



## TRUST SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2025-26

Policy Reference No	SG002
Review Frequency	Annual
Reviewed	Spring 2026
Next Review Date	September 2026
Approved by	Full Board



**FLOURISHING FUTURES**  
**Empower, Excel, Together**

## Change Log

Spring 2026	<p><b>Section 7</b> Values and Safeguarding Culture (page 8):          Updated wording to replace previous references to general mobile technology guidance with a clear statement that the Trust operates a phone-free environment throughout the school day as a preventative safeguarding measure, with links to behaviour and acceptable use policies.</p> <p><b>Section 26 – Online Safety</b> (page 24):          Updated to explicitly confirm that pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones or personal smart devices during the school day as part of the Trust's safeguarding approach. Previous generic references to mobile technology guidance were removed and replaced with clear cross-references to the Positive Behaviour Policy and Pupil Acceptable Use Policy for consistency.</p> <p><b>Section 27 – Searching, Screening and Confiscation (Safeguarding Context)</b> (page 25):          New section added to establish the Trust's safeguarding-led approach to searching, screening and confiscation, including reference to mobile phones and personal electronic devices. The section clarifies lawful authority, proportionality, safeguarding oversight and recording expectations in line with Department for Education guidance.</p> <p><b>Cross-policy alignment:</b>          Updates ensure consistency between this policy and the Positive Behaviour Policy, Home-Academy Agreement, and Acceptable Use Policies, particularly in relation to mobile phone expectations and safeguarding responses.</p>
July 2025 for implementation September 2025	<p>Accessibility and Language Support added.          Updated in line with KCSIE 2025.</p> <p><b>Section 8: Site Access</b>  <b>Section 9: Details on Managing Allegations</b>, including Low level concerns further clarified.  <b>Section 24: Updated responsibility of Virtual School Head</b>  <b>Section 25: Updated link to Guidance on Alternative Provision</b> and reference to Annex 3 of the Trust Suspension and Exclusion Policy which MUST be referred when commissioning AP  <b>Section 26: Added information about the Trust approach to the use of AI</b>  <b>Annex 1 (Child on child abuse) updated re 'Gender Questioning', from KCSIE 2025.</b>          Annex 1: removal of 'spectrum / disorder' in line with Code of Practice</p>
June 2024	<p>Updated in line with KCSIE 2024, throughout, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated Definition of Safeguarding and promotion of welfare, in line with 'Working Together to safeguarding Children December 2023'.</li> <li>• Early Help amended to reflect revised working in line with 'Working Together to safeguarding Children December 2023'</li> <li>• Abuse and Neglect' – amended to include 'exploitation'.</li> <li>• Domestic Abuse, additional text included 'including where they see, hear, or experience its effects' when referring to domestic violence.</li> <li>• Attendance safeguarding updated to 'deliberately missing education' amended to reflect revised definition of 'unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education'</li> <li>• Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR – paragraph clarified to compliance with DPA/UKGDPR requirements.</li> <li>• 'Alternative Provision' – text added to clarify school remains responsible for the pupils they place in alternative provision.</li> <li>• Links added to NSPCC advice on protecting children with SEN; and deaf/disabled children and young people</li> <li>• 'Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning their gender' – disclaimer added, and additional text includes further clarification to comply with gender questioning children guidance terminology</li> <li>• 'Early help' – text amended to reflect 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'</li> <li>• 'Children and the court system' – two separate age-appropriate guides for schools to support children in the court system now included</li> <li>• Role of DSL includes need to document rational of actions (e.g. referral or not to social care) as part of record keeping.</li> </ul>

	<p><u>In addition:</u></p> <p>Section 1: updated and individual school information moved to Annex 9.</p> <p>Section 4: updated to reflect those DE policies updated in past 12 months.</p> <p>Section 9: update to Local Governance to EAC committee.</p> <p>Section 11: updated to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- importance of early identification and professional curiosity as key principles of safeguarding.</li> <li>-use of electronic recording as standard.</li> </ul> <p>Section 14: section name updated from racists to Racists and Prejudice based incidents.</p> <p>Section 15: definition of Extremism updated (March 2024) to reflect Government work on this- further definitions still under review- see Annex 7</p> <p>Annex 1: link added to Positive Behaviour Policy with annex on Responding to Green cases of HSB.</p> <p>Annex 2: reference to additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.</p> <p>Annex 6: Updated operation encompass regarding contact information from the police</p> <p>Annex 7: definition of Extremism updated (March 2024) to reflect Government work on this- further definitions still under review- see Annex 7</p> <p>Annex 8: Update to include that, for children going through the court system, there are now 2 age-appropriate guides to support them, as per page 151 of KCSIE 2014.</p> <p>Annex 9: Individual school's Safeguarding contact details moved to here.</p>
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## Accessibility and Language Support

If you require this policy in an alternative format or language, please contact the Academy Office. We are committed to ensuring that all colleagues have access to our policies and can fully understand and engage with them and will work with you to provide the necessary support and resources.

# 1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

This Policy sets out our provision, practice and expectations for Child Protect and Safeguarding in all our Trust schools.

Annex 9 has information for individual schools.

Safeguarding Trustee:	Maria Goodwin
Local Ethos and Advisory (EAC) Chair	See Annex 9 for individual school information
Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	See Annex 9 for individual school information.
Person responsible for Policy updates	Evie Semmens (Director for Vulnerable Pupils and Inclusion)
Status & Review Cycle	Statutory/Annual
Next Review Date	Summer 2026

## 2 Safeguarding and Wellbeing Statement

- 2.1 We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice. We do this first and foremost by listening to our children and remembering the principle of the Children's Act 1989 that the welfare of the child is paramount.
- 2.2 Child protection forms part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities. This Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy underpins and guides our procedures and protocols to ensure its pupils and staff are safe. All our staff understand it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard and protect children, and the way we try to do this is by developing trusting relationships with children and giving them time to talk to us.
- 2.3 As a school, we aspire to a culture of zero tolerance against any sort of unacceptable behaviour. We will take seriously any reports of sexual harassment or child on child abuse or discrimination of any kind. As parents, you know your children best. Please do not hesitate to contact the key personnel named in Appendix 1 (specific school named contacts) to ask for support or to discuss any worries you have for your children and be assured we will do all we can to help. We would also like to emphasise that our responsibilities still apply if your child cannot be in school for any reason so, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## 3 Terminology

- 3.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (as updated in Working Together to Safeguarding Children December 2023) is defined for the purposes of this guidance 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 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
  - promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.
- 3.2 **Child Protection** is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined for the purpose of this guidance as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online. Effective safeguarding means practitioners should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families' lives.
- 3.3 **Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.
- 3.4 **Child** includes everyone under the age of 18.
- 3.5 **Parents** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers and adoptive parents, and LA corporate parents.

## 4 Introduction

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

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (maintained schools only)
- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Teacher Standards 2012
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2025
- Behaviour in School Guidance 2023
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024
- Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 (Post 16 providers)
- Information Sharing 2024
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- The Equality Act 2010
- Prevent Duty Guidance 2023

## 5 Policy Principles

- 5.1 The welfare of the child is paramount.
- 5.2 All children regardless of age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity or religion have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities.
- 5.3 We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff <sup>1</sup>, volunteers and Trust Board and governance have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or concern that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- 5.4 All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe, and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, mental wellbeing and moral development of the individual child.
- 5.5 Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support and supervision.

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<sup>1</sup>Wherever the word "staff" is used, it covers ALL staff on site, including ancillary supply and self-employed staff, contractors, volunteers working with children etc and governors.

## 6 Policy Aims

- 6.1 Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. These can also be considered as extra-familial contexts.
- 6.2 To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to pupils, parents, and other partners.
- 6.3 To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence, and independence.
- 6.4 To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, and feel confident to, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- 6.5 To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- 6.6 To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- 6.7 To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- 6.8 To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- 6.9 To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially the Police and Local Authority Safeguarding Hubs.
- 6.10 To ensure that all staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance)<sup>2</sup>, and a single central record is kept for audit.

## 7 Values

- 7.1 Supporting Children.
- 7.2 We recognise that a child who is abused or is a witness to violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.
- 7.3 We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.
- 7.4 We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn as well as exhibiting signs of mental health problems.
- 7.5 We understand the impact on a child's mental health, behaviour and education when experiencing difficulties, abuse and/or neglect.
- 7.6 Our school will support all children by:
  - Encouraging self-esteem and personal development through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
  - Promoting a caring, safe, and positive environment within the school.
  - Responding sympathetically to any requests for time out to deal with distress and anxiety.
  - Offering details of helplines, counselling, or other avenues of external support.
  - Sharing best practice of supporting pupils across academies within our Trust.
  - Developing Trauma Informed Schools approach
  - Liaising and working together with all other settings, support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
  - Notifying Local Authority Safeguarding Hub as soon as there is a significant concern.

<sup>2</sup> DBS checks: detailed guidance - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

- Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the child's new setting and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.

7.7 Children are taught to understand and manage risk through our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and Relationship and Sex Education and through all aspects of school life. This includes online safety; and by accessing and utilising the necessary resources, guidance, and toolkits to support the identification of children requiring mental health support, support services and assessments and the subsequent systems and processes.

7.8 We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends, and an ethos of protection.

7.9 The school community will therefore:

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to.
- Include regular consultation with children e.g., through annual questionnaires, participation in antibullying week, asking children to report whether they have had happy/sad lunchtimes/playtimes.
- Ensure that all children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include safeguarding across the curriculum, including PSHE and opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help; this will include anti-bullying work, online-safety, road safety, pedestrian, and cycle training; provide focussed activities to prepare key year groups for transition to new settings and/or key stages e.g., more personal safety/independent travel; and
- Ensure all staff, pupils and parents are aware that the academy operates a phone-free environment throughout the school day. This forms part of our safeguarding approach to minimise access to inappropriate content, reduce online harms and support pupil wellbeing. Mobile phone expectations for pupils are set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy and the Pupil and Parent/Carer Acceptable Use Policy.

## 8 Safe School, Safe Staff

8.1 We will ensure that:

- All staff and volunteers read and understand Part One of KCSiE 2025 as required and relevant to their role at the school.
- All staff receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, staff behaviour policy (code of conduct)<sup>3</sup>, safeguarding and child protection policy, positive behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, the role and names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy(ies), and sign to say they have read, understood, and will abide by it (through the ESS portal).
- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection information, including online safety, at induction.
- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, in line with advice from Local Authority Safeguarding Partnerships, which is regularly updated (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually.
- All members of staff are trained in, and receive, regular updates in online safety and reporting concerns. This includes an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to the schools filtering and monitoring system, at both induction, and in addition to annual training.

<sup>3</sup> The code of conduct should include acceptable use of technology, staff & pupil relationship boundaries and communications, including the use of social media.

- All staff, governors and trustees receive appropriate child protection and safeguarding (including online) at induction. They should renew this annually, to maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse.
- This policy is available on the school website and all parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members regarding child protection procedures through the publication of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and reference to it in the school's Parent Handbook.
- The school is developing a child friendly version.
- The school provides a coordinated offer of Early Help when additional needs of children are identified and contributes to early help arrangements and inter-agency working and plans; assessments and plans are recorded on the Children's Services database.
- Our Disclosure & Barring Checks (DBS) Policy will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with children on school sites at any time, for example, by having evidence of DBS checks having been undertaken.
- Any visits to the school by professionals will be booked in advance and the DSL made aware.
- Community users organising activities for children are aware of the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, guidelines, and procedures, and the updated expectation in KCSIE 2025 regarding outside organisations' use of school's premises. This includes ensuring that outside providers have appropriate child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures and that arrangements are in place for liaising regarding any such issues. This is part of any lease and/or hire agreement.
- The name of the designated members of staff for child protection, the DSL/DDSL are clearly advertised in the school with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

## Site security

8.2 Visitors into to the school, including contractors, will enter via main reception where they will be signed in, in line with the 'Tiered Approach' to site access as set in Appendix 11 Tiered Approach to Site Access. This Tiered approach sets out the appropriate coloured lanyard which all visitors must wear clearly and signifies the status of the visitor. They will be given an appropriate coloured lanyard according to their DBS status.

Groups of parents, attending a large event e.g. assembly or sports day, do not need to be signed in as they will not have unsupervised access to pupils. All new visitors will be given a Safeguarding Booklet. All visitors are expected to observe the school's Health and Safety regulations to ensure children are kept safe.

## 9 Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 All Trustees understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely, to ensure that there is an effective Safeguarding and Child Protection policy together with a staff behaviour policy (code of conduct).

9.2 The Safeguarding Trustee, Ms Maria Goodwin and Head Teachers are responsible for ensuring that the relevant policies and procedures are in place across the Trust. This is supported by Ethos and Advisory Committee Inclusion Portfolio holders in each hub.

9.3 Child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), are consistent with Local Authority guidance and statutory requirements, are reviewed annually and that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is publicly available on the school website or by other means.

9.4 Ensures that all staff including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and staff Code of Conduct.

9.5 All staff have read the appropriate sections of KCSiE 2025, and mechanisms are in place to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance.

9.6 The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations and by ensuring that there is at least

one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches, as part of due diligence, may be carried out.

9.7 The school has procedures for dealing with reports of abuse against staff (including the Head Teacher), supply staff, volunteers and against other children. This is set out in the Managing Allegations against Members of Staff Policy. This details the policy and procedure for Low Level Concerns which are those concerns which do not meet the 'Harm's Threshold. The policy sets out that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have had they not resigned.

9.8 The Safeguarding Trustee is nominated to liaise with the local authority (LA) on Child Protection issues and in the event of a report of abuse made against the Headteacher.

9.9 A member of the senior leadership (SLT) team has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) by the Governing Body/Board who will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that the role is explicit in the role holder's job description.

9.10 On appointment, the DSL and deputy(ies) undertake appropriate Level 3 identified training offered by TSCP or other provider every two years.

9.11 All professionals working consistently with vulnerable pupils will receive robust supervision.

9.12 All other staff have safeguarding training updated as appropriate; but at least annually.

9.13 At least one member of the governing body has completed safer recruitment training to be repeated every five years.

9.14 Children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through personal social health and economic education (PSHE) and/or for maintained schools through relationship and sex education (RSE).

9.15 Appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

9.16 Appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems are in place on school devices and school networks, with designated staff regularly monitoring this. This provision is reviewed at least annually.

9.17 Enhanced DBS checks (without barred list checks unless the governor is also a volunteer at the school) are in place for all Governors.

9.18 Any weaknesses in Child Protection are remedied immediately.

9.19 The Headteacher will ensure that:

- The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is effective, and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- Sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL and deputy(ies) DSL(s) to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at child protection and other necessary meetings.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern that the child's wishes, and feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback which operate with the best interest of the child at heart.
- All staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle-blowing procedures.
- Pupils are provided with robust and ongoing opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online.
- These include investing in
  - Child Assault Prevention) training for all children and staff.
  - NSPCC Partnership working with assemblies and workshops
  - Dedicated weekly RHE lessons following a robustly planned and quality assured Curriculum, in line with Statutory Guidance.
- They liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), before taking any action and on an ongoing basis, where an allegation is made against a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer; and anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

## 9.20 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- Holds ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) in the school and is a member of the SLT.
- Will liaise with the Head Teacher or principal to inform him or her of issues - especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult – see [Appendix 8](#)
- Will liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure the school fully adheres to the DfE Searching, screening and confiscation guidance for schools<sup>4</sup> paying particular attention to the requirements in respect of strip searching and the encouragement to involve parents in decision making.
- Acts as a source of support and expertise in carrying out safeguarding duties for the whole school community.
- Will have the necessary knowledge and understanding to recognise possible children at risk of contextual and/or extra familial abuse or exploitation.
- Encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- Is appropriately trained with updates every two years and will refresh their knowledge and skills at regular intervals but at least annually.
- Will refer a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub and act as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Enquiries must be followed up in writing, if referred by telephone.
- Will keep detailed, accurate records, either written or using appropriate online software, of all concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral. These must include the rational for decision making.
- Will ensure that all such records are kept confidential, stored securely and are separate from pupil records, until the child's 25th birthday.
- Will ensure that an indication of the existence of the additional file is marked on the pupil records.
- Will ensure that when a pupil leaves the school, relevant child protection information is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file) within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives ensuring secure transit and that confirmation of receipt is obtained.
- In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the DSL of the new school or college in advance of a child leaving; for example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives. All transfers should be made securely.
- Will liaise with the LA, its safeguarding partners and work with other agencies and professionals in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
- Has a working knowledge of Local Authority Safeguarding procedures.
- Will ensure that either they, or another staff member, attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings; contribute to assessments, and provide a report where required which has been shared with the parents/carers.
- Will ensure that any pupil currently with a child protection plan who is absent in the educational setting without explanation for two days is referred to their social worker.
- Will ensure that all staff sign (through the ESS portal) to say they have read, understood, and agree to work within the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, behaviour policy, staff Code of conduct and KCSiE 2025 and ensure that the policies are used appropriately.
- Will organise child protection and safeguarding induction, regularly updated training, and provide a minimum of annual updates on (including online safety) for all school staff, keep a record of attendance and address any absences.

<sup>4</sup> [Searching, screening and confiscation at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation-at-school)

- Lead on overseeing the school's filtering and monitoring system and ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities at Induction, in addition to annual training.
- Will contribute to and provide, with the Headteacher, the "Audit of Statutory Duties and Associated Responsibilities" (S175/157 audit) to be submitted annually to the Education Team working on behalf of the Local Authority.
- Understands locally agreed processes for providing early help assessments and intervention and will support members of staff where Early Help is appropriate, or completion of the exploitation tool is necessary; and
- Will ensure that the name of the designated members of staff for Child Protection, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and deputies, are clearly advertised in the school, with a statement explaining the school's role in referring and monitoring cases of suspected abuse.

## **9.21 The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DDSLs):**

- is/ are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL the deputy will assume all the functions above.

## **9.22 All School Staff:**

- Understand that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and that they have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.
- Consider, always, what is in the best interests of the child.
- Have a role to play in ensuring there is a whole school approach to safeguarding, including promoting a culture of zero tolerance towards any form of abuse, including child on child abuse.
- Will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect both familial and contextual; and recognise that contextual harm can take a variety of different forms.
- Know how to respond to a pupil who alleges or appears to be the victim of abuse through delivery of 'Working together to Safeguard Children', and 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'.
- Will refer any safeguarding or child protection concerns to the DSL or if necessary, where the child is at immediate risk to the police or the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub.
- Will be aware of the Local Authorities Professional Differences (Escalation) policy or the duty to report concerns if the DSL fails to do so without reasonable cause.
- Are aware of the Early Help process and understand their role within it including identifying emerging problems for children who may benefit from an Early Help assessment, liaising with the DSL in the first instance and supporting other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment through information sharing. In some cases, staff may act as the Lead Professional in Early Help cases.
- Will provide a safe and nurturing environment in which children can learn.

## 10 Confidentiality

- 10.1 All staff recognise that to effectively meet a child's needs, safeguard their welfare, and protect them from harm the school must contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns.
- 10.2 All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2018<sup>5</sup> is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.
- 10.3 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- 10.4 However, we also recognise that all matters relating to child protection are personal to children and families. Therefore, in this respect they are confidential, and the Headteacher or DSLs will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis.
- 10.5 We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will seek advice from the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub.

## 11 Child Protection Procedures

- 11.1 Abuse, neglect and exploitation, are forms 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 the family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- 11.2 Abuse, neglect and exploitation, may also take place outside of the home, (contextual safeguarding) and this may include (but is not limited to), sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, radicalisation. Further information about the four categories of abuse; physical, emotional, sexual and neglect, and indicators that a child may be being abused can be found in the appendices.
- 11.3 Any child in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "It could happen here" with professional curiosity and early identification key principles.
- 11.4 There are also several specific safeguarding concerns that we recognise our pupils may experience:
  - child missing from education
  - child missing from home or care
  - child sexual exploitation (CSE)
  - child criminal exploitation
  - bullying including cyberbullying
  - domestic abuse
  - drugs
  - fabricated or induced illness
  - faith abuse
  - female genital mutilation (FGM)
  - forced marriage
  - gangs and youth violence
  - gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)

<sup>5</sup> [Data protection - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

- mental health
- private fostering
- radicalisation
- youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)
- teenage relationship abuse
- trafficking
- child on child abuse
- upskirting
- serious violence

11.5 Staff are aware that behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger and that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. See [Appendix 1](#) for a more detailed description of the school procedures in respect of child-on-child abuse.

11.6 We also recognise that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are complex and are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. Staff are aware that in most cases multiple issues will overlap one another.

**If staff are concerned about a child's welfare:**

11.7 If staff notice any indicators of abuse/neglect or signs that a child may be at risk of harm they should record these concerns on the school's electronic system, e.g. CPOMS, and pass it to the DSL. **If using an electronic alert, the sender should not assume the DSL will immediately receive this and any serious concerns should be reported immediately.** If concerns are discussed in person with the DSL details should also be recorded in writing.

11.8 There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, and they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed.

11.9 We recognise that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a relative is unwell, or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or needs safeguarding.

11.10 In these circumstances staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL and put them in writing. If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below regarding a pupil making a report of abuse or displaying behaviours that suggest they may have been abused.

11.11 We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to tell someone they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty, or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, 11.12 they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

11.13 A child who tells/shows that they have been abused may have to tell their story on several subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

11.14 During their conversation with the pupil staff will:

- listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely.
- remain calm and not overact or give any indication of being shocked or alarmed – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener.
- reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk.
- take what the child is telling them seriously.
- avoid asking leading questions, where possible allow the child to take the lead. • consider using TED to support: Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to Me
- limit questions to those necessary to try and obtain a context.
- where sexual abuse has been alleged or a report of criminal abuse do not ask additional questions telephone the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub for advice, however, do not stop the child talking.
- avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations.
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused.
- avoid admonishing the child for not telling them sooner. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about it when it started' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong; and
- tell the child what will happen next.

11.15 If a pupil talks to any member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing the staff member will let the child know that they will have to pass the information on – staff are not allowed to keep secrets.

11.16 The member of staff should write up their conversation as soon as possible using Cpoms and using the pupil's own words. Staff should make this a matter of priority. The record should be signed and dated, the member of staff's name should be printed, and it should also detail where the report/statement was made and who else was present. The record should be handed to the DSL via poms.

### **Notifying Parents**

11.17 The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and normally the DSL/DDSL will contact the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion, or report.

11.18 However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from Local Authority Safeguarding Hub e.g., familial sexual abuse.

11.19 Where there are concerns about forced marriage or honour-based violence parents should not be informed a referral is being made as to do so may place the child at a significantly increased risk. In some circumstances it would be appropriate to contact the police.

### **Making a referral**

11.20 Concerns about a child having been abused should be immediately raised with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub or other support is appropriate in accordance with Local Authority Safeguarding toolkits or assessments<sup>6</sup>.

11.21 If a referral is needed, then the DSL should make this rapidly and there must be systems in place to enable this to happen. However, anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made, they can and should consider making a referral themselves.

11.22 The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

11.23 If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving the DSL (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly the child's situation improves.

11.24 If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub.

11.25 Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

## **Supporting our Staff**

11.26 We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

11.27 We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

11.28 All professionals working consistently with vulnerable pupils will receive robust supervision.

## **12 Children who are particularly vulnerable**

12.1 We recognises that some children are more vulnerable to abuse and neglect and that additional barriers exist when recognising abuse for some children.

12.2 We understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures which fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment, or circumstances.

12.3 In some cases, possible indicators of abuse such as a child's mood, behaviour or injury might be assumed to relate to the child's impairment or disability rather than giving a cause for concern. Or a focus may be on the child's disability, special educational needs, or situation without consideration of the full picture. In other cases, such as bullying, the child may be disproportionately impacted by the behaviour without outwardly showing any signs that they are experiencing it.

12.4 Some children may also find it harder to tell others about abuse due to communication barriers, lack of access to a trusted adult or not being aware that what they are experiencing is abuse.

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<sup>6</sup> [Interactive Threshold Tool \(torbaysafeguarding.org.uk\)](http://torbaysafeguarding.org.uk)

12.5 Any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs.
- has special educational needs (regardless of whether they have a statutory education, health, and care plan).
- has a mental health need.
- is a young carer.
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- is frequently missing/goes missing from home or care.
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation.
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school and in AP or a PRU.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/ or criminal exploitation.
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited,
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.
- Is misusing alcohol or drugs themselves.
- Is at risk of so called 'honour'-based abuse, such as FGM or forced marriage.
- is a privately fostered child.

## 13 Anti-Bullying/Cyberbullying

13.1 Our school policy on anti-bullying is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g., cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying. We keep a record of known bullying incidents which is shared with and analysed by the governing body. All staff are aware that children with SEND and / or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse.

13.2 If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are seen to be ineffective, the Headteacher and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures and/or consider legislation regarding hate crimes<sup>7</sup>. The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PHSE education.

## 14 Racist or Prejudice based Incidents

14.1 Our policy on racist incidents is set out separately and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures and/or consider legislation regarding hate crimes. We keep a record of racist incidents and report them to the Local Authority.

14.2 Any incidents which classed as 'BPRI' Bullying, Prejudicial or Racist, are recorded on Cpoms and tracked across the Trust on the VP Dashboard. Schools also report any incidents of BPRI to their Local Authority.

<sup>7</sup> [Hate Crime \(campaign.gov.uk\)](https://www.campaign.gov.uk)

## 15 Preventing Radicalisation

15.1 The Prevent Duty for England and Wales 2023 for England and Wales places a duty on education and other children's services to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

[Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

15.2 PREVENT is part of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) – it is ultimately about safeguarding people who may be vulnerable to being radicalised within our communities. PREVENT aims to stop them supporting violent extremism and terrorism using early intervention and diversion opportunities.

15.3 We recognise that, as educators, we have a key role to play in raising awareness, reducing susceptibility and safeguarding children, young people and adults who may be at risk of radicalisation.

15.4 We recognise the key definitions relating to Prevent as:

- Extremism (updated March 2024) Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

15.5 As a school, we are clear that exploitation of vulnerable children and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and follows the Department for Education guidance for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism.

15.6 We recognise that some children are at risk of being radicalised; adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal, or dangerous, as set out in Annex 7 of this policy.

15.7 We seek to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, INCEL, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

15.8 School staff receive training to help identify early signs of radicalisation and extremism as part of annual training as well as information on regional and local risks. Local Ethos and Advisory Committees also receive annual training.

15.9 DSLs have additional training using Home Office resources [Prevent duty training: Learn how to support people susceptible to radicalisation | Prevent duty training \(support-people-vulnerable-to-https://www.support-people-vulnerable-to-radicalisation.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.support-people-vulnerable-to-radicalisation.service.gov.uk/). This includes Awareness and Referral Training and is refreshed at least every 2 years. DSIs have additional Training through regular DSL forums where information and updates from Local Safeguarding Boards is shared.

15.10 Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education) in Schools (2014)<sup>8</sup> as well as through the RHE curriculum with concepts of responsibility, respect and identity.

15.11 The school Headteacher and the DSL will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include the use of school premises by external agencies, antibullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community, and philosophy. This will

<sup>8</sup> Promoting fundamental British values through SMSC - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

be shared with Ethos and Advisory Committees so that they have oversight of risks, including those locally and the counter measures in place.

15.12 When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL. The 'Notice, check, share' procedure should be applied as set out in Home Office Training.

**Notice** Those who work in front-line support roles will often be the first to notice if someone is experiencing difficulties.

Remember to:

- look out for changes in behaviour that cause you concern.
- ask yourself whether this person might be susceptible to radicalisation.
- keep up-to-date with extremist signs and symbols - your local Prevent lead will have the latest information

**Check** It's important to understand why changes are happening before drawing conclusions.

Remember:

- the issues that make a person susceptible to radicalisation are sensitive and need to be handled with duty and care.
- try to understand the bigger picture by gaining more context.
- check your concern discreetly with a colleague or your line manager to see if they can offer any advice.

**Share** Everyone is responsible for sharing any information they hold that causes concern about a person with the police.

Remember to:

- work with your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or an equivalent if you have one.
- only share information that is relevant to the purpose.
- share information early to reduce risk.

15.13 The DSL will follow safeguarding measures and make use of Devon and Cornwall Police information support their actions . [Prevent | Devon & Cornwall Police \(devon-cornwall.police.uk\)](https://devon-cornwall.police.uk/Prevent/). This may include use of Devon and Cornwall Police Flow chart [Prevent-referral-flowchart-v.FINAL-2023.08.04.pdf \(preventingexploitationtoolkit.org.uk\)](https://devon-cornwall.police.uk/Prevent-referral-flowchart-v.FINAL-2023.08.04.pdf).

15.14 DSLs will need to follow their own MASH or MARU procedures if a Prevent Referral is not deemed appropriate.

Local information can be found on the following websites:

**Cornwall** <https://safercornwall.co.uk/preventing-violent-extremism/>

**Devon** [Reporting concerns about radicalisation - Preventing Exploitation Toolkit](https://devon-cornwall.police.uk/Prevent/)

**Torbay** [Prevent - Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership](https://www.torbay.gov.uk/children-and-families/childrens-safeguarding-partnership/prevent-torbay-safeguarding-children-partnership/)

## 16 Domestic Abuse

16.1 Domestic abuse represents at least one quarter of all violent crime. It is actual or threatened physical, emotional, psychological, financial, or sexual abuse. It involves the use of power and control by one person over another. It occurs regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, and religion, mental or physical ability. Domestic abuse can also involve other types of abuse.

- 16.2 We use the term domestic abuse to reflect that abusive and controlling behaviours do not necessarily involve physical violence. Slapping, punching, kicking, bruising, rape, ridicule, constant criticism, threats, manipulation, sleep deprivation, social isolation, and other controlling behaviours all count as abuse.
- 16.3 Living in a home where domestic abuse takes place is harmful to children and can have a serious impact on their behaviour, wellbeing and understanding of healthy, positive relationships. Children who witness domestic abuse are victims of abuse and have suffered or are at risk of significant harm. Staff are alert to the signs and symptoms of a child suffering or witnessing domestic abuse (See [Appendix 6](#)).
- 16.4 Government legislation enacted in 2021 recognises that it can be particularly relevant in relation to an impact on a child who sees, hears or experiences its effects. In such cases, the child regarded as a victim of domestic abuse.
- 16.5 In addition, the age limit for criminal offences related to domestic abuse was lowered from 18 to 16, to recognise that young people can experience abuse in their relationships.

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

- 17.1 Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. This power imbalance could be due to age, gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and /or access to economic or other resources. The abuse could be linked to an exchange for something the victim perceives that they need or want and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increase status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It may involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when the activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. More definitions and indicators are included in Appendix 4. Any concerns that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited should be passed without delay to the DSL. We are aware there is a clear link between regular school absence/truancy, CSE and CCE. Staff should consider a child to be at potential CSE/CCE risk in the case of regular school absence/truancy and make reasonable enquiries with the child and parents to assess this risk.
- 17.2 The DSL will use the Local Authorities Exploitation Toolkit<sup>9</sup> on all occasions when there is a concern that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited or where indicators have been observed that are consistent with a child who is being or who is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited. The Exploitation Toolkit will indicate to the DSL whether a Local Authority Safeguarding Hub. If the DSL is in any doubt, they will contact the Hub for advice.
- 17.3 If a child is in immediate danger the police should be called on 999.
- 17.4 We are aware that a child often is not able to recognise the coercive nature of the abuse and does not see themselves as a victim. Consequently, the child may resent what they perceive as interference by staff. However, staff must act on their concerns as they would for any other type of abuse.

<sup>9</sup> Cornwall: Missing and Exploitation toolkit: <https://ciossafeguarding.org.uk/scp/p/subgroups/missing-and-exploitation>

Devon: [Home - Preventing Exploitation Toolkit](#)

Torbay: <http://www.torbaysafeguarding.org.uk/professionals/missing-cse/>

17.5 The schools RHE curriculum supports children in an age-appropriate way to understand how to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways and from a variety of risks. This included online risks and risks of getting involved in criminal and unsafe behaviour. They will be supported in terms of recognising and assessing risk in relation to CSE/CCE, including online, and knowing how and where to get help.

## 18 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

18.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. A mandatory reporting duty requires teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s, which are identified in the course of their professional work, to the police<sup>10</sup>.

18.2 The duty applies to all persons in school, who is employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching work' in the school, whether or not they have qualified teacher status. The duty applies to the individual who becomes aware of the case to make a report. It should not be transferred to the DSL; however, the DSL should be informed.

18.3 If a teacher is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her or a teacher observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth, the teacher should personally make a report to the police force in which the girl resides by calling 101. The report should be made by the close of the next working day.

18.4 School staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators of FGM which are set out in [Appendix 5](#). Concerns about FGM outside of the mandatory reporting duty should be reported as per the School's child protection procedures. Staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period. There should also be consideration of potential risk to other girls in the family and practicing community.

18.5 Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm the teacher should report the case immediately to the police, including dialling 999 if appropriate.

18.6 There are no circumstances in which a teacher or other member of staff should examine a girl.

## 19 Forced Marriage

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

19.2 Forced marriage is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse, and a serious abuse of human rights. Since June 2014 forcing someone to marry has become a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

<sup>10</sup> [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

- 19.3 A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage which is common in several cultures. The families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.
- 19.4 School staff should never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Contact should be made with Local Authority Safeguarding Hub.

## 20 Honour-based Abuse

- 20.1 Honour based abuse (HBA) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code.
- 20.2 Honour based abuse might be committed against people who:
  - become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion.
  - want to get out of an arranged marriage.
  - want to get out of a forced marriage.
  - wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture.
- 20.3 It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual abuse. There is no, and cannot be, honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

## 21 One Chance Rule

- 21.1 This term is used in the FGM Guidance for schools produced by the national FGM centre July 2019 [FGM schools guidance](#). Multi agency statutory guidance dated July 2020 [FGM Statutory guidance July 2020](#) does not appear to use the term, however, the expression is intended to convey the importance of acting promptly and recognise there may be “only one chance to speak to a pupil who is a potential victim and have just one chance to save a life.”
- 21.2 We are aware that if the victim is not offered support following a report of abuse that the ‘One Chance’ opportunity may be lost. Therefore, all staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they become aware of potential forced marriage, FGM and HBA cases.

Multi agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation or extra-familial harm can be found at:  
<https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/>

## 22 Mental Health

- 22.1 Staff will be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Whilst school recognise that only appropriately trained professionals can diagnose mental health problems; staff are able to make day to day observations of children and identify such behaviour that may suggest they are experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. School is also aware of the many studies evidencing the impact on the emotional wellbeing of Covid and lockdown and the many adverse experiences children and their families may have faced.
- 22.2 Adverse Childhood Experiences have been shown to impact on a child's mental health, behaviour, and education through to adolescence and adulthood will be covered in safeguarding awareness training and updates. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they will share this with the DSL or deputy.

## 23 Private Fostering Arrangements

- 23.1 A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or 18 if the child is disabled. Children cared for by the local authority or who are placed in residential schools, children's homes or hospitals are not considered to be privately fostered. Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.
- 23.2 We recognise that most privately fostered children remain safe and well but are aware that safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases. Therefore, all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that the child has been trafficked into the country.
- 23.3 By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible. However, where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL and the DSL will notify the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub of the circumstances.

## 24 Cared for children and previously cared for children

- 24.1 The most common reason for children becoming cared for is because of abuse and neglect, although there may be other reasons, such as parental poor health. We ensure that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep cared for/Previously cared for children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's cared for legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
- 24.2 The designated teacher for cared for children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the Virtual school head for children in care. The Virtual School Head's role now include non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of all children in kinship care.
- 24.3 The designated teacher for cared for children works with the virtual school head to discuss how Pupil Premium Plus funding can be best used to support the progress of cared for children in the school and meet the needs in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher will follow the statutory guidance 'Promoting the education of Cared for Children'.

## 25 Children Missing Education and Alternative Provision

- 25.1 Attendance, absence, and exclusions are closely monitored. The school will hold more than one emergency contact number for pupils and students when reasonably possible. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.
- 25.2 The DSL will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day in conjunction with 'Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities'<sup>11</sup>. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.
- 25.3 When the School places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, our School continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil.
- 25.4 The cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is important that governing bodies and proprietors of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to. The department has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard:
  - Alternative Provision DFE statutory guidance
  - Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK](#)

- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK](#)

This includes Written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff, should be obtained.

**Annex of the Trust Suspensions and Exclusions Policy sets the expectations out in detail and MUST be referred to by schools when commissioning AP.**

## 26 Online Safety

- 26.1 We recognise that pupils increasingly use electronic equipment daily to access the internet and share content and images via social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and many others constantly emerging.
- 26.2 Unfortunately, some adults and other children use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts or emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexual behaviour such as webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate material such as pornographic websites or those which promote extremist behaviour, criminal activity, suicide or eating disorders.
- 26.3 This policy operates alongside the Positive Behaviour Policy and Pupil and Parent/Carer Acceptable Use Policy, which together confirm that pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones or personal smart devices during the school day. This safeguarding approach reduces exposure to online risk, peer-on-peer abuse, harmful content and unsupervised contact.

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<sup>11</sup> [Children missing education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

26.4 We will also provide advice to parents when pupils are being asked to learn online at home and consider how best to safeguard both pupils and staff.

26.5 Pupils are taught about online safety throughout the curriculum and all staff receive online safety training which is regularly updated. The school online safety co-ordinator is the DSL.

26.6 The Trust has a clear approach to the use of AI, in line with [Using AI in education: support for school and college leaders - GOV.UK](#). It is rolling out AI training for staff, in line with the new AI Policy (to be published Autumn 2025), Updated Staff Code of Conduct and staff training. Pupils do not use AI but plans are developing to explore how this might be developed in the future.

## 27 Searching, Screening and Confiscation (Safeguarding Context)

27.1 The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. As part of this duty, the Trust may need to search for, screen or confiscate items where there is a reasonable safeguarding concern, or where an item presents a risk to the safety, wellbeing or dignity of pupils or others.

This includes, but is not limited to, mobile phones, personal electronic devices, prohibited items, or any item that may facilitate harm, abuse, bullying or unsafe behaviour.

27.2 The Trust exercises its powers in line with:

- statutory safeguarding duties,
- Department for Education guidance, and
- the Trust's Behaviour, Acceptable Use and Safeguarding policies.

Any action taken will be lawful, proportionate, necessary and reasonable, and carried out with the child's welfare as the primary consideration.

27.3 Searching, screening or confiscation may take place where:

- a pupil is believed to be in possession of a prohibited or restricted item, including a mobile phone in a phone-free school environment;
- there is reasonable cause to suspect an item may:
  - place the pupil or others at risk of harm,
  - be linked to peer-on-peer abuse, bullying or harassment,
  - contain or enable access to harmful or inappropriate content;
- a safeguarding concern has been identified by staff or reported by another pupil.

27.4 Approach and Safeguards

- Actions will be risk-assessed and undertaken by appropriately authorised staff.
- Wherever possible, searches will be conducted with the pupil's cooperation and in a manner that preserves dignity and respect.
- The Trust will not routinely search digital content on personal devices unless there is a clear safeguarding concern and it is necessary to do so.
- Any refusal by a pupil to cooperate may be treated as a safeguarding or behaviour concern and escalated appropriately.

27.5 Confiscated Items

- Confiscated items will be stored securely.
- Parents/carers will be informed in line with the Behaviour Policy and safeguarding procedures.
- Items will be returned in a timely and appropriate manner, unless further action is required due to safeguarding concerns.
- Where the content of an item raises safeguarding concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed immediately.

27.6 Recording and Oversight

- All incidents involving searching, screening or confiscation will be recorded appropriately.

- Where relevant, actions will be logged as part of the school's safeguarding or behaviour records.
- The Trust will review patterns or repeated incidents to inform safeguarding practice and risk reduction.

27.7 This section should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Pupil Acceptable Use Policy
- Parents and Carers Acceptable Use Policy
- Home–Academy Agreement

27.8 Searching, screening and confiscation are safeguarding measures, not punitive actions. They are used to reduce risk, protect pupils and promote safe, respectful learning environments.

## 28 Child on Child sexual violence and sexual harassment

28.1 The DSL, Governing Body/Board and Headteacher will take due regard to Part 5, KCSiE 2025

28.2 In most instances, pupils will behave towards each other in a respectful manner. Where they do not, this will be covered by our behaviour policy. However, some reports of abuse may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns. We recognise that children can abuse their peers and that child-on-child abuse can happen in any school. It will not be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. The forms of child-on-child abuse are outlined below. Further detail is available in [Appendix 1](#).

- Domestic abuse – an incident or pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, financial and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent against a current or former dating partner regardless of gender or sexuality.
- Child Sexual Exploitation – children under the age of 18 may be sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by peers who are also under 18.
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour – Children and young people presenting with sexual behaviours that are outside of developmentally 'normative' parameters and harmful to themselves and others (For more information, please see [Appendix 2](#)).
- Up skirting – which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.
- Serious Youth Violence<sup>12</sup> – Any offence of most serious violence or weapon enabled crime, where the victim is aged 1-19' i.e., murder, manslaughter, rape, wounding with intent and causing grievous bodily harm. 'Youth violence' is defined in the same way, but also includes assault with injury offences. All staff will receive training so that they are aware of indicators which may signal that child are at risk from or involved with serious violence and crime.

28.3 The term child on child abuse can refer to all these definitions and a child may experience one or multiple facets of abuse at any one time. We will adopt a whole school approach to addressing child on child abuse and the policy is detailed in [Appendix 1](#).

## 29 Youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)

<sup>12</sup> Preventing youth violence and gang involvement - Practical advice for schools and colleges ([publishing.service.gov.uk](http://publishing.service.gov.uk))

29.1 The practice of children sharing images and videos via text message, email, social media, or mobile messaging apps has become commonplace. However, this online technology has also given children the opportunity to produce and distribute sexual imagery in the form of photos and videos. Such imagery involving anyone under the age of 18 is illegal.

29.2 Youth produced sexual imagery refers to both images and videos where:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a child under the age of 18.
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with a child under the age of 18 or an adult.
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

29.3 All incidents of this nature should be treated as a safeguarding concern and in line with government guidance<sup>13</sup>.

29.4

29.5 Cases where sexual imagery of people under 18 has been shared by adults and where sexual imagery of a person of any age has been shared by an adult to a child is child sexual abuse and should be responded to accordingly.

29.6

29.7 If a member of staff becomes aware of an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery, they should follow the child protection procedures and refer to the DSL as soon as possible. The member of staff should confiscate the device involved and set it to flight mode or, if this is not possible, turn it off. Staff should not view, copy or print the youth produced sexual imagery.

29.8

29.9 The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff and subsequent interviews with the children involved (if appropriate). Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is reason to believe that involving parents would put the child at risk of harm. At any point in the process if there is concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to Local Authority Safeguarding Hub.

29.10

29.11 Immediate referral at the initial review stage should be made to Local Authority Safeguarding Hub.

- The incident involves an adult.
- There is good reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special education needs)
- What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the child's development stage or are violent.
- The imagery involves sexual acts.
- The imagery involves anyone aged 12 or under.
- There is reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example the child is presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

29.12 If none of the above apply then the DSL will use their professional judgement to assess the risk to pupils involved and may decide, with input from the Head Teacher, to respond to the incident without escalation to Local Authority Safeguarding Hub, such decisions will be recorded.

29.13 In applying judgement, the DSL will consider if:

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<sup>13</sup> [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)

- there is a significant age difference between the sender/receiver.
- there is any coercion or encouragement beyond the sender/receiver.
- the imagery was shared and received with the knowledge of the child in the imagery.
- the child is more vulnerable than usual i.e., at risk.
- there is a significant impact on the children involved.
- the image is of a severe or extreme nature.
- the child involved understands consent.
- the situation is isolated or if the image been more widely distributed.
- there other circumstances relating to either the sender or recipient that may add cause for concern i.e., difficult home circumstances.
- the children have been involved in incidents relating to youth produced imagery before.

29.14 If any of these circumstances are present the situation will be escalated according to our child protection procedures, including reporting to the police or Local Authority Safeguarding Hub. Otherwise, the situation will be managed within the school.

The DSL will record all incidents of youth produced sexual imagery, including both the actions taken, actions not taken, reasons for doing so and the resolution in line with safeguarding recording procedures.

## 30 Allegations against staff

- 30.1 All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
- 30.2 Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers will be given at induction.
- 30.3 We understand that a pupil may make a report of abuse against a member of staff or staff may have concerns about another staff member. If such a report is made, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the report or made aware of the information, will immediately inform the Headteacher.
- 30.4 The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the report of abuse with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the earliest opportunity and before taking any further action.
- 30.5 If the report made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the person receiving the report of abuse will immediately inform one of the following: Trust Lead, Deputy Trust Lead, Chief Operating Officer or Trust Board Chair who will consult the LADO as above, without notifying the Head Teacher first.
- 30.6 The school will follow the Local Authority's procedures for "Managing allegations against staff", procedures set out in KCSiE 2025 and the school's Managing Allegations policy and procedures.

30.7 Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Headteacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headteacher will seek the advice of the LADO and an HR Consultant in making this decision. In the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Trust Board with advice as above.

30.8 We have a procedure for managing the suspension of a contract for a community user in the event of an allegation arising in that context.

30.9 Staff, parents, and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing including content placed on social media sites.

## 31 Whistleblowing

31.1 We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

31.2 All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements. If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, they should speak in the first instance, to the LADO following the Whistleblowing Policy.

31.3 The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

31.4 Whistleblowing re: the Headteacher should be made to the Chair of the Trust Board whose contact details are readily available to staff (as pertinent to setting).

## 32 Physical Intervention

32.1 We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that always it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.

32.2 Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention, will be appropriately trained.

32.3 We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

32.4 We recognise that touch is appropriate in the context of working with children, and all staff are familiar with the Trust 'Physical Intervention and Safe Touch Policy' to support understanding of this.

## 33 Confidentiality, sharing information and GDPR

33.1 All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

33.2 School and college staff should be proactive in sharing as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

33.3 Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Headteacher/principal, or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

33.4 It is important that governing bodies and proprietors are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. See ICO guidance 'For Organisations' which includes information about your obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information, and providing access to official information.

33.5 Information sharing is guided by the following principles:

necessary and proportionate  
relevant  
adequate  
accurate  
timely  
secure

33.6 Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

## 34 Linked policies

34.1 This policy also links to our policies on:

- Positive Behaviour
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing
- Anti-Bullying
- Health & Safety
- Managing Allegations against Members of Staff
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Attendance and Absence in Term Time
- RHSE
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy (including administration of medicines)
- Physical intervention and Safe Touch Approach
- E-Safety, including staff use of mobile phones
- Risk Assessment
- Recruitment and Selection
- Intimate Care
- Data Protection and FOI Policy
- Pupil Acceptable Use Policy

## Appendix 1 - Child on child abuse – policy and procedure

### Introduction

We recognise that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing other children. We take such abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. This includes verbal as well as physical abuse. Child-on-child abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as part of “banter” or “growing up”. We are committed to a whole school approach to ensure the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse within our school and beyond. In cases where child-on-child abuse is identified we will follow our child protection procedures, taking a contextual /extra familial approach to support all children and young people who have been affected by the situation.

Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing. DfE guidance situates sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexual behaviour in the context of developing a whole school safeguarding culture, where sexual misconduct is seen as unacceptable, and not 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. Advice about tackling and reporting sexual harassment in schools and colleges is here: [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways such as:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Sexting or youth produced digital imagery
- Up skirting
- Bullying
- Radicalisation
- Abuse in intimate relationships
- Children who display sexually harmful behaviour
- Gang association and serious violence (County Lines)
- Technology can be used for bullying and other abusive behaviour

Some of these behaviours will need to be handled with reference to other policies in the school such as the behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy, and online safety policy, however, they should all be considered in the wider context of the school approach to safeguarding in general. It should be recognised that these issues are more likely to occur than not. Pupils will be protected from 'up skirting', bullying, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviour, racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination

This appendix concentrates on child-on-child abuse in the context of sexual harassment and sexual violence. It is compliant with the statutory guidance on child-on-child abuse as set out in KCSiE 2025 and should be read in conjunction with the Local Authority Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and any relevant Practice Guidance issued by it.

## Aims

### **The policy will:**

- Set out our strategies for preventing, identifying, and managing child-on-child abuse.
- Take a contextual/extra familial approach to safeguarding all children and young people involved.
- Acknowledge that children who have allegedly abused other children or displayed harmful sexual behaviour are themselves vulnerable and may have been abused by other children, parents, or adults in the community.
- Understand that child-on-child abuse (Sexual violence and sexual harassment) can occur between two children of any age and sex or a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. The impact of this behaviour on children can be very distressing and have an impact on academic achievement and emotional health and wellbeing. Sexual harassment and sexual violence may also occur online and offline.

## The Context

All behaviour takes place on a spectrum. Understanding where a child's behaviour falls on a spectrum is essential to being able to respond appropriately to it. In this policy we recognise the importance of distinguishing between problematic and abusive sexual behaviour (Harmful Sexual Behaviour HSB). We are adopting the NSPCC definition of HSB as: - "Sexual behaviours expressed by children...that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or be abusive towards another child...or adult." • We will also use Simon Hackett 's continuum model to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours. Hackett (2010) has proposed a continuum model to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours presented by children and young people, from those that are normal, to those that are highly deviant.

## Vulnerable groups \*

KCSIE 2025, Paragraph 204 sets out:

We expect to publish the revised guidance on gender questioning children soon. Once published, we will signpost to this KCSIE 2025.

- *A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.*
- *However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.*
- *It is recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubescent children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.*
- *As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, schools should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.*
- We recognise that all children can be at risk however we acknowledge that some groups are more vulnerable. This can include experience of abuse within their family; living with domestic violence; young people in care; children who go missing; children with additional needs (SEN and/or disabilities); children who identify or are perceived as LGBT (see above) and/or have other protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.
- Whilst research tells us girls are more frequently identified as being abused by other children and, girls are more likely to experience unwanted sexual touching in schools this is not confined to girls. Boys are less likely to report intimate relationship abuse and may display other behaviour such as antisocial behaviour. Boys report high levels of victimisation in areas where they are affected by gangs. We recognise that both boys and girls experience child on child abuse, but they do so in gendered ways.
- All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.
- For all vulnerable children it is important to try to ensure a safe space where they can speak out or share their worries.

## Responding to Reports

### Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

- All reports of child-on-child abuse will be made on a case-by-case basis with the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy taking a leading role using their professional judgement and supported by other agencies such as social care or the police as required.
- To support the responses to 'green' (not classes as problematic or harmful) HSB, staff should follow Appendix 5 in the Positive Behaviour Policy.

### The immediate response to a report.

- The school or college will take all reports seriously and will reassure the victim that they will be supported and kept safe.
- All staff will be trained to manage a report.
- Staff will not promise confidentiality as the concern will need to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead or social care) staff will however only share the report with those people who are necessary to progress it.
- A written report will be made as soon after the interview as possible recording the facts as presented by the child. These may be used as part of a statutory assessment if the case is escalated later.
- Where the report includes an online element the school or college will follow advice on searching, screening, and confiscation. The staff will not view or forward images unless unavoidable and only if another member of staff (preferably the DSL) is present.
- The DSL will be informed as soon as possible.

## Risk Assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL/DDSL will make an immediate risk and needs' assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs' assessment should consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support.
- The alleged perpetrator; and
- All the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school or college, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them; Risk assessments will be recorded (written or electronic say where these are filed) and be kept under review. The DSL/DDSL will ensure they are engaging with the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub.

## Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

Following an incident, we will consider:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour.
- The ages of the children involved.
- The developmental stages of the children involved.
- Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse.

- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff, and other related issues and wider context?

## Follow up Actions

Whilst the school or college establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children's social care and the police:

- The perpetrator will be removed from any classes they share with the victim.
- We will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school or college premises and on transport to and from the school or college. These actions are in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator.

## Options to manage the report

### Manage internally

- i. In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, we may decide that the children concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising the behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support. This decision will be made based on the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All decisions, and discussions around making these decisions will be recorded and stored (by whom, where).
- ii. In line with (I) above, we may decide that the children involved do not require statutory interventions but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

### The Local Authority Safeguarding Hub

- i. Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, we will make a referral to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub. Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the DSL/DDSL will be working alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator and any other children that require support.

### Reporting to the Police

- i. Any report to the police will generally be made through the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub. The DSL/DDSL will follow local processes for referrals. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is this will be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach. Where a report has been made to the police, the school or college will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. They will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity. Where there is a criminal investigation, we will work closely with the relevant agencies to support all children involved (especially potential witnesses). Where required, advice from the police will be sought to help us.

- ii. Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator, we will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school or college take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

## **The end of the criminal process**

- i. If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the school update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all children. We will consider any suitable action following our behaviour policy. If the perpetrator remains in school we will be very clear as to our expectations regarding the perpetrator now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions we think are reasonable and proportionate about the perpetrator's timetable. Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school or college. We will ensure all children involved are protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).
- ii. Where cases are classified as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is not guilty verdict, we will continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress the report does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. We will continue to support all parties in this instance.
- iii. Whatever the response, it should be underpinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

## **Support for Children Affected by sexual assault**

- Support for victims of sexual assault is available from a variety of agencies ([see Appendix 8](#)). We will support the victim of sexual assault to remain in the school but if they are unable to do so we will enable them to continue their education elsewhere. This decision will be made only at the request of the child and their family. If they are moved, we will ensure the new school is aware of the ongoing support they may need. The DSL will support this move. Where there is a criminal investigation, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any shared classes with the victim, and we will also consider how best to keep them a reasonable distance apart on the school premises or on school transport. This is in the best interest of the children concerned and should not be perceived to be a judgement of guilt before any legal proceedings.
- We will work closely with the police. Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, we may take suitable action, if we have not already done so. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school or college would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or students).
- Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, we may, if we have not already done so, consider any suitable sanctions using our behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school or college, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school and college premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.
- Reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment will, in some cases, not lead to a report to the police (for a variety of reasons). In some cases, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or sexual harassment are reported to the police and the case is not progressed or are reported to the police and ultimately result in a not guilty verdict. None of this means the offence did not happen or that the victim lied. The process will have affected both victim and alleged perpetrator. Appropriate support will be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a case-by-case basis. All the above will be considered with the needs and wishes of the

victim at the heart of the process (supported by parents and carers as required). Any arrangements should be kept under review.

## Physical Abuse

While a clear focus of child-on-child abuse is around sexual abuse and harassment, physical assaults and initiation violence and rituals from pupils to pupils can also be abusive. These are equally not tolerated and if it is believed that a crime has been committed, will be reported to the police. The principles from the anti-bullying policy will be applied in these cases, with recognition that any police investigation will need to take priority. When dealing with other alleged behaviour which involves reports of, for example, emotional and/or physical abuse, staff can draw on aspects of Hackett's continuum (see above) to assess where the alleged behaviour falls on a spectrum and to decide how to respond. This could include, for example, whether it:

- is socially acceptable
- involves a single incident or has occurred over a period of time
- is problematic and concerning
- involves any overt elements of victimisation or discrimination e.g., related to race, gender, sexual orientation, physical, emotional, or intellectual vulnerability
- involves an element of coercion or pre-planning
- involves a power imbalance between the child/children allegedly responsible for the behaviour
- involves a misuse of power

## Online Behaviour

- i. Many forms of child-on-child abuse have an element of online behaviour including behaviours such as cyberbullying and sexting. Policies and procedures concerning this type of behaviour can be found in the anti-bullying policy and online safety policy.
- ii. The academy's phone-free environment further reduces the risk of online child-on-child abuse occurring during the school day. Any suspected misuse of technology remains a safeguarding concern and will be managed in line with this policy.

## Prevention

Our school actively seeks to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of child-on-child abuse by:

- i. Educating all Trustees, SLT, staff and volunteers, pupils, and parents about this issue.
- ii. This includes training all Governors, SLT, staff and volunteers on the nature, prevalence, and effect of child-on-child abuse, and how to prevent, identify and respond to it.
- iii. This includes: (a) Contextual Safeguarding/extra familial abuse; (b) The identification and classification of specific behaviours; and (c) The importance of taking seriously all forms of child-on-child abuse (no matter how low level they may appear) and ensuring that no form of child-on-child abuse is ever dismissed as horseplay or teasing.
- iv. DSLs, Heads and EAC Inclusion Portfolio Holders members have additional training in using Brookes Identification Toolkit to robustly identify and respond to any incidents.
- v. Creation of a Toolkit and training for all school-based staff, to enable staff to have confidence to take the appropriate action following any report of HSB.
- vi. Educating children about the nature and prevalence of child-on-child abuse via PSHE/ RHE and the wider curriculum as well as the school's expectations of positive and supportive behaviour towards one another.
- vii. Pupils know what behaviour is acceptable as part of Positive Behaviour Policy and how to raise a concern.

- viii. Sharing the school's approach to child on child through the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- ix. Developing a long term, strategic plan to engage pupil and parents and equip them to understand, identify and challenge any form of Child-on-child abuse.
- x. Ensuring that all child-on-child abuse issues are fed back to the school's safeguarding team so that they can spot and address any concerning trends and identify pupils who maybe in need of additional support. M. Challenging the attitudes that underlie such abuse (both inside and outside the classroom).
- xi. Working with all stakeholders to address equality issues, to promote positive values, and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the school community.
- xii. Creating conditions in which our pupils can aspire to and realise safe and healthy relationships.
- xiii. Creating a culture in which our pupils feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgmental environment, and have them listened to; and
- xiv. Responding to cases of child-on-child abuse promptly and appropriately.

## Multi-agency working

- i. The school actively engages with its local partners in relation to child-on-child abuse and works closely with: Local Authority Children's Social care, Early Help and/or other relevant agencies, other schools, and the community in general, including our young people and their families. The relationships the school has built with these partners are essential to ensuring that the school is able to prevent, identify early and appropriately handle cases of child-on-child abuse. They help the school:
- ii. To develop a good awareness and understanding of the different referral pathways that operate in its local area, as well as the preventative and support services which exist.
- iii. To ensure that our pupils can access the range of services and support they need quickly.
- iv. To support and help inform our local community's response to child-on-child abuse.
- v. To increase our awareness and understanding of any concerning trends and emerging risks in our local area to enable us to take preventative action to minimise the risk of these being experienced by our pupils. The school actively refers concerns/reports of child-on-child abuse where necessary to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub and other safeguarding partners. Children resident out of county but attending our school will be reported to their home Children's Services. In cases involving children who are subject to risk, harm, and abuse and who are cared for, the children's social worker will be informed and a coordinated approach to address any incidents or concerns will be required.

## Prevention

As well as having strategies for dealing with incidents we will consider what we can do to foster healthy and respectful relationships between all pupils including through RSE and PSHE education. The most effective preventative education programme will be through a whole school approach that prepares pupils for life. The school has a clear set of values and standards, and these will be upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. This will be underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, and by a planned programme of evidence-based content delivered through the whole curriculum. Such a programme will be appropriate to the age and stage of development (especially when considering SEND children and their cognitive understanding), and may tackle such issues as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships. • What respectful behaviour looks like
- Consent.
- Gender roles, stereotyping, and equality.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.
- Prejudiced behaviour.
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong; and
- Addressing cultures of sexual harassment

## Some useful definitions

**Sexual Harassment:** This can be defined as 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. In the context of this guidance this means in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. It can include:

- Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting.

**Sexting:** Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked, or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others or sends sexually explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.

**Up skirting:** This typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm. It is now a criminal offence and may constitute sexual harassment. Cases of 'up skirting' have a mandatory requirement for being reported.

**Sexual Violence:** In this guidance this refers to sexual violence in the context of child-on-child sexual violence. Children can and do abuse other children. Sexual violence covers a spectrum of behaviour. It can refer to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2013. This includes:

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus, or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Consent:** Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal, or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. It is important to know that:

- A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity.
- The age of consent is 16.
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

It is also important to differentiate between consensual sexual activity between children of a similar age and that which involves any power imbalance, coercion, or exploitation. Due to their additional training, the DSL (or

deputy) should be involved and leading the school or college response. If in any doubt, they should seek expert advice. It is important that schools and colleges consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

**Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)** Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected, to inappropriate, problematic, abusive, and violent. Problematic, abusive, and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour". The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this advice. Harmful sexual behaviour can occur online and/or offline and can also occur simultaneously between the two. Harmful sexual behaviour should be considered in a child protection context. Useful guidance can be found in: - NSPCC and Research in Practice's Harmful Sexual Behaviour Framework: [Harmful sexual behaviour framework | NSPCC Learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/research-practice/harmful-sexual-behaviour-framework/)

**Hazing/Initiation** The practice of rituals, challenges, and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group.

**Contextual Safeguarding** and extra familiar harm (Further information can be found here: [More about extra](https://theinnovateproject.co.uk/about-the-project/extra-familial-risks/familial-risks/)[https://theinnovateproject.co.uk/about-the-project/extra-familial-risks/familial risks | The Innovate Project](https://theinnovateproject.co.uk/about-the-project/extra-familial-risks/familial-risks/)

All staff, but especially the DSL (or deputy) should be considering the context within which incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Additional considerations for schools when considering harmful sexual behaviour, ages, and the stages of development of the children are critical factors to consider. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature. Schools and colleges should ensure that their response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between children of the same sex is equally robust as it is for sexual violence and sexual harassment between children of the opposite sex.

## Appendix 2 - Recognising signs of child abuse

The information below is not exhaustive: see KCSIE Annex 2 for additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues.

### Categories of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse)
- Sexual Abuse (including child sexual exploitation)
- Neglect

### Signs of Abuse in Children:

The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention-needing behaviour
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression and/or anxiousness
- Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Criminality
- Substance abuse
- Mental health problems
- Poor attendance

### Risk Indicators:

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Services

*The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.*

### In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of the parent/s
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups)

### The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)

- Be absent or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

## **Recognising Physical Abuse**

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a “cry for help” and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

## **Bruising**

Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence, or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g., belt marks, handprints or a hairbrush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks on small children
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

## **Bite Marks**

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child.

A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

## **Burns and Scalds**

It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)

- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation

Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

## **Fractures**

Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.

There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent, or inconsistent with the fracture type
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life

## **Scars**

Many scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

## **Recognising Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse. The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g., anxious, indiscriminate, or no attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others

## **Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse**

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about, and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family.

Recognition can be difficult unless the child reports abuse and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child's age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation

- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

### **Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:**

- Pain or itching of genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the father of the child is not identified
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs, sexually transmitted disease, presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia, or clothing

It is rare for children to make false claims about sexual abuse and any reports should always be taken seriously.

### **Recognising Neglect**

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period and can cover different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g., adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and irresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

## **Appendix 3 Sexual Abuse & Sexual Harassment**

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. There should be a zero-tolerance attitude towards any form of derogatory behaviour. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate, or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers, or children. Staff should be vigilant to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- upskirting

### **Developmental Sexual Activity**

Encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional, and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

## **Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour**

Can be inappropriate socially, in appropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. It may also be that the behaviour is “acting out” which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed. If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may still be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour.

Abusive sexual activity includes any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base. To determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration. The presence of exploitation in terms of:

**Equality** – consider differentials of physical, cognitive, and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive, and assertive tendencies

**Informed consent** - In 2015 (recirculated in 2018) Thames Valley police produced a video on the topic of consent using the analogy of asking for a cup of tea. [Consent is everything. The video is reproduced on the Devon and Cornwall website alongside a range of resources including a good consent guide](https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/youth/15-19/good-consent-guide/cornwall.police.uk/youth/15-19/good-consent-guide/)  
<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/youth/15-19/good-consent-guide/cornwall.police.uk/youth/15-19/good-consent-guide/>

They highlight the following: Sexual consent is where a person has the freedom to agree to sexual activity. It is vital the person instigating sex makes sure their partner is participating freely and readily. The website sets out what the consequences are for a person who takes part in sexual activity without seeking consent:

- Rape is a crime.
- It happens to men and women. Rape occurs when a person penetrates another person's mouth, anus, or vagina with their penis without consent.
- If someone initially agrees to have sex, but later withdraws their consent and the other person continues anyway, that person will have committed rape.
- Being drunk or on drugs is not a defence.
- Being accused of rape has life-changing consequences:
- Suspects will be arrested and questioned by the police.
- Their belongings will be seized, and DNA taken, analysed and added to a database.
- A suspect charged with rape will appear in Crown Court before a judge and jury for trial.
- A convicted rapist could be sent to prison. The maximum sentence is life imprisonment.
- Offenders would be ordered to sign the sex offenders register.
- After being convicted it may be harder to get a job or a place at university.
- Offenders may not be able to travel to some countries.
- Offenders may also damage or even lose relationships with friends and families.
- To have sex without consent is to commit rape.

**For there to be informed consent the following must be present**

- Understanding that is proposed based on age, maturity, development level, functioning and experience
- Knowledge of society's standards for what is being proposed
- Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives
- Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally
- Voluntary decision

- Mental competence

## Coercion

The young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance. [See Appendix 4](#)

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide. The TSCP offer guidance to sexually harmful behaviour in its guides to harmful behaviour generally: [TSCP Harmful Behaviour Guide and policy](#)

## Appendix 4 Exploitation (including Child Sex Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines)

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive, but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people who may be victims of sexual or criminal exploitation. Signs include:

- going missing from home or school or regular absence
- regular school absence/truanting
- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- repeat sexually transmitted infections
- in girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile
- online safety concerns such as youth produced sexual imagery or being coerced into sharing explicit images.
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- seen at known places of concern
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- contact with known perpetrators
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime
- police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

## Consent

Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines help people who work with children to balance the need to listen to children's wishes with the responsibility to keep them safe. When practitioners are trying to decide whether a child is mature enough to make decisions about things that affect them, they often talk about whether the child is 'Gillick competent' or whether they meet the 'Fraser guidelines'. Although the two terms are frequently used together and originate from the same legal case, there are distinct differences between them but often refer to children in relation to health issues [NSPCC Gillick Competent Frasier Guidelines](#)

In relation to children who are exploited consideration should be given to if a child is consenting but

- the structure of grooming by their abuser means they do not understand the power differential, and they will often side with their abuser (coerced abused consent)
- they believe that their own and or families survival depends on them and therefore they are exploited for money, food, drugs and or accommodation (survival abused consent)
- normalising violent non – consenting sex (given access to pornography, sexting, music lyrics, gang culture, peer pressure) other young people sometimes groom others to get out of being abused or assaulted themselves. (abused normalised consent)
- professionals unconsciously normalise the abuse i.e. "all 14 year olds have sex" (professional condoned abused consent)

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

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults being exploited to move (and store) drugs and money. The same grooming models used to coerce, intimidate, and abuse individuals for sexual and criminal exploitation are also used for grooming vulnerable individuals for county lines.

## Appendix 5 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms, and other indicators of FGM. If a member of staff, in the course of their work, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, the member of staff must report this to the Police.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act"). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

Section 5B of the 2003 Act<sup>1</sup> introduces a mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. The duty came into force on 31 October 2015.

### What is FGM?

It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. 4 types of procedure:

Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris

Type 2 Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora

Type 3 Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia

Type 4 all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

### **Why is it carried out?**

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a girl's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement
- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps girls be clean / hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

### **Is FGM legal?**

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is illegal in most countries including the UK.

### **Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening are:**

- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
- Family taking a long trip abroad
- Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
- Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
- Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage

### **Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:**

- Prolonged absence from the school and other activities
- Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
- Bladder or menstrual problems
- Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable
- Complaining about pain between the legs
- Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
- Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Repeated urinal tract infection
- Report of abuse

### **The 'One Chance' rule**

As with Forced Marriage there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that settings /schools/colleges act **without delay** and make a referral to children's services.

## Appendix 6 Domestic Abuse (including Operation Encompass)

### How does it affect children?

Children can be traumatised by seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of violence and abuse. They may also be directly targeted by the abuser or take on a protective role and get caught in the middle. In the long term this can lead to serious long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, children may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Government legislation enacted in 2021 recognises that a child who sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, domestic abuse and is related to the person being abused or the perpetrator is also to be regarded as a victim of domestic abuse.

In addition, the age limit for criminal offences related to domestic abuse was lowered from 18 to 16, to recognise that young people can experience abuse in their relationships.

### What are the signs to look out for?

Children affected by domestic abuse reflect their distress in a variety of ways. They may change their usual behaviour and become withdrawn, tired, start to wet the bed, and have behavioural difficulties. They may not want to leave their house or may become reluctant to return. Others will excel, using their time in your care as a way to escape from their home life. None of these signs are exclusive to domestic abuse so when you are considering changes in behaviours and concerns about a child, think about whether domestic abuse may be a factor.

### What should I do if I suspect a family is affected by domestic abuse? Contact:

<http://www.areyouok.co.uk/>

### Torbay

**Torbay Domestic Abuse Service (TDAS)** provides support for men, women and children across Torbay who need advice and protection from domestic abuse. Through confidential advice, support, and crisis accommodation, we can help you to make informed decisions about your future, safety, health, housing and other concerns. [TDAS](tel:08002000247) 0800 2000 247

### Cornwall

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Help and support <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-care-services/domestic-violence-help-and-advice/care/adult-care-services/domestic-violence-help-and-advice/>

Cornwall Safer Futures: [saferfutures.org.uk](http://saferfutures.org.uk) 0300 777 4777 (9am – 5pm, Mon – Fri

### Devon

Devon Domestic Abuse Support Service

<https://www.victimcaredevonandcornwall.org.uk/Victim-Support/Devon-Domestic-Abuse-Support-Service/> 0345 155 1074

**National Domestic Abuse Helpline** Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, available 24hour a day 0808 2000 247 and its website offers guidance and support for potential victims. [Refuge Against Domestic Violence - Help for women & children.](http://www.refuge.org.uk)

**Operation Encompass** helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help for children. Police will inform the 'key adult' within school if they have been called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household before registration the next day.

Operation Encompass is no longer operated via telephone but via email.

Trust schools have set up a dedicated and secure email address, which has restricted access by only those with leadership for safeguarding within a school.

This annex sets out how schools process this information:

- When an officer attends a domestic violence incident, it will be recorded on the Police computer system with details of the children living at the property.
- This will instigate an automated process whereby two emails are sent to the school(s) of the children.
  - Email 1: Information of the incident contained in a password protected zip file attachment;
  - Email 2: contains the password to open the zip file in the first email.
- The Trust IT support, Computeam, have confirmed that Zip 7 software is accessible on Trust systems.

#### **Processing the notification:**

- Upon receiving a notification via Operation Encompass, and in line with safeguarding duties, the information will only be shared with those necessary to enable the pupil to be supported.
- The PDF received will be uploaded to the pupil's secure CPOMS records as soon as possible, with the correct time and date of notification on CPOMS itself.
- The PDF should NOT be stored on a laptop or files but only held within CPOMS records.
- The email should NOT be forwarded on or shared in any other way.
- For security reasons, the email should not be stored but deleted, once PDF uploaded to CPOMS.

Ensure you process the PDF in line with your school's operating procedures for dealing with Operation Encompass notifications.

- Open the first email and save the attachment to the dedicated secure location on your computer.
- Open the zipped file by double clicking on it or right clicking and selecting 'Open archive'. You will be prompted to enter a password. You can copy and paste or manually enter the password. This will open a PDF of the Operation Encompass information.
- If the named school is incorrect or the details of the child named in the notification are incorrect, please report this to the Police Operation Encompass team in your area as per the instructions on the Operation Encompass email.

For further information visit: <https://www.operationencompass.org/>

## Appendix 7 Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation

*Note from KCSIE 2024 This preventing radicalisation section remains under review, following the publication of a new definition of extremism on the 14 March 2024. Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.*

### Key terms

- Extremism (updated March 2024) Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.
- Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

### Key updates in the SW Region:

- The national terrorism threat level is Substantial, meaning that an attack is likely.
- The greatest threats are from international terrorism and right-wing terrorism.
- There are continued risks from people acting alone and using low-tech methods.
- Online extremism is a key concern – this involves people being groomed online through social media and online games by extremists, and self-radicalisation through exposure to extremist online material.
- Locally we continue to see increased concern around young people displaying hateful, racist, misogynistic, homophobic and transphobic behaviours.
- Hate crime, intolerance and community tensions can play a key role in creating the conditions for violent extremism. Nationally and regionally, we have seen protests and hate related incidents directed against asylum seekers, including incidents linked to extremism

### Radicalisation risk indicators

There is no single route to radicalisation. However, there are some behavioural traits that could indicate that a learner is susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism.

Radicalisation is not a linear process. Learners may express a combination of behaviours at different times. Designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) should consider an individual's behaviour in the context of wider influencing factors and vulnerabilities.

In most cases, you should speak with the learner and their parents or carers (if under 18). You should also consider contextual, vulnerability and protective factors to make a comprehensive assessment of risk and harm.

Keep a written record of all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.

Tell the police immediately if you think a learner:

- is about to put themselves or others in immediate danger
- appears to be involved in planning to carry out a criminal offence

**Detailed support and guidance about identifying level of risks and next steps can be found: [Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-risk-of-radicalisation-in-your-education-setting)**

As a school, we support staff, through training, to recognise the threat to pupils. We are alert to violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, including certain divisive or intolerant narratives which can reasonably be linked to terrorism.

Some groups and organisations that promote extremist ideologies are not proscribed terrorist groups or organisations.

These groups support divisive or hateful narratives towards others but may not promote extreme violence. For example, they may hold views that support the distrust or hatred of people with different faiths or undermine the principles of democracy.

More information can be found here

- [Islamist extremism](#)
- [right-wing extremism](#)
- [left-wing, anarchist and single-issue extremism](#)

***Some learners may appear to be at risk or susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism without showing a clear ideology. Individuals increasingly adopt a mix of ideas from different ideologies into their grievance narratives.***

This could include individuals who:

- show an interest in multiple extremist ideologies at the same time
- switch from one ideology to another over time
- target a 'perceived other' of some kind (perhaps based on gender or another protected characteristic), but do not otherwise identify with one particular terrorist ideology or cause - for example, involuntary celibates (incels) who direct their anger mainly at women
- are obsessed with massacre, or extreme or mass violence, without specifically targeting a particular group - for example, high school shootings
- show an interest in conspiracy theories which can act as gateway to radicalised thinking, common themes include:
  - religious or ethnic superiority
  - antisemitism
  - misogyny
  - anti-establishment and anti-LGBT grievances
- may be susceptible to being drawn into terrorism out of a sense of duty, or a desire for belonging, rather than out of any strongly held beliefs

## Online radicalisation

Learners are at risk of accessing inappropriate and harmful extremist content online. There is a rapid proliferation of terrorist content online and the internet has become the preferred avenue for those searching for terrorist propaganda. This could include downloading or sharing terrorist material, which could be a criminal offence. The most recent [data published](#) shows the continued high numbers of under 18's being arrested for

terrorism offences. The latest data indicates that 14% of those arrested year ending 31st March 2023 were 17 and under.

The internet and social media make spreading divisive and hateful narratives to millions of people easy. The barriers that existed with in-person terrorist group activity in the past have been removed to be replaced with an online environment which is built for ease of access.

Extremist and terrorist groups and organisations use social media (for example, apps, forums, blogs, chat rooms) to identify and target susceptible individuals.

You do not need to be an online expert to understand when a learner is at risk of harm. You should deal with harmful online behaviour in the same way as offline activity.

### **Concerns that a learner is being radicalised online**

Any learner who uses the internet can be at risk of online abuse.

Education settings need to be aware of the risks and talk to learners about staying safe online.

If you're concerned that a learner is susceptible to radicalisation online, you should follow your normal safeguarding procedures.

Radicalisation is like grooming. Whether this happens online or offline, you should treat it in the same way.

### **How learners become susceptible to radicalisation**

There's no single way of identifying whether a learner is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism.

The process of radicalisation is different for every individual. It can take place over a long period, or it can be very quick.

Learners who are vulnerable to grooming for sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation or county lines, may also be vulnerable to radicalisation. Factors could include things like being a victim or witness of crime, abuse or bullying, or having personal or emotional difficulties.

Adverse childhood experiences, combined with specific influences from family and peers or online connections, may make someone more susceptible to radicalisation.

Extremist influences could include, but are not limited to:

- family members having direct contact or involvement with extremist or terrorist groups
- staff members of an education or community setting promoting an extremist ideology
- peers promoting an extremist ideology or sharing extremist material
- access or exposure to online extremist material via social media or the internet - for example, propaganda including pictures, videos, blogs and fake news
- exposure to extremist, terrorist or other violent activity in overseas settings
- access or exposure to extremist leaflets, magazines or stickering
- exposure to extremist groups hosting marches, protests or stalls

### **Risk factors**

Push and pull factors can make a learner at risk of extremism or radicalisation. Often there are several risk factors present that, seen together, can cause concern.

#### **Push factors**

Push factors may include a learner feeling:

- isolated
- they do not belong
- they have no purpose
- low self-esteem
- their aspirations are unmet
- anger or frustration
- a sense of injustice
- confused about life or the world
- real or perceived personal grievances

## Pull factors

Pull factors could include an extremist or terrorist group, organisation or individual:

- offering a sense of community and a support network
- promising fulfilment or excitement
- making the learner feel special and part of a wider mission
- offering a very narrow, manipulated version of an identity that often supports stereotypical gender norms
- offering inaccurate answers or falsehoods to grievances
- encouraging conspiracy theories
- promoting an 'us vs. them' mentality
- blaming specific communities for grievances
- encouraging the use of hatred and violent actions to get justice • encouraging ideas of supremacy

## Appendix 8 - Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984) – Code C

Note that for children going through the court system, there are now 2 age-appropriate guides to support them, KCSIE 2025.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) are aware of the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult when in contact with Police officers who suspect them of an offence.

PACE states that anyone who appears to be under 18, shall, in the absence of clear evidence that they are older, be treated as a child for the purposes of this Code and any other Code.

PACE also states that If at any time an officer has any reason to suspect that a person of any age may be vulnerable, then that person is entitled to be accompanied by an appropriate adult at any point.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) will communicate any vulnerabilities known by the school to any police officer who wishes to speak to a pupil about an offence they may suspect. This communication will be recorded **on the schools electronic recording system e.g. CPOMS**.

If having been informed of the vulnerabilities, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) does not feel that the officer is acting in accordance with PACE, they should ask to speak with a supervisor or contact 101 to escalate their concerns.

A person whom there are grounds to suspect of an offence must be cautioned<sup>[1]</sup> before questioned about an offence<sup>[2]</sup>, or asked further questions if the answers they provide the grounds for suspicion, or when put to them the suspect's answers or silence, (i.e. failure or refusal to answer or answer satisfactorily) may be given in evidence to a court in a prosecution.

A Police Officer must not caution a juvenile or a vulnerable person unless the appropriate adult is present. If a child or a vulnerable person is cautioned in the absence of the appropriate adult, the caution must be repeated in the appropriate adult's presence.

**The appropriate adult' means, in the case of a child:**

- I. the parent, guardian or, if the juvenile is in the care of a local authority or voluntary organisation, a person representing that authority or organisation.
- II. a social worker of a local authority

**Failing these, some other responsible adult aged 18 or over who is not:**

- A. a police officer;
- B. employed by the police;
- C. under the direction or control of the chief officer of a police force; or
- D. a person who provides services under contractual arrangements (but without being employed by the chief officer of a police force), to assist that force in relation to the discharge of its chief officer's functions.

Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pace-code-c-2019/pace-code-c-2019-accessible>

## Appendix 9: Individual School's Safeguarding Contacts

The following information or those names contacts at your child's school. \*Out of hours contact details will be made available to staff

All Saints Marsh Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mr Liam O'Sullivan	allsaints@lapsw.org	01626 365293
Deputy DSL(s)	Mr Steve Waters	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mr Liam O'Sullivan	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Debby Forsyth	As above	As above

Bovey Tracey Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Miss Becky Forrest	boveytracey@lapsw.org	01626 833257
Deputy DSL(s)	Ms Louise Prywata	As above	As above
Headteacher	Ms Louise Prywata	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Debby Forsyth	As above	As above

### Charleton Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Hannah Ruston	charleton@lapsw.org	01548 312289
Deputy DSL(s)	Mrs Sarah Dugard	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mrs Hannah Ruston	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Carole Calvert	As above	As above

### Dartington Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Rob Trewinard	dartington@lapsw.org	01803 862357
Deputy DSL(s)	Katie Coombe Catherine Eversfield Heather Wilson	As above	As above
Headteacher	Katie Coombe	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Carole Calvert	As above	As above

### Dunsford Community Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mr Liam O'Sullivan	dunsford@lapsw.org	01626 572971
Deputy DSL(s)	Mrs Tanya Clarke	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mr Liam O'Sullivan	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Debby Forsyth	As above	As above

### Ellacombe Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Miss Gemma Williams	ellacombe@lapsw.org	01803 293040
Deputy DSL(s)	Mrs Tamsin Corline Ms Alison Helm Mrs Yrsa Logan	As above	As above
Headteacher	Ms Alison Helm	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Sue Davies	As above	As above

### Gulworthy Primary Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Melody Sterry	gulworthy@lapsw.org	01822 600650
Deputy DSL(s)	Mr Aaron Taylor	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mrs Melody Sterry	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Peter Hake	As above	As above

### Ilsham Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mr Jake Grinsill	ilsham@lapsw.org	01803 292313
Deputy DSL(s)	Mrs Sam Bennett	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mr Jake Grinsill	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Sue Davies	As above	As above

### Jacobstow Community Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Michelle Jones	jacobstow@lapsw.org	01840 230337
Deputy DSL(s)	Miss Amber McCarten Ms Natasha Ellerington	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Jones	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Julie Cardrick	As above	As above

### Lamerton Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Melody Sterry	lamerton@lapsw.org	01822 613561
Deputy DSL(s)	Mrs Rachel Tozer	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mrs Melody Sterry	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Peter Hake	As above	As above

### Lifton Community Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mr Adam Hill	lifton@lapsw.org	01566 232071
Deputy DSL(s)	Rachel Tozer	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mr Adam Hill	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Peter Hake	As above	As above

### Marhamchurch Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Deirdre Petersen	marhamchurch@lapsw.org	01288 361445
Deputy DSL(s)	Mrs Joanne Maudsley/ Mrs Natasha Ellerington	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mrs Deirdre Petersen	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Julie Cardrick	As above	As above

### St Andrew's Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Deborah Nunn	standrews@lapsw.org	01822 853153
Deputy DSL(s)	Hannah Griffiths Rebecca Murdoch Claire Morris	As above	As above
Headteacher	Deborah Nunn	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Patricia Topham	As above	As above

#### St Mark's Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Deirdre Petersen	stmarks@lapsw.org	01288 331395
Deputy DSL(s)	Mrs Vicki Jordan	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mrs Deirdre Petersen	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Julie Cardrick	As above	As above

#### St Michael's Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Julie Edwards	stmichaels@lapsw.org	01803 500971
Deputy DSL(s)	Mrs Rachel Attwood	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Edwards	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Sue Davies	As above	As above

#### Thurlestone All Saints' Church of England

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Hannah Ruston	thurlestone@lapsw.org	01548 560494
Deputy DSL(s)	Mrs Sarah Dugard	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mrs Hannah Ruston	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Carole Calvert	As above	As above

#### Warberry Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Hannah Reeves	warberry@lapsw.org	01803 29642
Deputy DSL(s)	Mr Steve Bone	As above	As above
Headteacher	Mr Steve Bone	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Sue Davies	As above	As above

#### West Alvington Church of England Academy

Role	Name	Email	Telephone

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Hannah Ruston	westalvington@lapsw.org	01548 312290
Deputy DSL(s)	Mrs Sarah Dugard	As above	As above
Head Teacher	Mrs Hannah Ruston	As above	As above
EAC Chair	Carole Calvert	As above	As above

## Appendix 9 – Resources

Further advice on child protection is available from:

NSPCC: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/home.aspx>

Anti-Bullying Alliance: <http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Beat Bullying: <http://www.beatbullying.org/>

Childnet International - making the internet a great and safe place for children. Includes resources for professionals and parents <http://www.childnet.com/>

Thinkuknow (includes resources for professionals and parents) <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Safer Internet Centre <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

Transgender <http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/>

[Intercom trust transgender guidance](#)

[Guidance on online safety](#)

### DfE advice for schools: teaching online safety in schools

- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS)37 guidance: Education for a connected world
- UKCIS guidance: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
- The UKCIS external visitors guidance will help schools and colleges to ensure the maximum impact of any online safety sessions delivered by external visitors
- National Crime Agency's CEOP education programme: Thinkuknow
- Public Health England: Every Mind Matters
- Harmful online challenges and online hoaxes - this includes advice on preparing for any online challenges and hoaxes, sharing information with parents and carers and where to get help and support.

### Other useful resources

- A [video on supporting children](#) who are victims of sexual abuse.
- A link to [South West Grid for Learning](#), a charity that provides support regarding abuse and technology, and [The Marie Collins Foundation](#), a harmful-sexual-behaviour support service.
- A [county lines toolkit for professionals](#).

- Government guidance on [\*\*forced marriage\*\*](#).
- LGFL "[\*\*Undressed\*\*](#)" - a website that features a video and song that schools can use to teach young children about the risk of being tricked into getting undressed online

## Appendix 10 - Safeguarding contacts including the MASH/ MARU

**In an emergency call 999** [\*\*Police\*\*](#) non-emergency: 101

### **Torbay**

**Targeted Help, Consultation and Enquiries** please contact: Telephone: 01803 208525 (9am-12pm) Email: [targetedhelp@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:targetedhelp@torbay.gov.uk)

**MASH** please contact: Telephone: 01803 208100 Email: [MASH@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@torbay.gov.uk)  
**MASH Referral Form** available at <http://www.torbaysafeguarding.org.uk/workers/hub/>

For the **Emergency Duty Team** out of working hours please contact: 0300 456 4876

**For all LADO enquiries** Duty LA

### **Cornwall**

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/childrens-services/child-protection-and-safeguarding/>  
<https://ciossafeguarding.org.uk/scp/p/our-policies-and-procedures/procedures-and-guides-2>

**CIOS Safeguarding Children Partnership**

Email: [ciosscp@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:ciosscp@cornwall.gov.uk)

Tel: 01872 224552

**CIOS Safeguarding Children Training**

Email: [oscptraining@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:oscptraining@cornwall.gov.uk)

**CIOS Safeguarding Children LADO**

Email: [lado@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:lado@cornwall.gov.uk)

Tel: 01872 326536

### **Devon**

**Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership (Devon SCP)** <https://www.devonscp.org.uk/>

Call 0345 155 1071    [mashsecure@devon.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gov.uk)

If you believe the concern meets the remit of the LADO service, please complete the [notification form](#) or telephone [01392 384964](tel:01392384964) or email [ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gcsx.gov.uk) for a notification form.

# Appendix 11 – Tiered Approach to Site Access

## Principles

Our schools should have secure sites where children should be able to safely access the grounds at any time from when children are on site (e.g. 8am if breakfast club to 4pm if after school clubs).

Therefore, we strive to identify and minimize the risk of any persons who 'may have the opportunity for contact with a child', even if they do not visit regularly. Our approach is to identify the need for visitors/contractors to have access to sites, across the Trust and to categories this so that there is clarity of need and risk management of this.

We seek to ensure access to sites is minimized to the bare minimum and there is processes in place to review this regularly. Whilst many contractors only need 'site access' and not 'building access', there still needs to be a clear process and policy for this, as any entry to site poses a risk to schools.

## Practicality

Schools are busy places who require the function of many roles, both during term time and outside of this. Whilst Site Supervisors work across schools to utilize their expertise and capacity, schools do not have full time of the site team, on site. Most schools have part time admin function and therefore, there needs to be a clear system to school access.

Whilst many contractors only need 'site access' and not 'buildings access', there still needs to be a clear process and policy for this, as any entry to site poses a risk to schools.

## Policy

The current Trust Security Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies will be updated to fully document the range of site access that is practicality required. This will include identified risks and management of these, so that there are clear protocols outlined. This will be outlined in Section 8.2, and set out in full, in Annex 10.

## Visitors and Contractors – Tiers

Only LAP employees have full access to our school sites and will have a pink lanyard.

Anyone else is a 'visitor' and the proposed categories of this are set out below:

### Tier One - REGULATED

<b>Definition</b>	Have the 'opportunity for regular contact with children' and is in 'regulated activity' (e.g. regular unsupervised contact) with children, as set out in KCSIE
<b>Examples of role</b>	Sports coaches Music teachers Catering assistants / providers Our regular Educational Psychologists Forest School Volunteers who are regular and in regulated activity (see Volunteer Policy). External Reviewers, contracted by the Trust
	<b>Some</b> service providers e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• WEMCO</li><li>• Devon Fire and Security</li><li>• South West Norse</li><li>• Computeam</li><li>• Aborcure: West Devon and Cornwall Hubs</li><li>• JB Westcountry: Torbay, South Devon and South Hams Hub.</li></ul>

<b>SCR/ Checks</b>	<p>On the SCR  Enhanced DBS Check*  Barring List Check*  Letter of assurance from their company that they will adhere to their own safeguarding process and policies, or an agreement to follow Trust policies.</p> <p>(*Either completed by LAP or confirmed via letter of assurance)</p>
<b>Training</b>	<p>Evidence that they have had safeguarding training  Or  Take up LAP L2 online training</p>
<b>Access</b>	<p>Access during the school day  All MUST sign in and out, upon entering/ leaving school.  Green lanyard - own access named badge (photos onto SCR) - All will have signed 'Lap Contractors ID Badge Agreement.'</p>

#### **Tier One - UNREGULATED**

<b>Definition</b>	<p>Has 'opportunity for contact with children' but is not in 'regulated activity' with children.</p>
<b>Examples of role</b>	<p>Service providers e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Western Lightning</li> <li>• Some contract cleaners such as Norse if outside of school hours</li> <li>• Ad Hoc visits from contractors such as Devon Tree Services</li> </ul>
<b>SCR/ Checks</b>	<p>On SCR  Enhanced DBS*  Letter of assurance from their company re the above and that they will adhere to their own safeguarding process and policies or agreement to follow Trust policies.</p> <p>(*Either completed by LAP or confirmed via letter of assurance. Barred List Checks are not completed for those not in regulated activity)</p>
<b>Training</b>	<p>Evidence that they have had safeguarding  Or  Take up LAP L2 online training</p>
<b>Access</b>	<p>All MUST sign in and out, upon entering/ leaving school.  Green lanyard with access card (access is limited to minimum school(s) needed).</p>
<b>Statutory Services</b>	<p>The following should produce photo ID from their employee which should be checked upon signing in.  Letters of assurance gained from their employer and therefore, they will be given a Green lanyard.  Social workers.</p>

	Local authority Safeguarding Teams Police NHS Health Teams
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## Tier Two – Essential Services

<b>Definition</b>	Has 'opportunity for regular contact with children' but individual to each school setting.
<b>Examples of role</b>	Refuse Collectors Regular Royal Mail Postal workers (not Amazon/ ad hoc delivery companies )
<b>SCR/ Checks</b>	Individual school risk assessments for refuse collectors, gardening services, post etc. Not on the SCR
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No formal training from employer</li> <li>• Limited documentation from employer re safeguarding policy and procedure.</li> <li>• Risk assessments undertaken to identify and manage risk, according to each school setting and location of post box/ refuse store.</li> </ul>
<b>Access</b>	<p>Access is required to school site to undertake these essential services. Roles will require an Access Control Card with a (new colour) blue lanyard.</p> <p>Exact access to be considered according to their role e.g. postal worker access 6.00am - 8.30am or 4.00pm - 5.00pm according to school activities.</p> <p><b>Blue</b> Access Control Card ID Badge Agreement to be signed upon issuing of badge and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize contact with children,</li> <li>• Not sharing card on with anyone,</li> <li>• Minimizing access to essential use e.g. only going as far as the bins</li> <li>• Any concerns to contact school front office</li> </ul>

## Tier Two – Lettings

<b>Definition</b>	Has 'opportunity for regular contact with children' but individual to each school setting and extended hours clubs etc.
<b>Examples of role</b>	Brownies Church Groups
<b>Checks</b>	Lettings policy updated with clear process and evidence of checks needed.
<b>Training</b>	Evidence that they adhere to their own company safeguarding procedures.
<b>Access</b>	<p>Access control card/ code- limited times and to that school site.</p> <p>Upon issuing card, companies <b>MUST</b> sign the Lettings Contract/ Access ID agreement to set out safeguarding expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize contact with children,</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not sharing card on with anyone,</li> <li>• Minimising access to essential use, not entering any office space unless in an emergency e.g. to call the emergency services.</li> <li>• Limited access to wider school e.g. staffroom for facilities</li> <li>• Must notify contact (have named contact) re any additional access etc., for example we entered the office.</li> </ul> <p>Individual Risk Assessments identify risks per school location and set out the management and mitigation of this.</p>
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### Tier Three

Definition	Contractors or visitors 'opportunity for contact with children'- by their very nature of being on site whilst children may be (8am to 6pm depending on before/ after school provision) but is not in 'regulated activity' with children.
Examples of role	One off/ irregular visitors Contractors for quotes Single visit e.g. speaker MP, Diocese (if SIAMs inspection- see Tier 1) specialist 'speaker'. Irregular Parent volunteers
SCR/ Checks	None as classed as visitors
Training	None
Access	Must be always supervised Grey lanyard, no access.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. What is regulated activity?

The definition of regulated activity depends on what activity the person is undertaking, how often this takes place, and where the work takes place.

- For anyone employed by the LAP where they are teaching, caring or supervising children under 18 years of age, on a regular basis (more than 3 days in a 30-day period), **this is regulated activity**.

But what about those not employed by LAP? Anyone working in specified establishments (e.g. a school) will be carrying out regulated activity with children if they **meet all 5 of the following criteria**:

- They work in the establishments on more than 3 days in a 30-day period, or once overnight between 2am and 6am with the opportunity for face-to-face contact with the children
- They have the opportunity, because of their job, to have contact with the children in the establishment
- They work there for the purpose of the establishment
- It is not temporary or occasional work
- It is not a supervised volunteer role

You can read more about regulated activity here: [Regulated activity with children in England and Wales - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulated-activity-with-children-in-england-and-wales)

## **2. How does regulated activity apply to contractors?**

For most contractors, the above regulations will not apply because they will not meet all 5 criteria, therefore they are not engaging in regulated activity. In this case, their work provides them with an opportunity for contact with children, so an enhanced DBS Check (not including a Barred List Check) will be appropriate. However, there are some contractors, such as James Bowles from Computeam, who would meet all 5 of those criteria (unsupervised contact with children on a regular basis whilst completing work for LAP).

The easiest way to summarise is:

- Contractors working in schools with the opportunity for contact with children, for 4 or more days in any given 30-day period, require an Enhanced DBS check including a Children's Barred list check.
- Contractors working in schools for fewer than 4 days in any given 30-day period, require an Enhanced DBS check, but no Children's Barred List check.

**In both examples, contractors can have a green lanyard as the relevant checks have been completed. However, if you have a contractor who is coming in regularly and you are unsure what checks have been completed, please contact the People Team.**

## **3. What are some examples of regulated / unregulated activity?**

- **Agency Catering**

A school has contracted an agency to provide a catering service to cover a vacancy. Each Catering Assistant will work at the school at least once a week on an ongoing basis.

- The catering agency will be at the school on an ongoing basis and the caterers will be working at the school frequently, therefore each caterer is in Regulated Activity. An enhanced DBS Check with a Barred List Check is required.
- The agency is responsible for obtaining these checks, and LAP should obtain written confirmation (a Letter of Assurance), from the agency that all appropriate vetting and barring checks have been completed.

- **Building Contractor**

A school has contracted a builder to complete some works building new playground equipment. They will be at the school for three days, in the afternoons and afterschool.

- The company will be at the school on a one-off basis, for a couple of days. Whilst there is some opportunity for contact with children, it would not meet the definition of regulated activity, therefore an enhanced DBS Check without a Barred List Check is required.
- The company is responsible for obtaining these checks, and LAP should obtain written confirmation, (a Letter of Assurance), from the agency that all appropriate checks have been completed.
- If the contractor was a self-employed builder, LAP could complete these checks on their behalf.

- **Peripatetic teachers**

Bob Smith is a music teacher who works at a school once a week, during the school day, and delivers music lessons. He is paid directly by the parents of the student he is teaching. He is not supervised by any member of staff while he is at the school.

- Bob Smith is not providing an occasional or temporary service, and he is coming into contact with children on a frequent basis, therefore, he is in Regulated Activity and an enhanced DBS Check with a Barred List Check is required.
- If Bob is not working for an organisation who can provide a letter of assurance, the LAP can complete the relevant checks.

#### **4. What is a letter of assurance?**

A letter of assurance is written confirmation from another organisation that all appropriate and required safer recruitment, vetting and barring checks have been completed for the colleagues being supplied or contracted to the LAP.

#### **5. Where can I find contractors on the SCR?**

Most contractors can be found in the LAP Central Team on the SCR. Individual schools may have their own contractors that just visit that one school, and they can be found on the schools own SCR profile. You can use the search function to help – please note that some organisations will be listed by their name (e.g. Plymouth Argyle), however if we have been provided a list of names by the organisation (e.g. James Bowles – Computeam), they will be listed by name. If you are unsure, you can contact the People Team.

#### **6. What colour lanyard do I give them?**

If they are on the SCR and are “green”, that means all relevant checks have been completed, including an enhanced DBS. They can have a green lanyard. Some service providers who have been identified (such as James from Computeam) will have their own named green lanyard.

If they are not on the SCR, are a one-off visitor, or the DBS is showing as “red” on the SCR, they must have a grey lanyard and be supervised. The only exception to this is those who Estates have identified as essential services (e.g. refuse collectors) who will have been issued with a blue lanyard.

#### **7. I have a new contractor visiting my school, what do I do?**

Check the SCR for the contractor to see if a letter of assurance has been obtained; you can contact the People Team if you are unsure. You should always ensure you see ID when they arrive, and they must sign into the school. If it is unclear whether any checks have been completed, you should either not allow them on site, or provide a grey lanyard and ensure they are supervised at all times.