a child subject to social care involvement transfer schools, college, or education provider we will ensure the child's child protection or confidential file move is transferred within 5 days as required by KCSiE.
- 40.3 Our Senior DSLs will liaise directly with the receiving school, college or alternative placement and hold a discussion to share important information to support the child's transfer to ensure the child remains safeguarded, has any 'reasonable adjustments' agreed, and put in place and to ensure the changes experienced by the child are as smooth as possible to enable a positive integration experience and engagement with new staff and learning.
- 40.4 In accordance with KCSiE 2025 we will maintain information on cohorts of children who have been open to social care, have had a social worker or who are closed to social care and may have returned to the family home. This information will only be considered for sharing 'if appropriate' with the new school or provider in advance of the child leaving to allow for the new school to continue supporting the children who have had a social worker or been victims of abuse, including those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme.
- 40.5 When a child attends Alternative Provision the safeguarding file will remain with the child's school, the DSL must share relevant information to allow the Alternative Provision to safeguard the child.

#### **41. RECORDING PRACTICE**

- 41.1 Timely and accurate recording will take place when there are any issues regarding a child.

- 41.2 A recording of each and every incident or concern for the child will be made, including any telephone calls to other professionals. These will also be recorded on the chronology and kept within the child protection file for that child, as over time they are likely to help identify any patterns or emerging risks and needs. This will include any contact from other agencies who may wish to discuss concerns relating to a child. Actions will be agreed, and roles and responsibility of each agency will be clarified, and outcomes recorded.
- 41.3 The chronology will be brief and log activity; the full recording will be on the record of concern.
- 41.4 Further detailed recording will be added to the record of concern and will be electronically signed and dated. Records will include an analysis of the event or concerns and will take account of the holistic needs of the child, and any historical information held on the child's file.
- 41.5 Support and advice will be sought from social care, or early help whenever necessary. In this way a picture can emerge, and this will assist in promoting an evidence-based assessment and determining any action(s) that needs to be taken.
- 41.6 This may include no further action, whether an Early Help Assessment should be undertaken, or whether a referral should be made to First Response/Children's Social Care in-line with the Threshold for access to services published September 2021, or any later edition made available by Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 41.7 Such robust practice across child protection and in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will assist the school and DSL team in the early identification of any concerns which may require addressing further and the prevention of future harm, risk, or abuse.
- 41.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm (through the concern file and through an ongoing dialogue with pastoral staff). They will ensure that we contribute to assessments of need and support multi-agency plans for those children.

## **42. EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE – OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH SAFEGUARDING**

- 42.1 As a school we will teach children in an age-appropriate way about youth produced imagery, on-line risks associated with social networking to prevent harm by providing them with the skills, attributes, and knowledge to help them

navigate risks, including covering online safety, remote learning, filters and monitoring, information security, cyber-crime, fake news, disinformation and conspiracy theories, reviewing online safety platforms and use of mobile technology. We will ensure appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness.

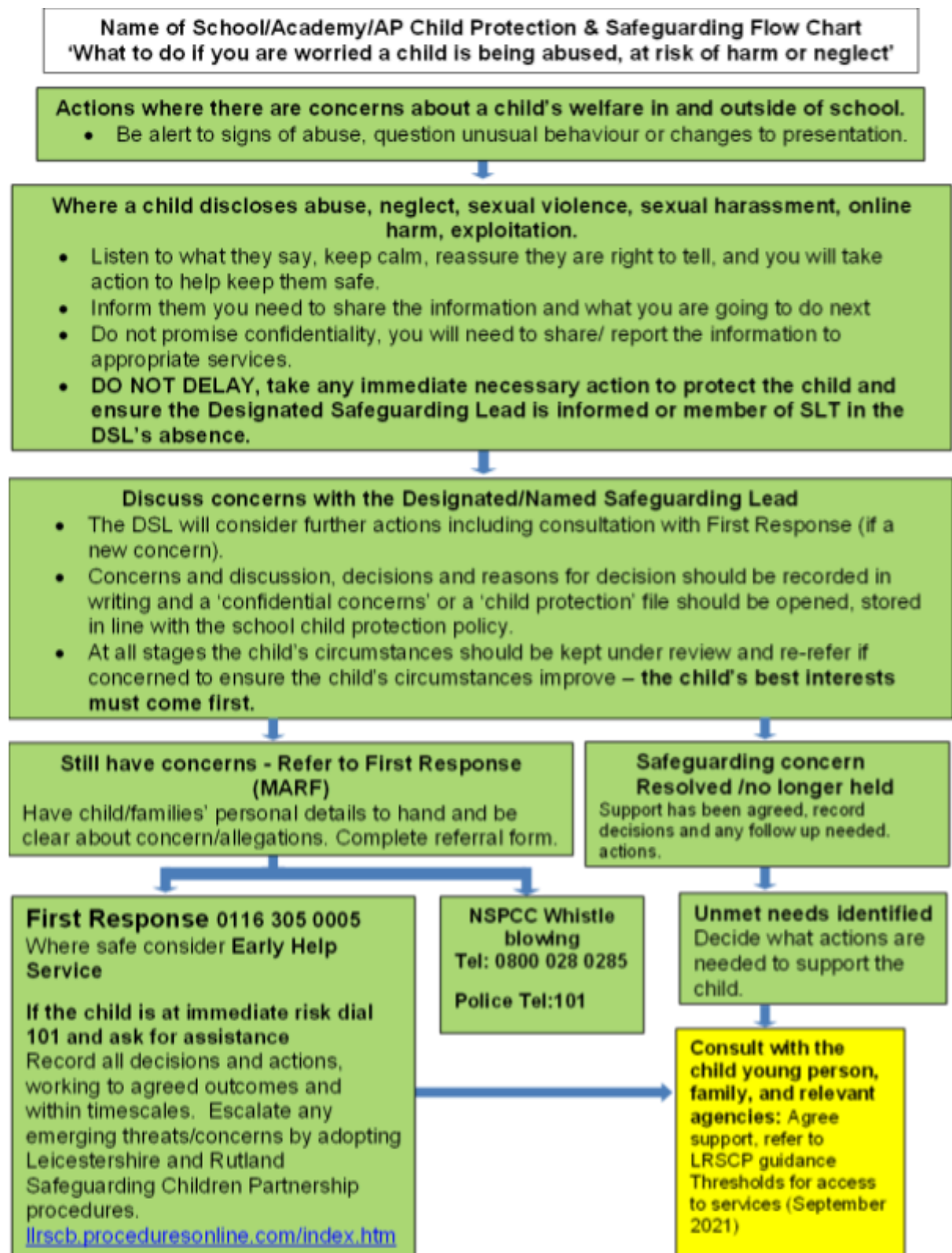
- 42.2 The education we provide for online safety will take into account the need for children to learn using online technologies to include generative artificial intelligence in a safe environment whether that be in school, in the home or in a community environment. This will also be taught as part of a wider RSHE programme, as well as through other subject areas and ICT.
- 42.3 We will ensure a whole school approach is in place to promote giving children the space to explore key issues in a sensitive way and the confidence to seek the support of adults should they encounter problems or online harms, hoaxes or harassment including involving incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children.
- 42.4 We will carefully consider mobile phone use and the new filtering and monitoring standard required by DfE and how this is managed in school and ensure it is reflected in our mobile and smart technology policy. This will include where children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e., 3G, 4G and 5G).
- 42.5 Our arrangements will be regularly reviewed to address this additional area of safeguarding as technologies change on a regular basis and having access to smart technology could mean some children, whilst at school/college, sexually harass, bully, and control others via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images consensually and non-consensually (via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content.
- 42.6 Our school uses CORAM: SCARF as it's PSHE content which delivers online safety (and other) at an age appropriate level, building on the content year on year.
- 42.7 The school notes that revised RSHE guidance published in July 2025 will apply from September 2026. The school will review and update its curriculum and related policies in good time to reflect any statutory changes.
- 42.8 Children and parents are made aware of online safety to minimise the safeguarding risks technology can pose and where they can seek advice, help, and support. Children are taught this content as part of the curriculum and parents have this information shared with them via regular newsletters, the school website and in-school workshops as appropriate.

- 42.9 Where arrangements have been made for children who access education from home and under what circumstances: the school continues to ensure that there are weekly safe and well checks, regular TAF meetings and reviews with ambition to get children back in school as soon as possible.

### **43. HELPLINES AND REPORTING**

- 43.1 Children can talk to a Child Line counsellor 24 hours a day about anything that is worrying them by ringing 0800 11 11 or in an online chat at <https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat/>
- 43.2 Where staff members feel unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feel they have a genuine concern that is not being addressed we acknowledge they may wish to consider whistleblowing channels. Likewise, if parents and carers are concerned about their child, they can contact the NSPCC Helpline by ringing 0800 028 028 0295, or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
- 43.3 For children and families affected by harmful sexual behaviour, additional support and advice is available via the [Lucy Faithfull Foundation's Shore service](#). Staff should share concerns with the DSL, who can advise on appropriate support and referral pathways.

#### 43.4 Appendix 1 - Child Protection & Safeguarding Flow Chart



**Contacts:** For any allegations/concerns regarding an adult who works with (in either paid/voluntarily) employment with children contact the LA Designated Officer (LADO) [CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk](mailto:CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk) Outside of office hours, contact the First Response Children's Duty Team: 0116 305 0005

LA Safeguarding and Compliance Lead [Charlotte.Davis@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Charlotte.Davis@leics.gov.uk) 0116 305 7750

## **Appendix 2 - List of services/useful websites/agencies we work with:**

Services School have access to are

- Educational Psychology Service

Specialist Teaching Services which has been restructured into the following teams:

- Vision Support Team
- Assistive Technology for Education Team
- Autism and Learning Support Team
- Hearing Support Team
- Dorothy Goodman outreach support
- Oakfield Behaviour Forum
- Special Educational Needs Assessment Service (SENA)
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- School Nurse
- Member National Association of Special Educational Needs (NASEND)
- SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

School is actively involved with:

- IPAT SEND Co-ordinators Network
- Leicestershire Virtual School
- Leicester City Virtual School
- Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust
- Warwickshire Virtual School

### **Signposts for parents-**

**Leicestershire Local Offer:** provides local support and information for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

**Leicestershire SEND Hub:** The Leicestershire SEND Hub is a parent carer led organisation for families of children and young people with additional or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who live or access services in Leicestershire.

<https://www.leicestershiresendhub.org.uk/>

**ADHD Solutions UK** - They Support children, young people and adults who have ADHD, their families, and the professionals who are working with them. <https://www.adhdsolutions.org/>

**Jigsaw** (Leicestershire Autistic Society) Parent/Carer support group

<https://www.leicestershireautisticsociety.org.uk/las-support-activity-groups/>

Leicestershire children and family and wellbeing service Children and Family Wellbeing Service | Leicestershire County Council

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/social-care-and-supporting-families/help-for-children-and-families>

### **Appendix 3**

## **Appendix 3 - Low-Level Concerns Policy**

### 1. Introduction

Inspiring Primaries Academy Trust ("Trust") takes its responsibility of care for its students seriously. The

Trust recognises that any allegation that a member of staff may have harmed a student must be investigated thoroughly, and in a way that does not prejudice either the student or the member of staff. Any investigation of an allegation of abuse against a member of staff must follow the objective, professional standards and routines described here.

In designing these routines and standards, we recognise the overarching requirement for confidentiality and in all cases, we will follow the guidance in Part 4 of the latest iteration of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

Staff must ensure that they are familiar with the Staff Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Rules, and clearly understand the provisions of their schools' Safeguarding Procedures.

### 2. The Law

The framework for managing cases of allegations of abuse against people who work with children is set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children': A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children which provides an overview of how allegations should be handled. It is relevant for the purposes of s.157 and s.175 of the Education Act 2002.

Other legislation:

- The Children Act 1989
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (local authorities, governing bodies of maintained schools and institutions in further education sector)
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002
- Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014
- The Children Act 2004
- Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (other agencies)

### 3. About these Procedures

This statement of procedures has two sections covering the two levels of allegation/concern:

- i. Allegations that may meet the harm threshold, and
- ii. Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold, referred to, for the purposes of these procedures as "low-level concerns".

Section one: Concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold.

This part of the guidance is about managing cases of concerns/allegations that may indicate a person will pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position,

or in any capacity with children in a school or college. In this section reference is made to 'allegation' for ease. This part of the guidance should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

1. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
3. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
4. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The harm test is explained in the Disclosure and Barring service Guidance: Making barring referrals to the DBS and Section 31(9) of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act.

Point 4 includes behaviour that may have occurred outside of school, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, known as "transferable risk". Where appropriate, an assessment of this transferable risk should be undertaken in respect of the children with whom the person works. Advice should be sought from the LADO as appropriate.

Allegations should be reported, without delay to the Head of School.

Where the subject of the allegation is the Head of School, the report should be made to the HR Manager who will confidentially advise the CEO and the Chair of Trustees.

A "Head of School" will lead any investigation. Depending on the circumstances set out above, this will be either the Headteacher / Executive Headteacher, or the HR Manager.

Throughout these procedures the reference to "Head of School" should be read as "HR Manager" in circumstances where the subject of the allegation is the Head of School.

The initial response to an allegation

Where the school identifies a child has been harmed, that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, they should contact local authority children's social care and as appropriate the police immediately in accordance with prevailing safeguarding practice.

On receipt of an allegation the Head of School will

- a) delegate, confidentially, to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or their deputy) the responsibility for the welfare of the child; ensuring they are not at risk and making any necessary social care referrals.

And

- b) undertake basic enquiries to establish the facts, to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, but being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation by:

- i. establishing if the individual was in school at the time of the allegation, or not.
- ii. establishing if the individual did, or could have, come into contact with the child,
- iii. establishing if there are any witnesses,
- iv. establishing if there is any CCTV footage available.

Having undertaken steps a) and b) the Head of School will then contact the LADO to discuss the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action.

The outcome of this discussion will inform the next steps which will likely be one of the following:

- The matter is not criminal. School (and other agencies as appropriate) investigate and report their findings back to LADO before progressing the case.
- The matter may be criminal. Police investigation is required – the school should cease any internal investigation until it is agreed otherwise.
- School deals with the matter in accordance with their internal procedures as the allegation does not meet the harm threshold.
- No further action

A representative of the Trust's HR team is to be invited to attend LADO strategy meetings and discussions to provide HR advice.

The timing of sharing information about the allegation with the subject should be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis, with guidance as required from the LADO, and if appropriate local authority children's social care and the police.

Inspiring Primaries Academy Trust takes seriously its duty of care to our employees. We will take reasonable steps to ensure that any stress caused by the allegation is minimised and managed by:

- Sharing as much information as soon as possible, explaining the likely course of action, guided by the LADO, and the police where necessary.
- Setting out clearly the need to maintain confidentiality and our commitment to do likewise.
- Advising the individual to contact their trade union representative, or a colleague for support.
- Appoint a named representative to keep the person informed about the progress of the case.
- Provide access to counselling via SOS where appropriate.
- Provide access to medical advice via Occupational Health where appropriate.

If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion involving the police and/or local authority children's social care will be convened in accordance with the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children. If the allegation is about physical contact, for example restraint, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation will take into account that teachers and other school and

college staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain children in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Further information about the use of reasonable force can be found in Part Two of KCSIE and on GOV.UK.

Where the Head of School is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the member of staff's family, they should discuss these concerns with the DSL (or a deputy) and make a risk assessment of the situation. It may be necessary for the DSL to make a referral to local authority children's social care.

Where the strategy discussion/initial assessment with the LADO determines that that an investigation by the police or local authority children's social care is not necessary the Headteacher / Executive Headteacher will be tasked to deal with the matter in accordance with IPAT's internal procedures.

#### No further action

Where the initial discussion leads to no further action, the Headteacher / Executive Headteacher and the LADO will:

- record the decision and justification for it, and
- agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.

The Headteacher / Executive Headteacher will additionally determine if the matter is to be recorded as a "Low Level Concern" as set out in Part Two of these procedures.

#### Further enquiries

Where further enquiries are required to enable a decision about how to proceed, the LADO and Head of School should discuss how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. The LADO will

provide advice and guidance to schools when considering allegations against adults working with children.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, local authority children's social care, or the school or a combination of these.

In straightforward cases, the investigation should normally be undertaken by a senior member of the School.

The Head of School will monitor the progress of cases liaising with the LADO to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible in a thorough and fair process.

KCISE suggests that a first review should take place no later than four weeks after the initial assessment, and subsequent reviews should ideally take place at fortnightly (and no longer than monthly) intervals. However, this may vary depending on the local authority and the involvement of other agencies.

## Suspension

Suspension will not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. All options to avoid suspension will be considered prior to taking that step.

The Head of School will consider carefully whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children at the school, until the allegation is resolved and will take into consideration potential professional reputational damage to employees that may result where an allegation is later found to be unfounded, unsubstantiated, malicious, or false.

Thus, suspension 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, and/or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal.

The Head of School after seeking views from the LADO, (and police and local authority children's social care if they have been or are involved) the Head of School should consult the HR Manager before making a determination as to suspension.

The following options may present acceptable alternatives to suspension, depending on the circumstances:

- redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned.
- ensuring the individual does not have unsupervised access to children by either ensuring they are accompanied when they have contact with children or redeploying to alternative work.
- moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the member of staff,  
> only if it is in the best interests 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 have been consulted,
- temporarily redeploying the member of staff to another role in a different location.

Where the Head of School (after consultation with the HR Manager) determines that suspension is the appropriate course of action, that decision will be confirmed in writing giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. The letter will provide details of a named contact and other sources of support. It will also set out that social contact with work colleagues and friends, is not prohibited unless where this may prejudice the gathering of evidence.

When we are made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order, in respect of an individual, we will take immediate action to ensure the person does

not carry out work in contravention of the order. The specific action will depend on the particular circumstances of the case and will be on a without prejudice basis.

#### Confidentiality and Information sharing

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the Head of School will ask the police to obtain consent to share relevant statements and evidence for use in any subsequent disciplinary process.

Where consent is provided, it will enable the police to share relevant information without delaying the conclusion of their investigation or any court case.

Where Local Authority children's social care are involved, the Head of School will ask them to obtain similar consent in the course of their enquiries so that any information obtained which may be relevant to any disciplinary case can be passed to the employer without delay.

It is an offence (except in the limited circumstance expressly permitted by the legislation), for any person to publish any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher in a school who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a child from the same school (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation).

These reporting restrictions apply until the point that the accused person is charged with a relevant offence, or the Secretary of State publishes information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case arising from the allegation.

The reporting restrictions do not apply where the individual effectively waives their right to anonymity by going public themselves or by giving their written consent for another to do so or if a court lifts the reporting restrictions in response to a request to do so.

The legislation prevents the "publication" (any speech, writing, relevant programme or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public.) of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of the allegation.

This means that a parent who, for example, published details of the allegation on a social networking site would be in breach of the reporting restrictions (if what was published could lead to the identification of the teacher by members of the public).

In circumstances where schools need to make parents aware about an allegation, we will also make parents aware that reporting and publishing restrictions apply.

The Head of School will consult the LADO (and, where involved, local authority children's social care and/or the police) on what information can be disclosed so that parents or carers of the child or children involved may be:

- formally told about the allegation as soon as possible
- kept informed about the progress of the case, only in relation to their child - no information can be shared regarding the staff member, and

- made aware that the requirement to maintain confidentiality and unwanted publicity about any allegations made against teachers in schools are set out in section 141F of the Education Act 2002.

The police will not normally provide any information to the press or media that might identify an individual who is under investigation, unless and until the person is charged with a criminal offence.

Inspiring Primaries Academy Trust takes its obligations in respect of confidentiality seriously and will take reasonable and proportionate steps to maintain confidentiality, and in observing its legal obligations.

We will give careful consideration to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, the law of confidence and, where relevant, the Human Rights Act 1998 and other relevant legislation in determining what information to disclose to whom and when.

Therefore, the Head of School will take advice from the LADO, the police and local authority children's social care to agree the following:

- who needs to know and exactly what information can be shared.
- how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip
- what, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation and
- how to manage press interest if, and when, it should arise.

The Head of School will also take advice from the CEO in relation to managing press interest.

#### Allegation outcomes

The definitions that are used the outcome of an allegation is determined are set out below:

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. (the term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence), or
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

#### Following a substantiated allegation

If the allegation is substantiated and:

- the person is dismissed; resigns, or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services, or

- the employer ceases to use the person's services.

Where the subject of the allegation is a teacher, the Head of School will consider whether or not to make a referral to TRA (to consider whether the individual should be prohibited from teaching).

In addition a referral to the DBS must be made where an allegation is substantiated, and the harm test has been met. It is an offence not to do so.

Following a criminal investigation or a prosecution

The police will inform the LADO and the employer immediately when:

- a criminal investigation and any subsequent trial is complete
- it is decided to close an investigation without charge, or
- it is decided not to continue to prosecute after the person has been charged.

In those circumstances, during the joint assessment meeting the LADO should discuss with the Head of School whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed. Any information provided by the police and/or local authority children's social care will also inform that decision. The options will depend on the circumstances of the case, the result of the police investigation, or the trial, as well as the differing standard of proof between civil and criminal proceedings.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and the Head of School will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation was a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to local authority children's social care may be appropriate.

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who raised the allegation made it as per their own behaviour or staff disciplinary policy.

Returning to work

Where on the conclusion of a case a person who has been suspended is permitted to return to work, the Head of School will consult with HR about ways to do so. Such considerations may include:

- a phased return
- the provision of a mentor
- coaching and training
- consulting on how to manage the person's contact with the child or children who made the allegation can best be managed if they are still attending the school or college.

Managing the situation and exit arrangements.

We will not cease our investigations if the person leaves, resigns or ceases to provide their services and take appropriate steps to ensure that a conclusion is reached in any cases where allegations have a bearing on the safety or welfare of children, including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate.

We will provide reasonable and appropriate opportunity to the accused to answer, and make representations about, the allegation.

Where the individual refuses to engage, does not respond to written requests for information or otherwise does not cooperate, we will record the information we do have and reach a judgement as to whether the allegation can be substantiated or otherwise on the basis of the information available. This determination will be recorded, and the person concerned will be notified in writing of the conclusions drawn and any sanctions that might or could have been posed had they engaged.

In limited circumstances, the Head of School may consider it appropriate to use a settlement agreement to end the employment relationship on agreed terms. However, this will only happen after taking advice from the HR Manager.

Where a settlement agreement is used it will not prevent us from:

- fulfilling our legal duty to refer cases to the DBS where the referral criteria are met or
- providing an appropriate reference to potential employers when requested or
- considering whether to make a referral to the TRA where the criteria are met.

#### Record keeping

Details of allegations following an investigation that are found to have been malicious or false will be removed from an employee's personnel records unless the individual gives their consent for retention of the information.

Where an allegation is substantiated and crossed the harm threshold, the following information will be retained on the personnel file:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation.
- details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved.
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome e.g., substantiated.
- statement that the information will be referred to in future employment references.
- a copy provided to the person concerned, where agreed by local authority children's social care or the police.

Where an allegation is unfounded, or unsubstantiated, or substantiated and has not crossed the harm threshold the following information will be recorded in accordance with the procedures set out in Part Two "Low Level Concerns:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation.
- details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved.
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- statement that the information will not be referred to in future employment references.

- a copy provided to the person concerned, where agreed by local authority children's social care or the police.

The purpose of these records is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time.

All other records will be retained in accordance with the provisions set out in the IPAT Records Management and Document Retention Policy.

## References

Cases in which an allegation was found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in employer references.

Any repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in any reference.

Information relating to substantiated safeguarding allegations that meet the harm threshold will be included in employment references where such information is requested or is legally required. Every effort will be taken to ensure that the information provided is factual, accurate and does not contain negligent misstatement.

## Non-recent allegations

Should an adult make an allegation to our schools that they were abused as a child the individual should be advised to report the allegation to the police.

Non-recent allegations made by a child should be reported to the LADO in line with the local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. The LADO will coordinate with local authority children social care and the police.

Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago it happened.

## Section Two: Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (Low-Level Concerns)

What is a low-level concern?

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. If you have any doubt about whether your concern should be shared, speak to the DSL or Head of School.

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

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

We recognise that such behaviour exists on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but may not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

Staff are encouraged to self-refer in circumstances where they:

- find themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted,
- find themselves in a situation might appear compromising to others,
- on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way which falls below the expected professional standards.

### Sharing and Responding to low-level concerns

All low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person and recorded in the school's safeguarding reporting system and dealt with appropriately to protect staff from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings. If you have any doubt about whether your concern should be shared, speak to the DSL or Head of School.

IPAT seeks to:

- encourage staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns.
- address unprofessional behaviour and support the individuals to correct it at an early stage.
- Handle and respond to concerns sensitively and proportionately when they are raised, and
- Use this information to identify any weakness in our safeguarding system.

If you identify a low-level concern:

- If you have access to the schools safeguarding reporting system, record the details there.
- If you do not have access to the schools safeguarding reporting system, report concerns directly to the DSL or DDSL either in person or via the school's internal email address.
- If neither the DSL or DDSL are available and your opinion is that the issue is urgent, speak to the Head of School.

The Head of School will determine appropriate next steps/actions in respect of the low-level concerns, consulting with the DSL, depending on the nature of the concern raised.

Low-level concerns which are about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers.

If the concern is been raised via a third party, the Head of School (or a nominated deputy) will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously,

and

- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

The information collected assists to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. For example, informal or formal action in relation to any identified breaches of the IPAT Staff Code of Conduct or other disciplinary rules.

#### Recording low-level concerns

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing on the school safeguarding reporting system. The record should describe:

- details of the concern,
- the context in which the concern arose.
- action taken.
- The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

Low Level concern records are held securely and in accordance with IPAT's Data Protection Policy and the IPAT Records Management and Document Retention Policy.

Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour can be identified.

Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the Head of School will decide on a course of action which will be one of the following:

- Establishing if wider cultural issues within the school are a factor necessitating:
  - > Revision of appropriate policies and/or
  - > Delivering additional training
- Addressing the concerns through informal or formal disciplinary procedures or
- Where a pattern of behaviour suggests the harm threshold has been crossed a referral to the LADO will be made (Section one of these procedures).

#### References

Low-level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included for example, misconduct or poor performance for which a live sanction is in place, or (in the case of performance) is required because the new employment is teaching in a maintained school.

Low-level concerns which relate exclusively to safeguarding will not be referred to in a reference.

## Appendix 4 - Low-level Concern Reporting Form

Thank you for reporting your concerns. Please fill in the form below, including as much detail as you can, and return it directly to the Headteacher or a DSL. We ask that you keep all details, including the name of the staff member to whom the concern pertains, confidential.

Your details	
Name (optional)	
Role	
Date	
Details of individual whom the concern is about	
Name	
Role	
Relationship to the individual reporting the concern (e.g. manager, colleague)	
Details of concern	
<i>Please include as much detail as possible</i>	
Details of any children involved	
Name(s)	
Class(es)	
Do you believe there is a risk of harm to the above childre, either now or in the future, as a result of the individual's behaviour? Please give your reasons.	
Next steps	
What would you like to see happen in response to your concern?	
Are you willing to meet with the Headteacher/DSL to discuss your concern?	
Signature (optional)	

*For use by the safeguarding team*

<i>Date and time concern received</i>	
<i>Signature of Headteacher / DSL</i>	
<i>Action to be taken</i>	

## **Appendix 5 - Child on Child Abuse Policy**

Child on child abuse - We recognise that children sometimes display harmful behaviour themselves and that even if there are no reports, it may still be happening. Incidents or allegations will be referred on for appropriate support and intervention. Such abuse is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at all or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”. This abuse could for example include sexual violence and sexual harassment, “upskirting”, initiation/hazing type violence, all forms of bullying, abuse in intimate relationships between peers, consensual and non-consensual sharing of indecent images, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent and physical violence (eg hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, etc). This may be experienced by both boys and girls, however, girls are more likely to be the subject of abuse and boys carrying out the abuse. Some children may be more at risk of harm from specific issues such as sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination. We will therefore take positive action to create a culture of support and to ensure that girls and vulnerable groups such as LGBT and children from ethnic minority backgrounds feel confident to bring forward any concerns and have a safe space to talk to trusted staff about their experiences.

There are different school and local authority or Safeguarding Children Partnership guidances and policies which detail the school’s procedures to address and minimise these concerns including;

1. children Behaviour Policy
2. Anti-bullying Policy
3. E-safety/Online safety Policy
4. “Guidance for schools working with children who display harmful sexual behaviour” (Leicestershire LA Guidance)
5. DfE guidance Part 5 of “Keeping children safe in education”.

All children will be encouraged to report to a trusted adult in school all incidents of child on child abuse wherever it may have happened and will be taught about alternative ways of doing this both in school and elsewhere eg via a “worry box”. They will always be taken seriously and never given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting their concern or made to feel ashamed. It is recognised that even where no reports are received, this does not mean that such abuse is not taking place. It could just be that it has not been reported. Where an incident has occurred or specific risks are identified, the details will be added to a safeguarding or behaviour record for the children concerned and a thorough investigation conducted by the DSL, where appropriate. A written risk assessment will be undertaken by the DSL in order to minimise the risk of further harm and to ensure the safety of all staff and children. Parents or carers of the children involved will be informed as soon as it is appropriate to do so. Support plans will be written and help offered, by different adults in school (to avoid a possible conflict of interest), to the alleged child who has been harmed, the child or young person accused and any other children involved. A referral to any relevant outside agency will be made eg Police or Social Care. Detailed guidance and procedures are included in the linked guidance and school policies listed above.

The following steps will be taken to minimise the risk of child on child abuse:

- Staff training to ensure an understanding of what it is and how to recognise signs
- Promotion of a supportive environment by teaching about acceptable and unacceptable behaviours (including online) in both assemblies and the wider curriculum eg PSHE
- Clear procedures put in place to govern the use of mobile phones in school
- Appropriate staff supervision of children and identifying locations around the school site that are less visible and may present more risk to children