Safeguarding Policy 2026-27

Blenheim Primary School and Blenheim Early Years

Date	Changes
July 2026	Policy Update in line with changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

Key Contacts

	Blenheim Primary School	Blenheim Early Years
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Suzy Crowe 01702 474684 info@blenheim.lihtrust.uk	Jan Down 01702 474684 info@blenheim.lihtrust.uk
Deputy DSLs (DDSLs)	Amanda Wiley, Jensine Overaa, Emily Lynn, Adam Shaw, Clare Shaw, Sophie Hill, Jane Green, Louise Rourke, Alexa Oldham info@blenheim.lihtrust.uk	Caroline Burchell Emily Ratnage info@blenheim.lihtrust.uk
Designated Safeguarding Portfolio Governor	Richard Reece Victoria Humphreys info@blenheim.lihtrust.uk	
Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Sam Taylor info@blenheim.lihtrust.uk	
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) *Where there are concerns/allegations in respect of people working with children.*	lado@southend.gov.uk	
Children's Services: *Where schools have concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person.* **Out of Office Hours** *To make URGENT child protection referrals*	CSPOC 01702 215007 0345 606 1212	
Channel Helpline	0800 011 3764	

Policy Statement

The Learning in Harmony Trust (LiHT) is committed to safeguarding children and young people, and expects everyone who works within the Trust to share this commitment. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are everyone's responsibility and applies to all employed staff, volunteers, teacher training and work experience placements, as well as contracted and supply staff working at any of the Trust's schools and/or central team. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. In order to fulfil our responsibility effectively, all professionals will make sure that their approach is child-centered and should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Application

LiHT expects that everybody (trustees, governors, volunteers, teacher training and work experience placements and all staff, including contracted and supply staff) working in a Trust school, as well as the Trust central team, recognises and understands their safeguarding responsibilities. There is a

shared commitment to providing a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of every child and young person.

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are defined for the purposes of this policy 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;
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

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

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may include children causing harm to adults, often called 'child to parent' or 'care giver' abuse or emotional abuse which may include verbal abuse such as criticism, belittling or name calling

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams regardless of whether they're consensual or non-consensual. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video.

Children - As outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2026), 'children' refers to everyone under the age of 18, which includes'babies'

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with. It is important to remember that **safeguarding and child protection** are not the same. Safeguarding is what we do for all children and young people; a proactive endeavour to keep them safe whilst in our care.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

Consent is an informed, voluntary, and free agreement given by a person with the capacity to give permission for actions. We understand that under-13s can never legally consent to sexual activity.

The following three safeguarding partners are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The Local Authority (LA)
- Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA.
- The Chief Officer of police for a police area in the LA area.

Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the statutory guidance provided in the Department for Education's 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2026), 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2026) and the Academy Trust Governance Guide. As part of LiHT we comply with the guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our three local safeguarding partners. Keeping Children Safe in Education and the supplementary advice **must** be read in conjunction with this policy. This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at the school
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some children may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- Mobile phones in schools, June 2026. Setting out that all schools are legally required to operate as "phone-free" environments.
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
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This policy also complies with our Funding Agreement and Articles of Association.

There are four main elements:

- **Prevention - Preventing impairment of children's health or development** (eg. positive, supportive, safe school/learning provider culture, curriculum and pastoral opportunities for children/vulnerable learners, safer recruitment and Volunteer and Work Experience procedures);
- **Protection - Protecting children from maltreatment** (by following the agreed procedures, ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns);

- **Support - Ensuring all children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care** (for all children/learners, parents and staff, and where appropriate specific intervention for those who may be at risk of harm);
- **Working with parents/families and other agencies - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes** (to share information and ensure appropriate actions are undertaken).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school and Trust wide policies: Online Safety Policy; First Aid Policy; Positive Handling and/or Physical Contact Policy; Safer Recruitment Policy; Staff Code of Conduct; Whistleblowing Policy; and the Managing Allegations of Abuse against staff policy.

Trust Expectations

All staff are expected to read, at the start of each school year or at the time of appointment as part of their induction, the following documents:

- This Safeguarding Policy.
- KCSIE Part 1 and Annex B.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Behaviour Policy.

All staff should also:

- Know the name and roles of the DSL and their deputies.
- Know how to raise a safeguarding concern with the DSL or other members of the school's wider safeguarding team through the use of the CPOMS reporting tool.

The DSL and members of the school's wider safeguarding team must have due regard to the guidance contained within other relevant safeguarding documentation, primarily 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

Professional Development

When new staff, volunteers, teacher training and work experience placements join an LiHT school, they are:

- Provided with appropriate safeguarding training as part of their induction, including on whistleblowing and online safety.
- Given access to a copy of our Trust Safeguarding Policy.
- Given access to KCSIE Part One.
- Advised who the DSL (and Deputy) is and informed about how to share concerns with them.

This is to ensure that they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse, exploitation or neglect.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff volunteers, teacher training and work experience placements receive regular safeguarding training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, including online safety. All staff are kept informed and updated about safeguarding and child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and regular awareness training. This includes online safety. This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-trust safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning.
- Be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners.
- Include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring

All Staff & Volunteers: Complete annual safeguarding training (including Flick courses) and receive anti-radicalisation (Prevent) training. They must read key policies - including the Safeguarding Policy, the annual Staff Code of Conduct (outlining behavioral boundaries), and *Keeping Children Safe in Education* - to ensure they can confidently identify signs of abuse, neglect, and extremism.

Temporary Staff, Contractors, Teacher Training and Work Experience placements are fully briefed on the school's child protection arrangements and their specific responsibilities.

Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads (D/DSLs) undergo updated child protection training at least every two years and continuously stay aligned with local Children's Safeguarding Partnership advice.

The school and Trust maintain comprehensive training records for all training. The Head Teacher integrates safeguarding and online safety into the whole-school professional development plan, the DSL has regular external supervision, while the Head Teacher or DSL provides staff with confidential supervision, coaching, and support when handling child protection issues.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that we collectively:

- Maintain children's welfare as our paramount concern.
- Create a culture of vigilance, where the welfare of all children is promoted and where timely, appropriate action is taken to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- Use the necessary information to enable the school to meet its statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children.
- Ensure consistent good practice with all staff volunteers, teacher training and work experience placements in being able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse, including child-on-child abuse and the appropirate procedures, reporting systems and communications for raising concerns.
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of policies and practices for safeguarding and child protection through open and honest professional relationships, enabling children to receive the right support at the right time.
- Engage in training in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues.
- Demonstrate the Trust's commitment to safeguarding children.

Prevention of Harm

We recognise that schools play a significant part in the prevention of harm by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults and an ethos of protection. Therefore, we aim to:

- Establish and maintain an ethos and safe environment in which children can learn and develop feeling secure, valued, respected and confident and are able to talk openly and are sure of being listened to.
- Provide support and guidance so that children have a range of trusted adults who they feel confident to approach if they are experiencing difficulties, and that they are never made to feel like they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harrasment.
- Use the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that children have a range of strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others and know who they should turn to for help.

Working Together to Safeguard Children

We are committed to the expectations set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)'. These expectations ensure that all practitioners:

- Share the same goals to help keep children safe.
- Learn with and from each other.
- Have what is needed to help protect families.
- Acknowledge and appreciate differences.
- Feel able to challenge each other where necessary.

Additionally, we maintain a child-centred approach for babies, including understanding their specific vulnerabilities and:

- Interpreting non-verbal and pre-verbal cues
- Observing interactions between babies and their parents/carers
- Remaining professionally curious, particularly when relying on parent/carer accounts

Equality Statement

LiHT promotes a fully inclusive environment. We recognise that some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face and adhere to the protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act. This also includes compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and Public Sector Equality Duty, paragraphs 83-93.

Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, teacher training and work experience placements, governors and trustees and is consistent with the procedures of the three safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities. We recognise that schools play a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of whole-school approaches to preparing children for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by the following:

- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies
- Pastoral Support systems
- Planned programmes of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), covering online harms such as sharing images, deepfakes, pornography and misogynistic influencers, and when and where to seek help.

We recognise that all adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential. There are, however, key people within schools and Local Authorities who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures.

Overview

The DSL is a Senior Leadership Team member who holds ultimate, non-delegable responsibility for safeguarding, child protection, and online safety (including filtering and monitoring systems). While Deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard and can handle day-to-day tasks, overall accountability remains solely with the DSL.

A safeguarding team member is always available during school hours, with reporting systems also active out of hours, such as a confidential email - to ensure all safeguarding concerns are received, monitored, and acted upon without delay.

The safeguarding team actively coordinates with external agencies and the three key safeguarding partners - the Local Authority, Integrated Care Boards, and the Chief Officer of Police - in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.

All Staff

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and all staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from Early Help. Any staff member who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out within this policy.

All staff will:

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- Read, understand, and annually sign Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Complete regular safeguarding, online safety, and filtering/monitoring training, and remain fully aware of school policies (such as the Code of Conduct, behaviour, and missing from education procedures).

- Maintain a strong safeguarding culture both in-school and online. Staff must recognise the signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation - including domestic/sexual abuse, parental conflict, child-on-child abuse, FGM, county lines, and radicalisation, alongside emerging technology-driven threats like online grooming.
- Know how to handle disclosures confidentially, refer all concerns immediately to the DSL, and actively engage in the early help assessment process to support vulnerable children.
- Reinforce online safety with parents and carers, ensuring they are kept informed of children's digital tasks and interactions.

Safeguarding concerns about adults in an individual school should be made directly to the Head Teacher. Concerns about the Head Teacher should be made to the Trust Leadership Group. Concerns about safeguarding practices in a school should be made to a member of the Trust Leadership Group, to the CEO or using the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

Responsibilities of the DSL

As a Senior Leadership Team member, the DSL holds lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding, including online safety and overseeing device/network filtering and monitoring. They coordinate timely referrals to Early help, Family help and Children's Social Care, collaborate with the Local Authority and external agencies, and ensure appropriate information sharing. The DSL acts as the primary source of safeguarding advice for staff, ensuring all staff (including volunteers, contractors, temporary staff and trainee teachers and work experience placements) are trained, aware of policies, and consistently following procedures. As the safeguarding team holds the most complete picture of pupil welfare, Deputy DSLs are trained to the same high standard to act in the DSL's absence, ensuring seamless continuity of care.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is supported with the necessary time, funding, and resources to fulfill the following core duties:

- Update their safeguarding skills annually, undergo formal training every two years (with a strong focus on harmful sexual behavior), and maintain a firm understanding of the school's online filtering and monitoring systems.
- Remain accessible during school hours for staff to report concerns, brief all external/temporary staff on school procedures, and provide emotional support and debriefing to staff dealing with distressing cases.
- Lead all multi-agency referrals (including Early Help, Family help, Children's Social Care, and the Prevent programme) and know when to involve the police or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). They also coordinate with specialist services to address extremism, sexual violence and harassment.
- Ensure all safeguarding files are detailed, accurate, and kept strictly confidential. The DSL documents the clear rationale behind all decisions, tracks records for concerning behaviour patterns, notifies social workers immediately if a child on a protection plan is absent without explanation, and securely transfers files when a pupil changes schools.

The DSL will also ensure that they help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children (including those with a social worker) are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and other staff. For example: making sure that staff know who these children are; understand their academic progress and attainment; maintain a culture of high aspirations for them; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face, and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support them.

Training

The DSL (and any deputies) will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training will be updated at least every two years. In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via the Trust's Training platform, e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs at Trust wide conferences and forums, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required,

and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up to date with any developments relevant to their role.

Raising Awareness

The DSL should:

- Ensure the Safeguarding Policy is known, understood and used appropriately.
- Ensure the Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Work with the Trust IT Central Team to ensure that filtering and monitoring systems are fit for purpose and that there is a clear procedure to respond to issues and safeguarding concerns, as well as fulfilling responsibilities under the Prevent Duty. DSLs will ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities in this area, via information shared during training/updates.
- Ensure the Attendance Policy is clear about the safeguarding risks for children absent or missing from school, including those absent on repeat occasions/for prolonged periods. This should include how staff supporting attendance work with the DSL.
- Periodically review procedures for responding to safeguarding concerns about other organisations and individuals using the school site and work with relevant staff within the Central Team to ensure that these are clearly stated in any Lettings Policy and/or contracts.
- Ensure the Safeguarding Policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse, neglect and/or exploitation may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

Responsibilities of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is expected to:

- Ensure the Safeguarding Policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- Allocate sufficient time and resources to enable the DSL and any deputies to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of children and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings.
- Ensure that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the Whistleblowing procedures.
- Ensure this policy is communicated to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Make decisions regarding all low-level concerns.
- Ensure that a list of all staff and volunteers, and their safeguarding training dates is maintained.
- Implement statutory guidance on Mobile phones in schools.
- Ensure the relevant staffing ratios are met within the Early Years Statutory Framework and that all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are assigned a key person.
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, and devices like mobile phones and cameras within the Early Years setting.

Responsibilities of the Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body (LGB) helps facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of the work of the school. Governors on our local governing bodies review the school-specific elements of this policy after the trust level policy has been reviewed and approved by Trustees.They ensure that the school has effective safeguarding procedures in place, holding the Head Teacher to account for their implementation.

The LGB ensures that the school has:

- A DSL for safeguarding and child protection, who is a member of the senior leadership team and has undertaken the appropriate training (including online safety and an understanding of the school's filtering and monitoring system).
- Appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training in place for all governors at induction to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test

and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.
- A strong safeguarding culture and that children are taught to keep themselves safe through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, including online safety and that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place.

The Head Teacher/DSL and Designated Governor will engage and undertake in Safeguarding Audits with Trust wide leaders in order to meet the Trusts obligations to S.175 of the Education Act 2002.

Safeguarding updates are also provided to each school's Local Governing Body as part of the Leadership Report termly.

Trust Leadership Group

The Trust Leadership Group is responsible for ensuring that there is an effective Safeguarding Policy and procedure, consistent with Local Safeguarding Children Board requirements implemented within each Trust school, which is updated annually and is available on the school website. Trust Leaders will also ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the Trust.

Trust leaders ensure that there is a training strategy which ensures all staff receive safeguarding training at regular intervals and that all temporary staff teacher training and work experience placements and volunteers are made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection. All Governors and Trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction which is then regularly updated.

The Trust Leadership Group and central team ensure that schools have the appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, and review their effectiveness. This includes:
- Making sure that the leadership team and staff within all Trust schools are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training.
- Reviewing the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, and discussing with the IT Central Team staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the schools in meeting these standards.

The Trust Leadership Group and central team work with the school's leaders to ensure that the school follows all safer recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, including the requirements for appropriate checks in line with national guidance. (see policy on Safer Recruitment and Volunteering and Work Experience procedures for further information, including the updates requirements around regulated activity). The Trust Leadership Group and central team also ensure that effective procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff, including allegations made against the Head Teacher meet all statutory requirements.

Virtual School Head Teachers

Within our Trust we recognise the role of the Virtual School Heads in supporting the safety and well-being of children within our schools and we ensure strong partnerships with wider professionals. Virtual School Heads (VSHs) have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker. They also have a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children in kinship care (children who live with a relative or close family friend). VSHs should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), social workers, mental health leads and others.

Procedures

All LiHT schools work with key local safeguarding partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, including identifying and responding to their needs. When new staff, teacher training and work experience placements, volunteers or regular supply staff or contractors join the school, they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They are

given a copy of the Trust's Safeguarding Policy, advised who the DSL (and Deputies) are and informed how to share concerns with the DSL or Deputy.

Staff are kept informed about child protection and safeguarding responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings, e-bulletins and awareness training, at least annually. Staff and governors also have access to copies of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)', the Code of Conduct, Behaviour Policy and are made aware of the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.

All staff immediately report any suspected abuse, neglect, or disclosure to the DSL (or Deputy DSL). The DSL team then determines the appropriate response, whether through internal pastoral care, Early Help, or an external referral to Children's Social Care and the police. The DSL provides ongoing advice, guidance, and confidential supervision to staff managing difficult child protection cases.

Reporting Concerns to the DSL

Core Principles & Professional Curiosity

- All Staff, volunteers, trainee teachers and work experience placements are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and always act in the child's best interests.
- Staff should proactively build trusted relationships with children, recognising that children may not always disclose abuse directly or recognise that they are being harmed.
- Any concern, no matter how small, must be reported immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL and follow the schools referral process via CPOMS. Staff, volunteers, trainee teachers and work experience placements should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action.

Referrals & External Escalation

- If a child is in immediate danger, a referral must be made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police immediately. Anyone can make a referral, but they must inform the DSL as soon as possible.
- Any telephone referral to Children's Services must be confirmed in writing (signed and dated by the referrer) within 48 hours, providing essential details (family composition, reason for referral, etc.).
- Assessments must consider and be sensitive to wider environmental factors outside the school which can impact children and families' lives. Such as, economic and social circumstances, ethnicity and disability.
- If a staff member feels their concerns are not being addressed or the child's situation is not improving, they must raise this with the DSL to press for case reconsideration/escalation.

Specific Statutory Duties

- Teachers have a statutory, personal duty to report known or physically observed cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in girls under 18 directly to the Police. Failure to meet this mandatory duty will result in disciplinary sanctions.
- Concerns regarding extremism or terrorism should be discussed with the DSL first (unless there is immediate danger) to determine the correct referral pathway, which may include the police, the government's Channel programme, or Children's Social Care.

Parent Communication

- The school will share its intention to refer a child to Social Care or involve external agencies with parents/carers unless doing so would place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions advice will be taken from Children's Social Care or the Police about when it is appropriate to share information with parents/carers.

Immediate Response to the Pupil

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused, neglected or exploited. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what

will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. If a child talks to staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, the staff member will need to let them know that the information must be passed on; staff are not allowed to keep secrets and staff recognise that their actions do not abuse the child further or prejudice further enquiries. Guidance is provided below.

- Accept what the pupil says. Listen to them and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and not ask leading questions.
- Stay calm and not show that they are shocked or upset. The pace should be dictated by the pupil without them being pressed for detail by asking leading questions, such as, "What did s/he do next?" **It is the adult's role to listen, not to investigate.**
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling an adult, and not tell them they should have told us sooner.
- Use open questions, such as, "Is there anything else you want to tell me?" or "Yes?" or "And?"
- Acknowledge how hard it was for the pupil to tell us.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator; the pupil might have a relationship with them.
- Do not promise confidentiality. We reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing, explain whom we will have to tell (the DSL) and why, and, depending on the pupil's age, what the next stage will be. It is important that we avoid making promises that we cannot keep, such as, "I'll stay with you all the time," or "It will be alright now."
- Record the conversation as soon as possible by reporting it on CPOMS. Stick to the facts, use direct speech where you can and do not put your own judgement on it.
- Aside from the DSL and/or senior leaders, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.
- Bear in mind that some children may:
  a) Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
  b) Not recognise their experiences as harmful.
  c) Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers.

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

Recording Information

Staff, volunteers, teacher training and work experience placements, within our school play a vital role in helping children in need or at risk by effective monitoring and record keeping. Any disclosure, incident or behavioural change in a child that gives cause for concern should be recorded on the CPOMS system. It is important that records are factual and reflect any words used by the child.

- The child's name and date of birth.
- The incident(s) which gives rise for concern with date(s) and time(s).
- A verbatim record of what the child has said.
- If recording bruising/injuries, indicate position, colour, size, shape and time on the appropriate body map.
- The name of the person completing the report, including the names of any witnesses.
- Any physical evidence, such as a note or drawing, should be passed to the DSL and kept securely.
- If an opinion is given a reference must be made to an evidence base.

These basic details are vital to the information gathering process and do not constitute an investigation. All staff are able to log a concern on CPOMS to inform the DSL or Deputy who will decide on the appropriate action. They will ensure that records relating to concerns for the welfare or safety of children are stored securely in chronological order. CPOMS Software will create an automatic email alert on the system, and the person making the referral will receive a confirmation that the report has been read. Further information is only shared if appropriate. It is important to remember that any issues are confidential and staff are informed on a 'need to know' basis only. In all but the most exceptional cases, parents/carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child at the earliest possible stage. Remember to seek support and advice for yourself if required.

After receiving a CPOMS notification, the DSL has the following options:

- Managing any support for the child internally using the pastoral support team, if deemed appropriate;
- An Early Help Assessment; or
- A referral for statutory services because the child might be in need, is in need or is suffering or likely to suffer harm. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and the police) is made immediately.

Appropriate documentation provided by the Local Authority should be used to support a child protection referral. The Local Authority is expected to make a decision on the required response and notify the school within one working day. Staff are encouraged to seek personal support if a case is distressing, and they have a duty to follow up or press for a reconsideration if they feel a child's situation is not being addressed or is failing to improve.

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

We recognise that information sharing is vital to identify, assess, and tackle abuse or neglect. Staff must be proactive in sharing information as early as possible and must never assume another professional will pass on critical details. The primary consideration is always whether sharing information protects the child.When sharing information the following key principle is considered:

Is the information being shared: necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely, secure, recorded?

All information held at the school will be stored and shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We are aware of the duty placed upon schools in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) ensuring that schools process information fairly and lawfully, keeping the information they hold safe and secure. We recognise that if staff need to share 'special category personal data', the Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk. For further information schools can access the ICO guidance 'For Organisations' which includes information about a school's obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information, and providing access to official information. The DfE Data Protection Guidance for schools also highlights what staff and pupil data to keep and good practices for preventing personal data breaches. Data Protection is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child being placed at risk of harm. 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; if unsure, staff should contact the DSL to discuss.

While family and pupil information is treated with high confidentiality, staff must never promise secrecy or guarantee confidentiality to a pupil, parent, or colleague regarding a safeguarding concern. Within the school, child protection details are shared strictly on a need-to-know basis. The DSL and Head Teacher will only disclose relevant details to staff to enable them to support the pupil with appropriate sensitivity, keeping the child's best interests paramount.

In case of children transferring schools, it will be up to the DSL of the new school to consider which information in a child protection file should be shared with relevant staff and when it's appropriate to do so. Where information indicates a risk to others, for example where a pupil has previously carried, threatened with or used a knife or weapon, the receiving school is responsible for assessing the risk and putting in place a support plan for when the child arrives.

Working with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play an important role in protecting their children from harm. We aim to help parents understand that the school has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. The school will need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are

concerns about a pupil's welfare. Parents and carers are informed about our school's duties and responsibilities under child protection procedures on admission and on the school website. The DSL will always undertake to share their intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with the parents or carers, unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, the DSL will normally notify the parents/carers of all children involved and will think carefully about what information is provided about the other child involved, and when. The DSL will work with the police and/or Local Authority children's social care to make sure the approach to information sharing is consistent. The DSL, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by case basis):

- Will meet with the victim's parents/carers, with the victim, to discuss what is being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed.
- Will meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents/carers to discuss support for them, and what is being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s).

On such occasions where sharing information with parents and carers could place the child at greater risk of harm, advice will be taken from Children's Social Care or the Police about when it is appropriate to share information with parents/carers.

Records and Monitoring

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice, and all child protection files are stored securely and confidentially on CPOMS. To ensure legal compliance, the Trust works closely with its Data Protection Officer (DPO) to document safeguarding data flows within the school's Records of Processing Activity and Privacy Notice. This robust oversight ensures that sensitive, "special category personal data" is processed, stored, and shared under strict legal conditions that prioritise child safety.

Safeguarding records are maintained actively for as long as a pupil remains on the school roll. Once a pupil with a child protection record reaches statutory school-leaving age, the last school they attended is required to securely archive and retain the safeguarding file until the individual reaches 25 years of age (seven years after school-leaving age) or for a child with an Education, Health and Care plan until the individual reaches 31 (seven years after their education, health and care plan elapses). This retention period is strictly enforced to ensure records remain accessible for any future subject access requests made by the individual as an adult.

When a pupil transfers to a new educational setting, their child protection file must be transferred securely and entirely separate from their main pupil file within five days of an in-year transfer or the start of a new term. The exporting school should include a summary setting out the current safeguarding concerns, relevant context, and any ongoing support needs. Distinguishing between current safeguarding concerns and historic information.

The sending school must obtain a secure confirmation of receipt from the receiving school, logging this confirmation alongside the date their own copy is destroyed, unless exceptional circumstances - such as sibling links or ongoing complaints - require temporary retention. To ensure a seamless transition and continuity of care, the DSL will proactively contact the new school in advance to coordinate support, and will immediately request safeguarding files from a pupil's previous school if none are received upon arrival.

Supporting Children at Risk

We recognise that a child who has witnessed or suffered abuse may abuse their peers. We are committed to providing the right help at the right time through early identification, multi-agency collaboration, and a curriculum that actively teaches safeguarding and online safety. Recognising that school may be the only safe, stable element in a vulnerable child's life, we provide targeted support to

mitigate the emotional impact of abuse and manage child-on-child abuse with the same rigor as all other safeguarding concerns.

We work closely with Children's Social Care and external partners to ensure a joined-up approach for children requiring additional support. This high-risk group includes children who:

- Are in care, previously in care, or **placed out of area**.
- Have a history of **frequent periods of missing education**.
- Have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (**SEND**).
- Have a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan.
- Require **mental health support**.
-

We support all children by focusing on three key areas:
1. School Culture & Behaviour
    - Maintaining a safe, supportive and inclusive school ethos where every child feels respected, valued, and consistently managed.
    - Challenging all forms of aggression, bullying, discrimination and racism while ensuring pupils know they are valued even when behavior is unacceptable.
    - Being alert to and challenging bias, both conscious and unconscious.
2. Curriculum & Online Safety
    - Embedding PSHE and Relationships Education to build self-esteem, self-motivation, and healthy relationships.
    - Implementing effective online filters and monitoring without "over-blocking" curriculum content, and supporting safe internet use at home.
3. Targeted Support & Collaboration
    - Training staff to be highly sensitive to signs of abuse, particularly for children with SEND, those who are unable to verbalise and those experiencing domestic violence or substance abuse at home.

Early Help

Our staff are prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help, including community-based early help and targeted early help (Family Help). Early help is defined as providing 'support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.' Any child and family may benefit from early help, but staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Has Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan).
- Has a health condition, mental health need or other specific additional need.
- Is a young carer.
- Is bereaved.
- Is showing signs of being drawn into antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime.
- Has experienced multiple suspensions or is at risk of being permanently excluded.
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care.
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation.
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol abuse, adult mental health issues or domestic abuse.
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence or misogyny), or developing inappropriate relationships online.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Is at risk of 'honour' based abused such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Is a privately fostered child, looked after or previously looked after.
- Is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education.

- Has a family member in prison.

Abuse, neglect, and exploitation are complex, overlapping issues that can stem from both non-physical ill-treatment and the trauma of witnessing domestic abuse. Staff must remain vigilant to all indicators of harm and actively support any necessary Early Help assessments, including family help. If a plan is implemented, the case must be kept under constant review; if the child's situation fails to improve or worsens, staff must immediately consider a referral to Children's Social Care for statutory services.

Mental Health

All staff are 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. Also that mental health problems may develop into safeguarding concerns, including self-harm, suicidal ideation and risk of suicide Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem and our school works with a range of external specialist agencies to support our childrens' mental health needs. We ensure that any interventions offered are evidenced as safe, effective and appropriate.

Staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Signs such as:
• significant changes in behaviour,
• ongoing difficulty sleeping,
• withdrawing from social situations,
• not wanting to do things they usually like,
• physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, such as racism and faith-targeted abuse, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that our staff are aware of how children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following our safeguarding procedures as outlined within this policy and all staff will speak immediately to the DSL or a Deputy. If staff feel a child is in immediate danger steps such as calling 999 or arranging for a child to be taken to A&E by a suitable person should be considered. Where the school has access use should be made of support from the respective mental health support team (MHST).

The Department for Education has published advice and guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, and Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools which we follow.

Serious Violence

Serious violence, which includes physical assault, weapon-related incidents, peer conflict, and criminal exploitation, remains a critical safeguarding concern, particularly for children with a history of offending or disrupted education (such as suspensions or exclusions). Staff must remain alert to signs of involvement or risk and must immediately report any concerns regarding weapons to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy. In line with the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) and statutory guidance, the school is committed to providing early, evidence-based support, including mentoring, trusted adults, and therapeutic interventions, while managing external referrals and police notification as required.

Inter-Agency Working

In line with the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, our school plays a pivotal role in local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. We collaborate closely with statutory safeguarding partners -including social care, the police, and health services - to protect children, provide coordinated Early Help, and contribute to statutory inter-agency plans. The school maintains robust processes to allow local authority children's social care access to conduct Section 17 or

Section 47 assessments. When notified that a pupil has an allocated social worker, the school actively uses this information to guide decision-making, particularly when responding to unauthorised absences and tailoring pastoral support.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring the school is represented at all Child Protection Conferences for children on roll or previously known to the school. A detailed safeguarding report must be provided to the Conference Chair 48 working hours in advance of the meeting and shared with the parents or carers beforehand. The school's representative will be fully briefed to contribute actively to the meeting and to express a professional view on whether a Child Protection Plan is required. All meeting notes are recorded securely and shared with relevant staff strictly on a need-to-know basis via CPOMS.

Once a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan is established, the DSL ensures the pupil's attendance, academic progress, and general presentation are monitored continuously. If the school is part of the Core Group, the DSL will ensure representation and active contribution to the ongoing plan. Any concerns regarding the plan or the child's welfare are recorded and discussed during Core Group meetings, unless doing so would increase the risk of harm to the child, in which case the DSL will notify the social worker immediately and document the agreement on CPOMS. Crucially, any unexplained absence of a child subject to a Child Protection Plan must be reported to their social worker immediately.

Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

We ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements. The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school Head Teachers. There is an appointed designated teacher, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance. The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role and will ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to. The designated teacher will also work with virtual school Head Teachers to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans.

Children Questioning Their Gender and Social Transition Requests

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 statutory framework, the school treats requests regarding gender identity and social transition as a clear safeguarding matter. In line with evidence-based recommendations, the school adopts a deeply cautious and holistic approach to supporting children who are questioning their gender.

Key Principles and Decision-Making
The school will never proactively initiate a child's social transition. The procedures detailed below apply strictly when a request is actively brought forward by a child or their parents/carers.

- Engaging parents or carers is treated as a priority. The school will involve parents in all discussions regarding a child questioning their gender. If doing so would place the child at an immediate and greater risk of significant harm the school will work to determine what action is needed to safeguard the child first.
- When evaluating any transition request, the school will determine what is in the best interests of the specific child. Final decisions are child-centered but not necessarily child-led, meaning the outcome may not automatically align with the child's stated preferences.
- The school will discuss constraints with parents/carers and children. For example, not allowing access to toilets or changing rooms designated for the opposite sex, or that while

school will take a strong stand against bullying, they also be conscious of the rights of pupils and staff in relation to their religion or belief.
- Support for formal social transition at a primary age will be agreed upon only in exceptionally rare circumstances.
- Staff must not make informal, ad hoc adjustments regarding a pupil's pronouns, uniform, or name.

Physical Spaces and Sports Compliance

The school enforces strict compliance with statutory single-sex provisions to guarantee the privacy, dignity, and safety of all pupils:

- Pupils only use toilets designated for their biological sex. If a gender-questioning child chooses not to use facilities matching their biological sex, the school will seek to offer an alternative arrangement, such as a single-occupancy, self-contained toilet, provided it does not compromise the availability of single-sex facilities for others.
- Children aged 11 and older must not undress or shower in front of peers of the opposite biological sex. Suitable private, enclosed spaces will be offered as an alternative where needed.
- Children will not be permitted to share overnight accommodation with peers of the opposite biological sex.
- Where school sports are segregated by sex for reasons of safety or fairness, no exceptions will be made as part of a social transition agreement.

Record-Keeping and Support

The school is legally required to accurately maintain each pupil's biological sex across all formal school systems. Relevant leaders and staff will have secure access to this data to properly fulfill their safeguarding and operational responsibilities.

The DSL will actively coordinate clinical advice, universal services, or targeted Family Help pathways where a gender-questioning child presents with complex, co-occurring welfare, mental health, or neurodevelopmental needs. The DSL is also responsible for overseeing the safety and heightened vulnerability of children "living in stealth" (where their biological sex is unknown to peers) to proactively manage potential anxiety, bullying risks, or sudden safeguarding changes.

Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) or Health Issues

We recognise that children with SEND or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- Children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than others.
- The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating content/behaviours in school or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the DSL (or a deputy) and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo).

We offer additional pastoral support for children and families, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place. Access to further information can be found below:

- SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years.
- Supporting children at School with Medical Conditions.

And from specialist organisations such as:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service.
- Mencap - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.
- NSPCC - Safeguarding children with SEND

Children in Alternative Provision (AP)

When a pupil is placed with an AP provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs. This is in line with the DfE's voluntary national standards for non-school alternative provision and alongside guidance to support schools and local authority commissioners in quality assuring providers. We obtain 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. This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that the commissioning school can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff. We have procedures in place for the use of AP, and how the school will ensure the safeguarding of pupils accessing this type of provision. Our school will always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. The school will regularly review the alternative provision placements they make. Reviews should be frequent enough (at least half termly) to provide assurance that the child is regularly attending and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement should be immediately reviewed, and terminated, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

Cohorts of Children in AP settings often have complex needs, and we recognise the importance of the additional risk of harm that our children may be vulnerable to. We always refer to the statutory guidance (Alternative Provision DFE statutory guidance, and Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) – DFE statutory guidance) before making the decision to access AP for our Children.

Children with a Social Worker

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health challenges. The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children. Where staff are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks.
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

Specific Safeguarding Issues

We recognise that there are a number of specific safeguarding issues about which staff need to be aware. Further information regarding some of these issues can be found below and these issues are also addressed in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and the violence against women and girls (VAWG) strategy 2025. Whilst we ensure that all staff avail themselves of opportunities to raise their awareness and gain knowledge regarding these areas, we recognise that expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support in relation to these issues. Government guidance is available on the GOV.UK website and links are provided from Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB), Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Violence

We recognise that children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from developmentally typical to inappropriate, problematic, abusive, or violent.
Understanding that:

- Child-on-child abuse builds progressively
- Sexual harassment left unchallenged can create an environment that normalises and leads to sexual violence.
- Misogynistic language, attitudes, and behaviors, whether occurring in classrooms, corridors, or online, must never be dismissed as "banter" or simple behavior management issues; they are recognized safeguarding indicators and precursors to potential harm.
- Harmful sexual behavior frequently intersects with wider forms of exploitation—such as child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE)—and that abuse is often committed or facilitated by peers, organised networks, or individuals already known to the victim (Extra-Familial Harm and Exploitation).

Procedures and Reporting

All staff have a duty to report any concerns regarding HSB, misogynistic behavior, or image-sharing to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy immediately in person and via CPOMS.
Upon receiving a report, the DSL will:

1. Inform parents i.e. victim's parents, the alleged perpetrator's parents and the parents of any other children who may have witnessed the alleged incident (unless this would put the victim at greater risk).
2. Conduct a risk-based, child-centered assessment using evidence-based tools (including NSPCC resources on typical vs. problematic development) to determine the severity and context of the behavior.
3. Provide immediate support for the victim, ensuring their safety and voice are prioritised.
4. Offer appropriate support to the alleged perpetrator. Understanding that children displaying such behaviours have often experienced their own abuse and trauma.
5. Consider appropriate consequences and sanctions for the alleged perpetrator.
6. Implement a robust intervention plan for the perpetrator, directly addressing underlying issues (such as sexism and misogyny) to prevent future abusive behaviors.Working collaboratively with parents and seeking advice from external professionals or seeking specialist advice.
7. Complete a risk assessment, considering the use of social stories, increasing staffing, working with professionals such as the educational psychologist, CAMHS or other agencies. Risk assessments will be reviewed every three months or every time there is an occurrence of an incident.
8. Coordinate multi-agency support, utilising universal services, community-based Early Help, or targeted Family Help pathways.
9. Make a referral to the Local Authority Children's Social Care team and the Police if the behavior meets the harm threshold, involves criminal elements (such as legally defined rape or sexual assault/penetration with an object), or if any child is in immediate danger. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.

We acknowledge that some of the behaviours that a child with SEND may display could be seen to be abusive towards others. However, we will explore the reasoning behind the behaviour as it may relate more to their special / individual need than to a purposeful attempt to cause harm.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Children can abuse other children, and it can happen both inside and outside of school and online and even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. Child-on-child abuse is safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator, which can include discriminatory behaviour, including racism and faith-targeted abuse, added to the definition of child-on-child abuse.

In line with the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026) statutory guidance, the school approaches child-on-child abuse by addressing behaviour across this continuum, prioritising early identification and intervention before behaviors escalate

To ensure a safe environment through timely, evidence-based intervention, the school operates on the principle that "it could happen here." The behaviour policy enforces the following commitments:

- Staff will actively challenge all derogatory or sexualised language, inappropriate peer behaviours, and the sharing of sexual images. Staff will remain vigilant to gender-specific risks, such as the sexualised touching of girls and hazing/initiation violence among boys, while using the curriculum to educate children on consent and appropriate boundaries.
- The school will ensure all victims are taken seriously and reassured. Staff will protect victims, witnesses, and alleged perpetrators from subsequent bullying or harassment, while explicitly considering intra-familial harms and supporting others needs.
- The school monitors reports of sexual violence and harassment to identify and address any environmental, systemic, or localised community risks, updating policies and the curriculum accordingly.
- All staff receive comprehensive training to recognise the indicators of child-on-child abuse, acknowledging that victims often exhibit behavioural changes rather than making direct disclosures, and that vulnerable groups face heightened barriers to reporting.
- Staff understand that perpetrators may themselves be victims of abuse, must act immediately on any welfare concerns by contacting the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and will remain alert to the role social media plays in the aftermath of any incident.

Child-on-child abuse can include, but may not be limited to:

- serious physical assault and harm, or threat of harm with a weapon.
- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children. Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Tricking someone into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Responding to a concern:
Most cases of children hurting other children will be dealt with under the Behaviour Policy, but the Safeguarding Policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence.
- Could put children in the school at risk.
- Is violent.
- Involves children being forced to use drugs or alcohol.
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, regardless of whether they're consensual or non-consensual).

Where there is an element of harmful sexual behaviour the school will follow the procedure as laid out in the HSB section.

A child should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or organised network exploits an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. The exploitation is typically driven by the exchange of something the victim needs or wants the financial gain or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. It is also understood that victims aren't always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take while under coercion. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. Both can constitute modern slavery; where a potential victim is identified, a formal modern slavery referral must be completed in accordance with statutory procedures. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. It may occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. The definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2017) is : *"Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology".* It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. We are alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The DSL will lead on these issues and work with other agencies as appropriate. Like all forms of child sex abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation:

- Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex.
- Can still be abused even if the sexual activity appears consensual, some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.
- Can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity.
- Can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both.
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).
- 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.
- Can be committed by those previously known to the victim
- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Children and the Court System

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate booklets to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers and our school signposts parents and carers to such documentation.

Children Missing from Education (CME) and Children Missing out on Education (CMoE)

Every child, regardless of circumstances or SEND, is entitled to a full-time education, and the school recognises that persistent, repeated, or unexplained absences - including during the school day - serve as critical warning signs for serious safeguarding risks, such as neglect, exploitation (including county lines), abuse, mental health issues, radicalisation, or forced marriage. To mitigate these vulnerabilities and protect children, especially those already supported by social care, the school works proactively with parents - who must provide at least two emergency contacts and report all absence reasons - and local partners to maximise attendance. In strict compliance with Department for Education (DfE) guidance and local protocols, the school conducts robust enquiries into unauthorised absences, immediately referring cases to children's social care and the police if a child is at risk of harm, and formally notifying the Local Authority if a pupil is persistently absent or missing without permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

County Lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs grooming and exploiting children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years.
- Can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years.
- Can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual.
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults.
- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.
- The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The Domestic Abuse Bill states that all children are considered victims of domestic

abuse if they witness, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm. If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. All police forces in England and Wales are part of Operation Encompass. Information is shared by the police with a school's trained Key Adult (DSL) prior to the start of the next school day after officers have attended a domestic abuse incident. If the school is made aware of an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident the DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances. See appendix 1 for the Operation Encompass Safeguarding Statement.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

Many home educated children have a positive learning experience and we would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all. Elective home education can mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education and are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs. We will inform the Local Authority of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll and follow procedures for notifying them of a request from a parent to electively home educate their child. Where possible the Local Authority, school, and other key professionals will work together to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. Staff should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers under the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015). If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the Police.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion are used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. Staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue using the schools safeguarding procedures.

Nude and Semi-Nude sharing Incidents

All adult-involved nude and semi-nude image sharing incidents are child sexual abuse offences and must immediately be referred to police/social care, regardless of whether they're consensual or non-consensual. However, as adult-involved incidents can present as child-on-child nude/semi-nude sharing, it may be difficult to initially assess adult involvement. There are two types of common adult-involved incidents: sexually motivated incidents and financially motivated incidents.

Sexually Motivated Incidents
In these cases, adult offenders use online platforms to groom children with the primary goal of obtaining nude or semi-nude images. Offenders often mask their identity (sometimes posing as peers) on social media, gaming platforms, or chat rooms. They build trust, move the conversation to private/end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) apps, and coerce the victim into sharing images. They may use pornography or AI-generated material to encourage compliance, followed by blackmail (threatening to expose the images to family/friends) to force the victim to send more.

Financially Motivated Incidents (Sextortion)

This involves organised crime groups, targeting young people solely for financial profit or money laundering. Reports of this type of extortion have increased significantly. Offenders use fake identities or hack existing peer accounts to make contact. They obtain images through grooming, account hacking, or by creating AI-generated/digitally manipulated fakes. Once they have an image, they blackmail the victim by demanding money or access to the victim's bank account.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL is aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that they are able to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity. The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act places a duty on local housing authorities in England to notify educational institutions, when a child is placed in temporary accommodation, this is with parental permission. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. We recognise that whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Honour-Based Abuse (HBA)

Honour-based abuse encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including FGM, forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing. Since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages. Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and will be handled and escalated as such. If staff have concerns they should speak in the first instance to the DSL. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Online Safety

We recognise that our children are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but we recognise it also presents challenges and risks. We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and well-being issues. Any pupil can be vulnerable online, and their vulnerability can fluctuate depending on their age, developmental stage and personal circumstance. We want to equip our pupils with the knowledge needed to make the best use of the Internet and technology in a safe, considered and respectful way, so they are able to reap the benefits of the online world. We aim to address this by:

- Having robust processes in place (including filtering and monitoring) to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers, teacher training and work experience placement and governors.
- Protecting and educating the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology.
- Setting clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community which is outlined in our Online Safety policy and references the Statutory guidance on Mobile phones in schools .
- Establishing clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate.

The range of online risks could be categorised as:

- **Content:** Being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalization, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- **Contact:** Being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct:** Online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying.
- **Commerce:** Risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and / or financial scams.

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

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
    a) The safe use of social media, the internet and technology.
    b) Keeping personal information private.
    c) How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online.
    d) How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety.
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras.
- Make all staff, volunteers, teacher training and work experience placements and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology.
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones.
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit pupil's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems, including the use of generative AI.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety and filtering and monitoring supported by an annual risk assessment (carried out by the senior leader responsible for filtering and monitoring, with support from the DSL and IT support. that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community. We are also aware that schools can use the department's 'plan technology for your school service' to self assess against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them, if required.
- Provide regular safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

All staff are aware of the risks to pupils online and we seek to help pupils keep themselves safe online in a range of ways - further information about our Trust wide approach to online safety is available in our Online Safety Policy.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini. LiHT recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deep fakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real. We will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and the school's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policy. Staff are aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and we encourage the use of risk assessments for any new AI tool being used. Our Trust and school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Private Fostering

Schools make sure that privately fostered children are properly and safely cared for. Local Authorities are under a legal duty to ensure the welfare of a privately fostered child is being promoted and safeguarded and are therefore required to undertake assessments of proposed or actual private fostering arrangements. As such, we always inform the Local Authority when they are notified about such an arrangement or become aware of one. A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (that is to say without the involvement of a Local Authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. Private foster carers may be from the extended family, such as a cousin or great aunt. However, a person who is a relative under the Children Act 1989 i.e. a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood, half blood or by marriage) or step-parent will not be a private foster carer. A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child's family who is willing to privately foster a child.

Radicalisation

Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk is part of our safeguarding approach.

- **Extremism** - is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to; negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or undermines, overturns or replaces the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or intentionally creates a permissive environment for others to achieve the results outlined in either of the above points.
- **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 of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern. It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. We will assess the risk of children in our school from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force. We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home. As with other safeguarding risks, our staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the DSL (or a deputy) making a Prevent referral.

The government website Educate Against Hate and the NSPCC say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves.
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution.
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance.
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy.
- Converting to a new religion.
- Isolating themselves from family and friends.
- Talking as if from a scripted speech.
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others.
- Increased levels of anger.
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use.
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions.
- Accessing extremist material online, including on social media.
- Possessing extremist literature

As of July 2015, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG 2015) placed a duty on schools and other educational providers. Under section 26 of the Act, schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.' This duty is known as the Prevent Duty. The Prevent duty is seen as part of our wider safeguarding obligations. It requires schools to:

- Teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion.
- Be safe spaces in which children can understand and discuss sensitive topics including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology and learn how to challenge these ideas.
- Be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues. CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

We work in accordance with local procedures for Prevent and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns, as appropriate. Where we have concerns about extremism or radicalisation, they will seek advice from appropriate agencies and, if necessary, refer to social care and/or the Channel Panel. Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multiagency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. If any further or new information comes to light while a referral is being assessed, this must be passed to the police. A representative from the school may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided. The DSL (or a deputy) should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with a new school in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Serious Violent Crime

All staff are aware of the risk factors and indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools is provided by the Home Office's 'Preventing youth violence and gang involvement'. Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member

of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Allegations or Concerns About People Working with Children

All staff are aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Code of Conduct. We work in accordance with statutory guidance in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity). There are two levels of allegation / concern:

1. Allegations that may meet the harm threshold.
2. Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold – referred to for the purposes of this guidance as 'low level concerns'.

It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents are similarly displayed when allegations are made about members of staff are accused of abuse. Guidance in KCSIE (September 2026), Part Four should be followed for allegations that might indicate someone working in our school, including supply staff, volunteers contractors and work experience and trainee teachers, poses a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school because they have:

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

This will involve following local safeguarding procedures, including working with the LADO. We have processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children including volunteers, teacher training and work experience placements and contractors). Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, volunteer, contractor or work experience or trainee teacher will be referred to the Head Teacher (or the Deputy Head Teacher in their absence). This role is distinct from the DSL as the named person should have sufficient status and authority in the school to manage employment procedures. Staffing matters are confidential and the schools must operate within statutory guidance around the UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Where the concern involves the Head Teacher, it should be reported directly to the CEO.

If a member of staff has a concern that a person may have behaved inappropriately or they have received information that may constitute an allegation they must:

- Report the facts to the Head Teacher (or Deputy) as soon as possible. All concerns will be listened to and managed appropriately; do not withhold information however trivial it may seem.
- Make a signed and dated written record of their concerns, observations or the information they have received and give it to the Head Teacher straight away.
- Maintain strict confidentiality.

They must not:

- Attempt to deal with the situation themselves.
- Make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish or embellish the seriousness of the behaviour or alleged incidents.
- Keep the information to themselves or promise confidentiality.
- Take any action that might undermine any investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as disclosing confidential information, interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses, or informing the alleged perpetrator or parents/carers.

Where an allegation has been received the LiHT Managing Allegations of Abuse against Teachers, Staff and Volunteers policy and procedure will be referred to. The appropriate procedures require that, where an allegation against a member of staff has been received, the Head Teacher, senior named person, or the CEO/Trust Leader must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. The LADO has overall responsibility for oversight of the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff members. Wherever possible, contact with the LADO should be made immediately, as they will then advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. We will manage these procedures alongside the school's disciplinary process, if appropriate in liaison with the Trust Central Team.

Concerns that Do Not Meet the Harm Threshold

As part of our whole school approaches to safeguarding, schools should ensure that they promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers, work experience and teacher placements and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school, Trust or as third party provider may have acted in a way that:

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

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

- Being over friendly with children.
- Having favourites.
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone.
- Engaging with a child on a 1:1 basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

To maintain a transparent and secure environment, all low-level concerns regarding staff conduct - including self-referrals where actions might be misinterpreted or fall below professional standards - must be reported directly to the Head Teacher (or the deputy). If the concern involves the Designated Safeguarding Lead, it should be shared with the headteacher. All staff allegations will be managed under the Trust's Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff and Volunteers procedures and discussed with the Trust Leadership Group. If there is any uncertainty about whether a low-level concern meets the harm threshold, the school will immediately consult with the Trust Leader and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Concerns about Agency and Contracted Staff

A school may have to consider an allegation against someone not directly employed by them and where the usual disciplinary procedures don't fully apply, such as supply staff provided by an agency or trainee teacher. Where schools consider an allegation against a person not directly employed by them, they share safeguarding responsibilities with the employment agency or business. The school should not decide to stop using the individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. The Head Teacher and Trust Leader should discuss with the agency or business whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual , or redeploy them to another part of the school, while they carry out their investigation. Agencies should be fully involved and co-operate in any enquiries, but the school will usually take the lead as the agency won't be able to collect the necessary information. When using an agency, they should be informed of the process for managing allegations, including inviting the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about the schools policies.

Staff Code of Conduct

The Trust actively promotes across all schools the importance of sharing low-level concerns and a culture of openness, trust and transparency. Each school should make it clear what a low level concern is and set it out within the staff code of conduct how the school's values and expected behaviour are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all staff. Each school will achieve the purpose of their low-level concerns policy and procedure by:

- Ensuring their staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour, in themselves and others.
- Empowering staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns.
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage.
- Handling and responding to such concerns sensitively and proportionately when they are raised.
- Helping identify any weakness in the schools safeguarding system.

Staff Wellbeing

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that there is a duty of care to the professionals working in our school. The Education Support Partnership is a charity providing mental health and well-being support services to all education staff and organisations. Education Support Partnership Helpline; 0800 562 561 (Everyday, 24 hours a day) Staff can also text on 07909 341229 or email support@edsupport.org.uk.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or a member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example pupils in the school or members of the public. All members of staff and the wider school community should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team at the school. All staff are aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues in line with the Code of Conduct / Speak Out Whistleblowing Policy.

We want everyone to feel able to report any child protection/safeguarding concerns. However, for members of staff who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, they can call the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk. Parents or others in the wider community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0800 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or e-mail: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Use of Reasonable Force

The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involves a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. There are circumstances when it's appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children, such as guiding a child to safety or breaking up a fight. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances'. This is in line with updated DfE guidance on restrictive interventions. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

We work in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force and recognise that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context. We plan positive and proactive relational support in partnership with parents and wider agencies which aim to reduce the occurrence of risky behaviour and the need to use reasonable force. Should a member of staff be in a position where they use 'reasonable force' they must provide an account of the incident in writing via the schools digital reporting tool (CPOMS, Iris or BehaviourWatch) as soon as possible after the incident and on the same day.

For more detailed information, see the Restrictive Interventions, including Use of Reasonable Force policy.

Use of the school premises by other organisations

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises, the Trust will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection. The LiHT Partnership Agreement approach is one methodology by which the Trust, through the Head Teacher and school business support teams can ensure that the body concerned has the appropriate policies, insurances and qualifications. We also recognise that there are a number of policies that are relevant to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare and these are shared with organisations using our wider school facilities.

Safeguarding Monitoring Arrangements

The Trust's safeguarding lead will monitor the safeguarding arrangements in each school, through visits to schools to meet with senior leaders, ascertain pupil and staff views and scrutinise school documentation. The Safeguarding Policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local child protection concerns and/or any changes to our procedures, and this will take place at least annually. All staff will be informed of any changes made.

The school has proactive monitoring arrangements in place to ensure the effectiveness of the safeguarding systems. This includes:

- Safeguarding Team meetings.
- Ascertaining the views of children, parents and staff through discussions and/or surveys.
- Use of the safeguarding audit toolkit which reviews and evaluates safeguarding practices within school through the use of an external consultant.
- Attending safeguarding conferences and forums which are implemented Trust-wide.
- Attending half termly supervision sessions with an external consultant.
- Engaging with the Safeguarding Portfolio Governor so that questions are focused with leaders/staff on other aspects of school life.
- Termly checks of the SCR.

The DSL and Head Teacher provide regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems to the Local Governing Body as well as the Trust Leadership Group.

Appendix 1 - Operation Encompass Safeguarding Statement

Our school is part of Operation Encompass. Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children who experience Domestic Abuse.

Operation Encompass is in place in every police force in England and Wales, the Isle of Man, Jersey, Guernsey, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar. Children were recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

There is a legislative requirement for police forces to share information with educational settings through Operation Encompass.

Through Operation Encompass, the police will share information with our school about ALL police attended domestic abuse incidents which involve any of our children who are related to either of the adults involved in the incident. This sharing of information will occur PRIOR to the start of the next school day. The notification will inform us about the context of the incident and will include the Voice of the Child.

Once a Key Adult (DSL) and their deputy/ies (DDSLs) have completed the free National Online Operation Encompass Key Adult training, they will cascade the principles of Operation Encompass to all other staff. All staff are encouraged to undertake the online training.

The DSL, Suzy Crowe, undertook training in February 2026.

The DDSLs, Jensine Overaa undertook training in March 2026 and Sophie Hill and Clare Shaw undertook training in August 2026.

The headteacher, Amanda Wiley, undertook training in August 2026.

Our Safeguarding Governor, Victoria Humphreys, undertook training in April 2026

6 members of staff have completed the training in 2026.

Our parents are fully aware that we are an Operation Encompass school and we ensure that when a new child joins our school the parents/carers are informed about Operation Encompass.

We display the Operation Encompass posters.

The Operation Encompass notification is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information.

The Key Adult /s have led training for all staff and Governors about Operation Encompass, the prevalence of Domestic Abuse and the impact of this abuse on children.

As a school we have also discussed how we can support our children who are experiencing Domestic Abuse on a day-to-day basis and particularly following the Operation Encompass notification.

We have used the free Operation Encompass Handbooks to inform our thinking.

We are aware that we must do nothing that puts the child/ren or the non-abusing adult at risk.

The Safeguarding Governor will report on Operation Encompass in the termly report to Governors. All information is anonymised for these reports.

When the Headteacher, DSL or DDSLs leave the school and other staff are appointed, we will ensure that all Operation Encompass login details are shared with the new Headteacher/Key Adults and that the new member of staff will undertake the Operation Encompass online training.