LONG MEADOW SCHOOL

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (including safer recruitment, allegations against staff and low-level concerns)

Date of last review	September 2026
Date of next review	September 2027
Type of policy	Statutory
Frequency of review	At least annually
Governor committee	Full Governing Body

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Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Emma Kidd	emmakidd@longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Ruth Seagar (Interim Executive HT) Kerrie Evans (DHT) Emma Seaton (Learning Mentor/Parent Support Worker)	head@longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk kerrieevans@longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk emmaseaton@longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Milton Keynes LADO	Lado@Milton-Keynes.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Stuart Eldridge	office@longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk
Prevent helpline	0800 011 3764	020 7340 7264

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026), and the Maintained schools: governance guide. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local **safeguarding partners** (see section 3).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to have completed safer recruitment training
- 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 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and The Crime and Policing Act 2026), 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 age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting a specific group of pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- 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 pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as: sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination
- Operation Encompass statutory guidance, which explains that the police must notify our school of any incidents involving domestic abuse
- 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
- This policy also meets the requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- 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. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

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. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes is where children share nude or semi-nude images, such as photographs, videos or live streams. This also includes images that are digitally altered or wholly AI-generated (sometimes called 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes') that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video. The sharing of nude or semi-nude images requires a safeguarding response whether they are consensual or non-consensual.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following 3 **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 an area in the LA area

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.

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.

4. Equality statement

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.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language (EAL)
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence

- Are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 14)
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or frequently
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

5. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence/harassment, derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict. This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
  - Healthy and respectful relationships
  - Boundaries and consent
  - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
  - Body confidence and self-esteem
  - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
  - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support
  - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

5.1 All staff

All staff will:

- Read and understand at least part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) in full, and review this guidance at least annually
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have read and reviewed the guidance
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (for example, sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems that support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour policy, online safety policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education/who are absent from education.

- The school's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures

- The early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment

- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play

- The process for community-based Family Help assessments

- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals

- The signs of different types of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery, including domestic and sexual abuse (including controlling and coercive behaviour, as well as parental conflict that is frequent, intense, and unresolved), as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, grooming, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)

- The safeguarding issues that often overlap and can put children at risk of harm, including:
  - Drug taking and/or alcohol misuse
  - Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
  - Serious violence, criminal exploitation (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation
  - Consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes

- New and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm

- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe

- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online

- The fact that mental health can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation

- That children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay or bisexual can be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying

- The potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender

- That children may experience prejudice-based harm including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination. These experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health and ability to seek help

- That a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time

- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

Appendix 4 of this policy outlines in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is Emma Kidd, Deputy Headteacher. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety, and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

When the DSL is absent, the deputies will act as cover.

If the DSL and deputies are not available or absent, we have cover arrangements in place. This includes:

- Having a safeguarding@longmeadow shared mailbox so other members of staff can act on safeguarding concerns if needed

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school
- Make sure that staff have appropriate Prevent training and induction

The DSL will also:

- Keep the headteacher informed of any issues
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search
- Ensure that child protection files are kept up to date
- Where children leave the school, ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school

The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job description.

5.3 The governing board

The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Ensure that all staff who work directly with children read **at least part 1** of Keeping Safe in Education (KCSIE) and those staff who do not work directly with children read **part 1** of KCSIE
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Appoint a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL
- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners
- Ensure the school has a policy in respect of the use of restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force and which reflects that the adoption of a 'no contact' policy can leave staff unable to fully support and protect pupils
- Ensure the school has appropriate cyber security systems in place
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, and review their effectiveness at least once every academic year. This includes:
  - Making sure that the leadership team and staff 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
  - Ensuring that reviews should are carried out by the SLT member responsible for filtering and monitoring, with the support of the DSL and IT team. The review will include checks that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations. A record of these checks will be kept
  - Reviewing the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards
- Make sure:
  - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
  - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
  - The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
  - The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure
  - That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
  - Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed

- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) in its entirety.

Section 19.3 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

5.4 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
  - Are informed of our systems that support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
  - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, and devices like mobile phones and cameras in the setting

5.5 Virtual school heads

Virtual school heads (VSHs) have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils with a social worker.

VSHs 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).

They should also identify and engage with key professionals, for example DSLs, special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), social workers, mental health leads and others.

6. Confidentiality

Long Meadow School recognises that timely and appropriate information-sharing is essential to effective safeguarding and the protection of children. The school will ensure that:

- Information is shared within the school only where appropriate and necessary, and with local authority children's social care, safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies or professionals where required to safeguard a child.

- Concerns about confidentiality or data protection must not prevent staff from sharing information where this is necessary to promote a child's welfare or protect them from harm.
- The Data Protection Act 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and UK GDPR do not prevent or limit appropriate information-sharing for safeguarding purposes.
- Where special category personal data needs to be shared, information may be shared without consent where the relevant safeguarding conditions under data protection legislation apply, including where obtaining consent is not possible, cannot reasonably be expected, or could place a child at risk.
- Staff must never promise confidentiality to a child who discloses abuse or a safeguarding concern. Staff should explain that information may need to be shared with people who can help keep them safe.
- Where a child asks the school not to share a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, the DSL will consider the child's wishes alongside the school's duty to safeguard the child and others. Information may still be shared without consent where there is a lawful basis to do so.
- Parents or carers will normally be informed about safeguarding concerns unless doing so could place the child at greater risk or otherwise be inappropriate for safeguarding reasons.
- Where a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed, a referral will be made to local authority children's social care as appropriate.
- Reports of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault will be considered for referral to the police in accordance with statutory safeguarding guidance. The starting principle of referring such matters to the police remains relevant even where the alleged perpetrator is under the age of criminal responsibility.
- Staff will take all reasonable steps to protect the anonymity and privacy of children involved in reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to safeguard and support the children involved.
- Staff will be mindful of the potential for social media to spread rumours **or** reveal the identities of children involved in safeguarding incidents.
- Staff will follow the DfE's statutory guidance Information sharing to safeguard children and young people when deciding what information to share, with whom and when.
- Where staff are uncertain about whether information should be shared, they must seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL. Safeguarding information should not be withheld solely because staff are uncertain about data protection requirements.
- When a child leaves Long Meadow School, the DSL will ensure that the child protection file is transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file to the new school or college as soon as possible. For an in-year transfer, this should be within 5 days, and for a transfer at the start of a new term, within the first 5 days of that term. Where appropriate, relevant safeguarding information may be shared with the receiving school or college in advance of the child's transfer.
- All safeguarding information and records will be handled securely and confidentially, with access limited to those who need the information for safeguarding purposes.

Further guidance is available in the DfE's statutory guidance: Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners

Confidentiality requirements relating to record-keeping are addressed in Section 18 of this policy, and arrangements relating to allegations of abuse against staff are set out in Appendix 3.

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

All staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery and shall be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Has a disability or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer

- Is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves
- Has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- Is bereaved
- Is showing early signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- Has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of permanent exclusion and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit
- Is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- Is a privately fostered child

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean 'the DSL (or deputy DSL)'.

7.1 If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police immediately if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. Anyone can make a referral**.**

Tell the DSL (see section 5.2) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

In Milton Keynes, concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing should be reported promptly in line with the local safeguarding procedures agreed by the safeguarding partners. Professionals should refer concerns to the Milton Keynes Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**,** normally by completing the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF). If there is concern that a child may be at risk of significant harm, MASH should be contacted directly on 01908 253169 or 01908 253170; outside normal hours, the Emergency Social Work Team can be contacted on 01908 265545. If a child is in immediate danger, the police should be contacted on 999. Further information is available from Milton Keynes City Council – MASH and the GOV.UK service for reporting child abuse to your local council.

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions

- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, 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:

- Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful
- 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.

We will ensure that staff have sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the well-being of children in their care. For example, to keep records in English, liaise with other agencies in English, be able to summon emergency help, and understand instructions, for example about the safety of medicines or food hygiene.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and is illegal in the UK. The school takes all concerns relating to FGM seriously and will act promptly to safeguard any child who may be at risk.

- Any member of staff who suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM, or suspects that FGM may have been carried out, must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a Deputy DSL, without delay and follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- Staff must not investigate the concern themselves or delay reporting because they are uncertain whether FGM has taken place.
- The DSL will consider the information available and, where appropriate, make a safeguarding referral to Milton Keynes Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in accordance with Milton Keynes local safeguarding procedures.
- Professionals in Milton Keynes should make referrals to MASH by completing the online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF). MASH can also be contacted on 01908 253169 or 01908 253170 or at **children@milton-keynes.gov.uk**.
- Where there is concern that a child is, or may be, at risk of significant harm, the professional should telephone Milton Keynes MASH directly and follow this with the appropriate MARF. The referral must not be delayed while an Early Help Assessment or other process is completed.
- Outside normal working hours, safeguarding concerns should be referred to the Milton Keynes Emergency Social Work Team on 01908 265545.
- Where a child is in immediate danger, staff must contact the police on 999.
- The MASH brings together Children's Social Care, police, health and other safeguarding partners to share relevant information, assess the level of risk and determine the appropriate safeguarding response.
- Teachers have an additional statutory duty in relation to known cases of FGM. Where a teacher, in the course of their professional duties, discovers that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, they must personally report this to the police. This is a personal mandatory reporting duty and cannot be transferred to the DSL.

- The teacher should also inform the DSL so that appropriate safeguarding action and support can be considered. Reporting the matter to the DSL does not replace the teacher's personal duty to report a known case to the police.
- For staff who are not teachers, or where there is a suspicion that a girl may be at risk of FGM rather than a disclosure or physical evidence that it has occurred, the school's normal safeguarding procedures apply and the concern must be reported immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
- Staff should record concerns accurately and promptly in accordance with the school's safeguarding recording procedures, including what was observed or disclosed, the action taken and to whom the concern was reported.
- Staff must maintain appropriate confidentiality and share information only with those who need it for safeguarding purposes. However, concerns about confidentiality must never prevent necessary safeguarding information from being shared.

Milton Keynes City Council advises professionals to act promptly, not assume that somebody else will make the referral, and not attempt to resolve safeguarding concerns themselves. The school will therefore ensure that concerns relating to FGM are acted upon without delay and referred through the Milton Keynes safeguarding arrangements where appropriate.

7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Figure 1 below, before section 7.7, illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

Early help assessment

If an early help assessment is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

In Milton Keynes, the school will follow the Milton Keynes Levels of Need and Early Help procedures when identifying and responding to children and families who would benefit from additional support. Where concerns are emerging but do not indicate that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the DSL will consider appropriate Universal Early Help and support available through local services, including Family Centres. Where the intended outcomes for the child and family are not achieved through Universal Early Help, an Early Help Assessment (EHA) should be completed with the child and family to identify their needs, strengths, existing support and the additional help required. The assessment should inform a clear plan of support and, where appropriate, a Lead Practitioner will coordinate multi-agency involvement and review progress. Where the EHA identifies that needs cannot be met through universal services, or more coordinated or targeted support is required, a referral should be made to the Milton Keynes Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) using the online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF), with the completed EHA and details of interventions already undertaken included. MASH will consider the child's level of need and determine the most

appropriate response, which may include support from Milton Keynes Family Help Teams or Children's Social Care. The DSL will keep Early Help arrangements under regular review and escalate concerns where progress is not being made or the child's needs increase. An Early Help Assessment must never delay a safeguarding referral where there is concern that a child is, or may be, at risk of significant harm; in these circumstances MASH should be contacted directly on 01908 253169 or 01908 253170, and if a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted on 999.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority should make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

In Milton Keynes, safeguarding referrals for children and young people are made through the Milton Keynes Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which acts as the single front door for children who may need help or protection. Professionals should complete the online Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) and provide as much relevant information as possible about the child, family, concerns and any previous interventions. Where there is concern that a child is, or may be, at risk of significant harm, the professional should contact MASH directly on 01908 253169 or 01908 253170 and follow this with a completed MARF. Outside normal working hours, concerns should be reported to the Emergency Social Work Team on 01908 265545. Where a child is in immediate danger, the police must be contacted on 999. MASH will consider the information provided, undertake appropriate multi-agency information sharing and determine the most appropriate response; the referrer should receive feedback on the outcome of the referral.

If the school remains concerned about the response to a referral, the DSL or referrer should professionally challenge and escalate the concern rather than allowing the matter to drift. In line with Milton Keynes Levels of Need arrangements, practitioners should first seek dialogue with the relevant professional to resolve any disagreement about the child's level of need or proposed action. If agreement cannot be reached, the concern should be discussed with the practitioner's manager and the school's DSL/safeguarding lead and escalated through the appropriate management channels until a satisfactory safeguarding response is achieved. The school will maintain a clear written record of the referral, outcome, follow-up action and any professional challenge or escalation.

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include the police or Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

Concerns about radicalisation should be reported to the DSL. The DSL will follow the school's Prevent procedures and, where appropriate, make a Prevent referral or seek advice. In an emergency, call 999.counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

7.6 If you have a concern about mental health

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.

Mental health problems can also, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns (for example, self-harm).

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which education staff are well placed to recognise, including:

- 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

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4. If you feel that a child is in danger, call 999 or arrange for the child to be taken to A&E immediately by their parent or other suitable person.

If the child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

All staff have a responsibility to be alert to changes in a pupil's presentation, behaviour, attendance, relationships, emotional wellbeing or engagement with learning that may indicate an emerging mental health need. Any concerns should be recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding and pastoral recording procedures and shared promptly with the DSL and/or the school's Designated Mental Health Lead, as appropriate. The school will consider the nature, severity and persistence of the concern, information from the child and their parents/carers, and any wider safeguarding or contextual factors when determining the appropriate response. Parents/carers will normally be involved unless there is a safeguarding reason why doing so would place the child at greater risk.

Where concerns are mild to moderate, appropriate school-based pastoral support may be put in place and reviewed. Long Meadow School has access to the Milton Keynes Mental Health Support Team (MHST), an early-intervention service working in partnership with schools. Where appropriate, and with the necessary involvement of the child and parents/carers, the school's Designated Mental Health Lead or other authorised professional may make a referral to the MHST using the service's referral process. The MHST can provide

evidence-based early interventions for children and young people experiencing mild to moderate mental health difficulties, including anxiety, low mood and behavioural difficulties, as well as advice, group work and support for families and school staff.

Where a pupil's needs are more complex or severe, are persistent despite early intervention, or fall outside the MHST offer, the DSL/Designated Mental Health Lead will consider referral or signposting to other appropriate services, including the child's GP or Milton Keynes Specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The school will work with external professionals and contribute relevant information to assessments and support plans where appropriate.

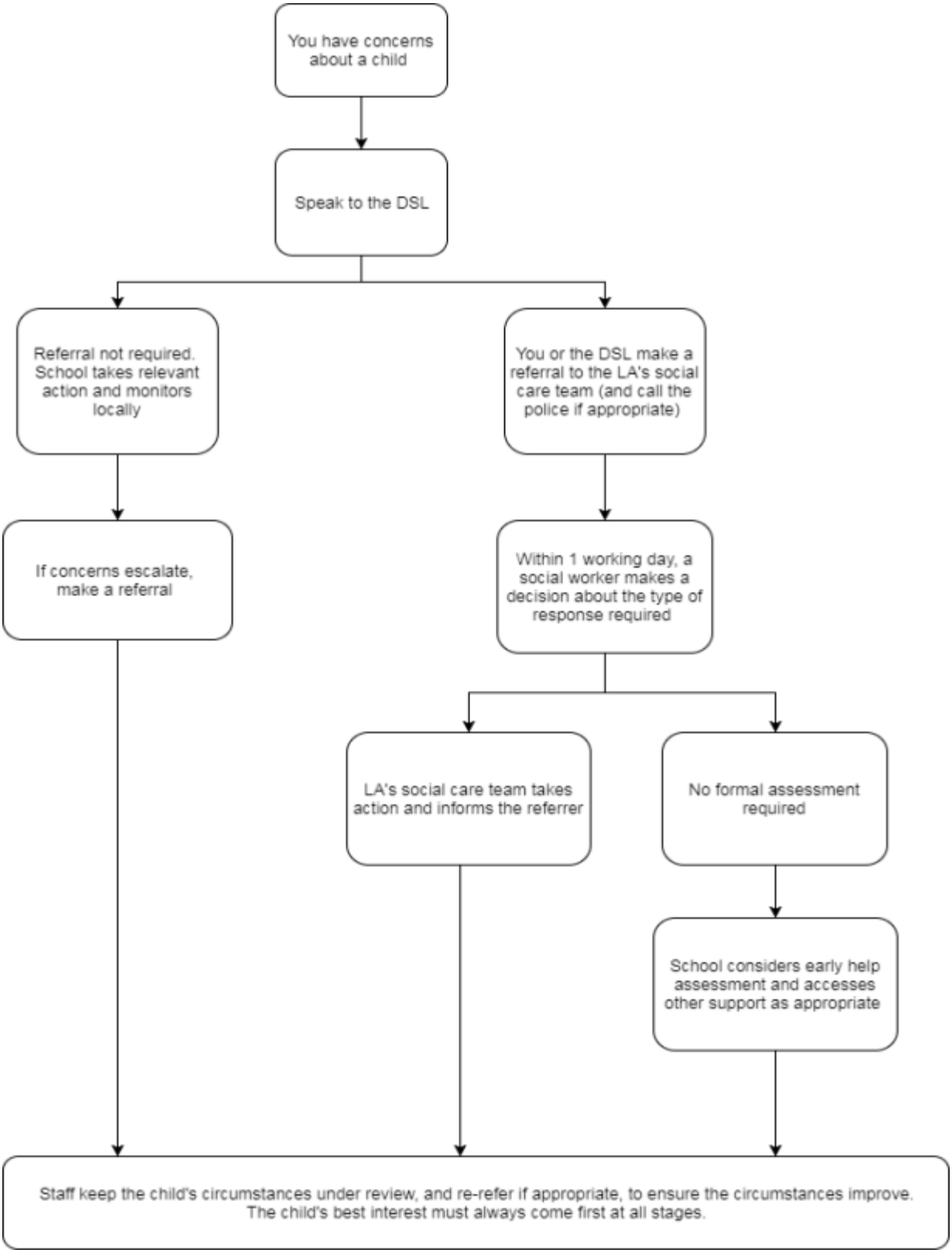
Mental health concerns will be monitored and reviewed, with actions, referrals, discussions with parents/carers and outcomes recorded appropriately. The DSL and/or Designated Mental Health Lead will maintain oversight of pupils receiving mental health support and ensure that concerns are escalated where a pupil's presentation deteriorates, interventions are not having the intended impact or new safeguarding concerns emerge. Staff should not assume that another professional has taken action and should follow up concerns where necessary.

Where a mental health concern is also a safeguarding concern, the school's child protection procedures will take precedence and staff must report the concern immediately to the DSL and follow the procedures set out in section 7.4. If there is an immediate risk to life or serious harm, 999 should be called or the child should be taken to A&E. Where urgent mental health support is required but there is no immediate life-threatening emergency, NHS 111 should be contacted and the mental health option selected.

The school will follow the Department for Education's Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance and work within Milton Keynes local mental health and safeguarding arrangements. Mental health support does not replace safeguarding action: where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a referral to Milton Keynes MASH will be made in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See section 7.4 for what to do.)



7.7 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.

The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

Where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale (see appendix 3 for more detail).

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up”, or “boys being boys”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, misogyny/misandry and an unsafe environment for pupils.

For some (but not all) forms of child-on-child abuse it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys’ perpetrators. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection and 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 pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils 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 making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including where generated by AI), which may include or be driven by misogyny/misandry

See appendix 4 for more information about child-on-child abuse.

Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named

person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)

- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

All allegations of child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously and responded to promptly, sensitively and consistently. The school will adopt a **child-centred and trauma-informed approach**, recognising that children may find it difficult to disclose abuse and that the absence of a report does not mean that abuse is not occurring.

- Recording concerns: Staff receiving a disclosure or witnessing an incident must make a clear, factual and contemporaneous record in accordance with the school's safeguarding recording procedures. The record should include the child's own words wherever possible, without interpretation or assumptions, and should be passed to the DSL as soon as possible. Staff must not conduct their own investigation or ask leading questions.
- Immediate safeguarding: The DSL will consider whether any child is at immediate risk and what action is necessary to keep all children safe. This may include separating children, making changes to lessons, break or lunchtime arrangements, transport or other activities, and increasing supervision. Arrangements will be carefully managed so that the victim is not unnecessarily disadvantaged as a result of reporting abuse.
- Assessment and referral: The DSL will consider the nature and seriousness of the allegation, the ages and developmental stages of the children involved, any power imbalance, whether the behaviour may have been coercive or repeated, and any previous concerns. Where appropriate, the DSL will make a referral to Milton Keynes Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and/or the police in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.
- Risk assessment: An individualised and regularly reviewed risk assessment will be completed where appropriate. This will consider the safety and needs of the victim, the child or children alleged to have caused harm, other pupils and staff, as well as risks arising in classrooms, social times, toilets, changing areas, extracurricular activities, online environments and school transport.
- Supporting the victim: The school will ensure that the victim is listened to, reassured and provided with a named trusted adult. Appropriate pastoral, educational and mental health support will be considered, including referral to the Milton Keynes Mental Health Support Team (MHST), CAMHS or other specialist services, where appropriate. The school will seek to ensure that the victim can continue their education as normally as possible and is not made to feel responsible for the consequences of reporting abuse.
- Supporting the child alleged to have caused harm: The school recognises that a child who has displayed harmful behaviour may also have unmet needs or be experiencing, or have experienced, abuse or trauma. Appropriate safeguarding, pastoral and mental health support will therefore be considered alongside any action taken under the school's behaviour policy. Support for the alleged perpetrator does not diminish the seriousness of the behaviour or the support provided to the victim.
- Other children affected: The DSL will consider the impact on witnesses, friends, siblings and the wider peer group. Additional pastoral support, supervision or education may be provided where necessary, while protecting the confidentiality and anonymity of the children directly involved.
- Parents and carers: Parents/carers will normally be informed and involved in planning appropriate support unless there is a safeguarding reason why doing so would place a child at additional risk. Where another agency, such as the police or Children's Social Care, is involved, the school will take account of its advice regarding communication with families.
- Investigation and disciplinary action: Where police or Children's Social Care are involved, the school will liaise closely with those agencies to ensure that any internal investigation or disciplinary action does not prejudice an external investigation. The school will not simply wait for the conclusion of a criminal investigation where proportionate safeguarding measures are required to protect children.
- Online incidents: Where child-on-child abuse involves social media, messaging services, images, videos or other online activity, the DSL will consider appropriate action under the school's online safety procedures. Staff must not unnecessarily view, copy, print, forward or share sexual images of children.
- Ongoing monitoring: The DSL will maintain oversight of the case and ensure that risk assessments and support plans are regularly reviewed. Particular attention will be given to any further incidents, retaliation, bullying, harassment, social isolation or online abuse following a disclosure.

- Recording decisions: The school will maintain a clear record of the allegation, safeguarding decisions, rationale for those decisions, referrals, advice received from external agencies, risk assessments, support provided and subsequent reviews. Records will be stored securely as part of the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Reviewing wider safeguarding practice: Where appropriate, the DSL and senior leaders will consider whether an incident indicates a wider safeguarding issue within the school, such as harmful attitudes, inappropriate sexual behaviour, bullying or unsafe locations. Appropriate action will be taken through the curriculum, supervision arrangements, staff training and the school's behaviour and safeguarding procedures.

Where concerns meet the threshold for statutory intervention, the school will follow Milton Keynes local safeguarding procedures and make a referral to the Milton Keynes Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Where there is an immediate risk of harm, appropriate emergency action will be taken, including contacting the police on 999 where necessary. The school will continue to safeguard and support all children involved while any Children's Social Care or police enquiries are ongoing.

Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting, making or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing-type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 7.10 below)
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- Recognise the intersection of misogyny/misandry and harmful sexual behaviour. We will actively identify, challenge and address how misogynistic/misandrist attitudes contribute to the normalisation of inappropriate behaviour and increases the risk of leading to child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, within our school environment
- Be alert to the prevalence of harmful online material and extreme misogynistic/misandrist ideologies, including misogynistic influencers, and recognise the impact this content could have on shaping pupils' attitudes
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
  - How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports

- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
- That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
  - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
  - A friend may make a report
  - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
  - A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
- That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
- That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side
- That exposure to misogynistic/misandrist content online can indicate a safeguarding concern and requires early discussion with the DSL

The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, such as by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn’t (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children’s social care to determine this
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

7.9 Making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

All incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual, require a safeguarding response. If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nude or semi-nudes, including where generated by AI, you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL’s responsibility)

- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care
- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)
- What further information is required to decide on the best response
- Whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult. Where an adult poses as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person, the incident may first present as a child-on-child incident. See appendix 4 for more information on assessing adult-involved incidents
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to their SEN)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents/carers

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialing 101.

Recording incidents

All incidents of making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including where generated by AI, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 18 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our relationships education and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment. This also includes making such images, including where generated by AI
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to make, provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images

This policy on the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

Teaching follows best practice in delivering safe and effective education, including:

- Putting safeguarding first
- Approaching from the perspective of the child
- Promoting dialogue and understanding
- Empowering and enabling children and young people
- Never frightening or scare-mongering

- Challenging victim-blaming attitudes

7.10 Reporting systems for our pupils

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for all pupils
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously and that they can safely express their views and give feedback
- Encourage pupils to report concerns to any member of staff they trust, including their class teacher, teaching assistant, DSL, Deputy DSL, pastoral staff or a member of the senior leadership team
- Ensure pupils understand that they do not have to report a concern to a particular member of staff and can speak to whichever trusted adult they feel most comfortable with
- Provide a worry box in every classroom, giving pupils a safe and accessible way to raise a concern or ask to speak to a trusted adult if they do not feel comfortable doing so verbally. Worry boxes will be checked daily by a designated member of staff, and any safeguarding concerns raised will be reported promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL
- Provide age-appropriate and accessible ways of reporting concerns, including alternative methods of communication and reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND or communication difficulties
- Regularly remind pupils about how and where they can report concerns through assemblies, class discussions, PSHE, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), online safety education and pastoral activities
- Teach pupils how to recognise situations that may be unsafe or worrying, including bullying, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, inappropriate touching and online abuse
- Ensure staff listen carefully, remain calm and take pupils seriously when they raise a concern or make a disclosure
- Reassure pupils that they have done the right thing by speaking to an adult and that they will not be blamed, judged or treated negatively for raising a genuine concern
- Explain to pupils, in an age-appropriate way, what will happen next after they report a concern
- Make it clear that staff cannot promise confidentiality and may need to share information with the DSL or other professionals in order to keep the pupil or another child safe
- Take pupils' wishes and feelings into account when deciding what action and support may be appropriate, while recognising that the school may need to take action to safeguard the child or others
- Provide pupils with a named or trusted adult they can speak to for ongoing support following a disclosure or safeguarding concern
- Take appropriate steps to protect pupils from retaliation, bullying, harassment or intimidation following a disclosure or allegation
- Be alert to changes in a pupil's behaviour, attendance, presentation, relationships or emotional wellbeing that may indicate they have a concern but are unable or reluctant to report it
- Ensure any concerns raised through the school's reporting systems are recorded and acted upon promptly in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures
- Regularly seek pupil voice and feedback to establish whether pupils feel safe, know how to report concerns and have trusted adults they can approach
- Regularly review our reporting arrangements to ensure they remain accessible, effective and understood by all pupils

8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

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

Our school includes Reception provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS**)**. We therefore ensure that our arrangements for online safety, mobile phones, cameras and other devices meet both whole-school safeguarding requirements and the specific requirements of the EYFS.

Our school aims to:

- Have robust processes, including appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, to support the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers, visitors and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in the safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology
- Maintain a mobile phone-free environment for pupils by default, in line with DfE expectations
- Establish clear expectations regarding staff use of personal mobile phones, cameras and other devices, including specific arrangements within Reception
- Ensure pupils know how to recognise and report online concerns
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, record, respond to and escalate online safety incidents and concerns

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety addresses the following four categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, including pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation, fake news and conspiracy theories
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interactions with other users or technologies, including generative AI applications that simulate human interaction. This may include peer pressure, inappropriate commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young people with the intention of grooming or exploiting them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct** – online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, including cyberbullying and the making, requesting, sending, receiving or sharing of explicit images, including images that have been created or manipulated using AI
- **Commerce** – risks including online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing, financial scams and other attempts to obtain money or personal information

Our approach to online safety

To meet our aims and address these risks, we will:

- Teach online safety throughout the curriculum in an age-appropriate way, including through computing, PSHE and Relationships and Health Education
- Teach pupils about:
    - Safe and responsible use of the internet and technology
    - Keeping personal information and passwords private
    - Appropriate online relationships and communication
    - Recognising inappropriate, upsetting, misleading or harmful online content
    - Online bullying and harmful behaviour
    - The risks associated with sharing photographs, videos and other personal information
    - Age restrictions and the safe use of online services
    - How images and information shared online can be copied, changed or redistributed
    - Age-appropriate understanding of misinformation, scams and AI-generated or manipulated content

    - How and where to report something that worries, frightens or upsets them online
- Encourage pupils to report online safety concerns whether they are the person affected, have witnessed the behaviour or are worried about another child
- Ensure pupils know they can report an online concern to any trusted member of staff, including their class teacher, teaching assistant, DSL or Deputy DSL. Pupils may also use the worry box available in every classroom, which is checked daily
- Train staff during induction on online safeguarding, including cyberbullying, child-on-child abuse online, online sexual harassment, radicalisation, the use of generative AI and their roles and responsibilities regarding filtering and monitoring
- Provide staff with appropriate safeguarding and online safety updates throughout the year and formal refresher training at least annually
- Provide parents and carers with information and guidance about online safety through school communications, the school website, meetings and other appropriate opportunities
- Ensure parents and carers know how to report an online safeguarding concern to the school
- Ensure pupils, staff, governors and other relevant users understand and comply with the school's Acceptable Use arrangements for school technology, internet access and devices

Filtering and monitoring

The school will have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place on school devices and networks to reduce pupils' exposure to harmful and inappropriate online material.

- The school will ensure that filtering and monitoring arrangements are appropriate for the age and needs of our pupils and do not unreasonably restrict access to educational material
- The DSL will have oversight of safeguarding issues associated with filtering and monitoring
- Senior leaders, the DSL and relevant IT support will understand their respective roles and responsibilities for filtering and monitoring
- Staff will understand their responsibility to report inappropriate content, concerning searches, filtering or monitoring concerns, or weaknesses in the school's systems
- Filtering and monitoring arrangements will take account of emerging technologies, including the use of generative AI
- The effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements will be formally reviewed at least annually, and sooner where there are significant changes to systems or identified risks
- Online safety will form part of the school's wider safeguarding risk assessment and safeguarding review processes

Filtering and monitoring systems do not replace effective supervision, safeguarding practice or education. Staff remain responsible for supervising pupils' use of technology appropriately and reporting concerns.

Mobile phones and smart technology – pupils

Our school is a **mobile phone-free environment for pupils by default**.

- Primary-aged pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones or personal smart devices during the school day
- Where a pupil needs to bring a mobile phone to school, for example because they travel to or from school independently, this must be in accordance with the school's agreed procedures
- Any permitted pupil mobile phone must remain switched off and securely stored for the duration of the school day
- Pupils must not use mobile phones, smart watches or other personal devices to photograph, record or communicate with others during the school day
- Reasonable adjustments or individual arrangements may be made where a pupil needs access to technology for a medical need, disability or other exceptional circumstance
- Any breach will be dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour, safeguarding and mobile phone procedures

Where there is a safeguarding concern relating to a pupil's device, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and relevant DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Staff mobile phones, cameras and personal devices

Staff may bring personal mobile phones to school but must use them responsibly and in accordance with school procedures.

- Personal mobile phones should be kept securely away while staff are working directly with pupils and should normally only be used during **non**-contact time and in areas where pupils are not present
- Staff must never use a personal mobile phone, camera or other personal device to photograph or record pupils
- Photographs and recordings of pupils for educational purposes must only be taken using school-authorised equipment and systems
- Images and recordings must be stored, used and deleted in accordance with the school's safeguarding, data protection and online safety procedures
- Staff must not use personal messaging accounts or social media to communicate privately with pupils
- Any safeguarding concern involving the use of technology by a member of staff must be reported in accordance with the school's procedures for managing allegations or concerns about adults

Reception – EYFS use of mobile phones and cameras

As the school provides Reception as part of the EYFS, additional safeguards apply to the use of mobile phones, cameras and other image-recording devices within the Reception environment.

- Staff working in Reception must not use personal mobile phones, smart watches, cameras or other personal devices to photograph or record children
- Personal mobile phones must be stored securely and must not be used while staff are supervising or directly working with Reception children, except in a genuine emergency and in accordance with school procedures
- Only school-authorised devices may be used to take photographs or recordings of Reception children for legitimate educational, assessment or safeguarding purposes
- School devices containing photographs or recordings of children must be used, stored and managed securely
- Staff must not transfer photographs or recordings of Reception children onto personal devices, personal cloud storage, personal email accounts or personal social media
- Visitors, volunteers, contractors and parents/carers must not photograph or record children within the Reception setting unless specifically authorised by the school
- The school will make expectations regarding photography and recording clear to parents and carers during events, performances and other school activities
- Any inappropriate use of a mobile phone, camera or recording device within Reception will be reported immediately to the DSL and/or Headteacher and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures

Responding to online safety concerns

Any online safety concern involving a pupil must be reported to the DSL or a Deputy DSL and recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Where appropriate, the DSL will consider whether the concern requires:

- Support for the child and their family
- Action under the school's behaviour or anti-bullying procedures
- A child-on-child abuse response
- A review of the child's risk assessment or support plan
- Referral to Children's Social Care, the police or another relevant agency

- Action relating to harmful or illegal online content
- A review of the school's filtering, monitoring or technical controls

Where a concern indicates that a child may be at risk of significant harm, the school's child protection procedures will be followed without delay.

Monitoring and review

The school will:

- Carry out an annual review of online safety, informed by the risks faced by our pupils and school community
- Review the effectiveness of its filtering and monitoring arrangements at least annually
- Ensure governors receive appropriate information to enable them to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities relating to online safety
- Consider online safety when reviewing safeguarding incidents and patterns or trends in behaviour
- Review this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including its online safety arrangements, at least annually and update procedures when required

This section should be read alongside the school's Online Safety Policy, Acceptable Use arrangements, Behaviour Policy and Mobile Phone Policy, where applicable. The requirements relating to mobile phones and cameras within our Reception/EYFS provision form part of this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and apply regardless of whether these matters are also addressed in a separate school policy.

8.1 Artificial intelligence (AI)

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

The school recognises that AI can have positive uses, including supporting teaching and learning and helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI can also present safeguarding risks, including facilitating bullying, grooming, impersonation, misinformation and the creation or distribution of harmful or inappropriate content. This includes deepfakes, where AI is used to create or manipulate images, audio or video so that they appear to depict a real person or event.

To manage these risks, we will:

- Ensure that the use of AI within school is age-appropriate, supervised and consistent with the school's safeguarding, online safety, data protection and acceptable use arrangements
- Educate pupils, at an age-appropriate level, about AI and the importance of not assuming that everything they see, hear or read online is genuine or accurate
- Teach pupils that AI must never be used to bully, intimidate, embarrass, impersonate, exploit or harm another person
- Teach pupils not to enter personal, sensitive or confidential information about themselves or other people into publicly available AI tools
- Ensure staff understand the potential safeguarding, privacy, data protection and accuracy risks associated with AI and exercise professional judgement when using AI tools
- Require appropriate consideration and risk assessment before new AI tools or services are introduced for use by the school, including consideration of age restrictions, privacy, data protection, security, filtering and monitoring
- Ensure that the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements apply to the use of AI, in accordance with KCSIE and the school's wider online safety arrangements
- Treat the use of AI to access, create or distribute harmful content, or to bully, harass, groom or otherwise harm a pupil, as a safeguarding concern and respond in accordance with this policy and the school's Behaviour and Online Safety policies

- Require staff to report any safeguarding concern involving AI promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL, and ensure the concern and actions taken are appropriately recorded
- Consider whether incidents involving AI constitute child-on-child abuse, online abuse or another form of safeguarding concern and respond under the relevant section of this policy
- Take particular care where AI has been used to create or manipulate nude, semi-nude or sexually explicit images of a child, including where no genuine photograph was used to create the image. Such incidents will be reported immediately to the DSL and managed as a safeguarding concern
- Ensure staff do not unnecessarily view, copy, print, forward, save or share nude or semi-nude images of children, including AI-generated or digitally manipulated images. The DSL will follow the school's procedures for responding to sharing of nude and semi-nude images and seek advice or make referrals to appropriate safeguarding agencies where required
- Consider the welfare and support needs of all children involved in an AI-related safeguarding incident, including a child whose likeness has been used or manipulated and any child responsible for creating or sharing the material
- Inform parents/carers where appropriate, unless doing so would place a child at increased risk or prejudice a safeguarding or criminal investigation
- Refer concerns to Milton Keynes MASH, the police or other appropriate agencies where the safeguarding threshold is met, in accordance with the school's established referral procedures
- Review any AI-related safeguarding incident to determine whether changes are required to the school's filtering and monitoring systems, curriculum, risk assessments, staff training or pupil education

The school recognises that AI technology is developing rapidly. Our approach will therefore be kept under review, and staff will be provided with updated guidance and training where necessary. The same safeguarding principles apply regardless of whether harmful material has been created by a person, generated by AI or digitally manipulated using AI.

9. Notifying parents or carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's 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

- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, for example, moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

10. Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect 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
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils
- The potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse
- The need for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others
- That these children are more likely to be dependent on adults for care
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or being unable to understand the consequences of doing so

We offer extra pastoral support for these pupils. This includes:

We offer extra pastoral support for these pupils. This includes:

- Learning Mentor support, including individual and small-group sessions tailored to the pupil's identified needs
- A relationship-based approach, ensuring pupils have trusted, consistent adults within school who know them well and can recognise changes in their behaviour, presentation or emotional wellbeing
- Regular check-ins with a trusted adult, where appropriate, giving pupils opportunities to talk about their feelings, worries and experiences
- Access to the worry box in every classroom, which is checked daily, providing an additional way for pupils to communicate concerns when they may find it difficult to speak directly to an adult
- Individualised approaches to help pupils identify, understand and communicate their emotions, including the use of visual resources, emotion scales and other appropriate communication tools
- The use of books, stories and social stories to explore emotions, relationships, friendships, personal safety, boundaries, consent, bullying and other issues in an accessible and age-appropriate way
- Additional support with friendships, relationships and social interaction, including individual or small-group work where appropriate
- Targeted support to develop self-esteem, confidence, resilience and emotional regulation
- Appropriate sensory and emotional regulation strategies, including access to calm or safe spaces where this forms part of the pupil's individual support
- Adaptations to PSHE, Relationships Education and online safety education to ensure safeguarding messages are accessible and understood by pupils with SEND
- Explicit teaching about safe and unsafe situations, appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, personal boundaries, trusted adults and how to ask for help
- Additional teaching and reinforcement around online safety, including understanding that online information may not always be true, recognising unsafe online interactions and knowing how to report something that causes concern
- Appropriate communication support and reasonable adjustments, including visual prompts, symbols, simplified language, additional processing time or other communication methods according to the individual pupil's needs
- Staff taking account of each pupil's usual methods of communication and presentation so that changes in behaviour or communication are not automatically attributed to their SEND or health condition
- Close liaison between the DSL, Deputy DSLs, SENCO, Learning Mentor, class teacher and other relevant staff to ensure safeguarding and pastoral needs are considered together
- Regular communication with parents and carers, where appropriate, to develop a consistent approach to supporting the pupil and identifying changes or emerging concerns
- Referral to or consultation with the Milton Keynes Mental Health Support Team (MHST) where a pupil has an appropriate mild-to-moderate mental health or emotional wellbeing need

- Referral or signposting to CAMHS, health professionals, Early Help or other specialist services where a pupil requires additional or more specialist support
- Individual risk assessments, support plans or safety plans where these are required to manage an identified safeguarding or wellbeing concern
- Regular review of pastoral interventions to consider whether they are meeting the pupil's needs and reducing identified risks, with concerns escalated where sufficient progress is not being made
- Additional support following incidents of bullying, prejudice-based bullying, child-on-child abuse or online harm, recognising that pupils with SEND may experience and communicate the impact of these incidents differently
- Ensuring that the pupil's voice, wishes and feelings are actively sought using communication methods appropriate to their age, developmental level and individual needs

Any safeguarding concern involving a pupil with SEND, a disability or a health condition will require close liaison between the DSL (or a Deputy DSL) and the SENCO. The school will consider whether additional pastoral support, reasonable adjustments or specialist input is required and will ensure that appropriate communication support is in place so that the child is able to express their wishes, feelings and concerns and participate meaningfully in decisions affecting them.

11. Pupils with medical conditions

An incident relating to the management of a child's medical condition (including allergies) does not itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners.

A safeguarding referral will be made where an incident highlights concern that the child might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family because of their medical condition. For example, information about the child's medical condition might be withheld from the school, or the child may be repeatedly sent to school without essential medication, putting them at risk.

12. Young carers

The school recognises that caring responsibilities can impact on a child's attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing, and early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive support at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health service.

13. Pupils with a social worker

Pupils 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.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we 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

14. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We will 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 heads

We have appointed a designated teacher, Emma Kidd, Deputy Headteacher, 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.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

15. Pupils who are lesbian, gay or bisexual

The school recognises that a child being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm. However, pupils who are (or who are perceived by other children to be) lesbian, gay, or bisexual can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. See our behaviour policy for more detail on how we prevent bullying based on sexuality.

Any concerns should be reported to the DSL.

16. Pupils who are questioning their gender

16.1 Supporting pupils who are questioning their gender

We are aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, such as difficulties relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment. We recognise that every child's circumstances will be different and that children who are questioning their gender may require appropriate pastoral, safeguarding or mental health support.

We will take time to understand the thoughts, feelings and individual circumstances of a child who is questioning their gender. Staff will remain professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences and needs and will not make assumptions based on gender stereotypes.

We will take a strong and proactive stance on all forms of bullying, harassment and discrimination**,** including bullying related to sex, gender questioning or perceived gender identity. Any incidents will be taken seriously and addressed promptly and appropriately. See our Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying procedures for further information.

In preventing and responding to bullying, harassment and discrimination, the school will act in accordance with its legal duties, including its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998. We will appropriately consider the rights and needs of all pupils and staff, including relevant protections relating to religion or belief. These considerations will not prevent the school from taking appropriate action to safeguard children or address bullying, harassment or discrimination.

The DSL will lead on safeguarding considerations relating to pupils who are questioning their gender, working with the Headteacher and other appropriate staff. Where appropriate, this may also involve the SENCO, Designated Mental Health Lead, Learning Mentor and/or relevant external professionals.

The school will ensure that the pupil is listened to, treated with dignity and has access to a trusted adult. Any associated concerns relating to mental health, self-harm, bullying, abuse, exploitation or other safeguarding risks will be responded to promptly under the relevant sections of this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

16.2 Involving parents/carers in cases of pupils questioning their gender

Where a child who is questioning their gender asks the school for support, parents/carers will be actively involved as a matter of priority, and their views will be given appropriate consideration.

The school will work openly and sensitively with the child and their parents/carers, taking account of the child's age, individual circumstances, wishes and feelings, safeguarding needs and best interests.

In the rare circumstances where there is reason to believe that involving parents/carers may place the child at greater risk of significant harm, the DSL will determine the appropriate safeguarding action before parents/carers are contacted or decisions are taken. Where necessary, advice will be sought from Children's Social Care or other appropriate safeguarding professionals.

Where a child confides in a member of staff about their feelings but does not ask the school to make changes to how they are treated, the school will handle this information sensitively. Information will only be shared without the child's agreement where this is necessary and proportionate, including where there is a related safeguarding concern or another lawful reason for sharing it.

Where appropriate, the school will encourage parents/carers to seek relevant clinical help or advice, and any relevant clinical advice available to the child and family will be taken into consideration.

16.3 Considering requests for support with social transition

The school will not initiate action regarding social transition. This section applies where a pupil or their parent/carer makes a request for the school to provide support relating to social transition.

Members of staff must not independently adopt changes relating to social transition. Any request must be considered through the school's agreed decision-making process, with appropriate involvement of the child's parents/carers as set out in section 16.2.

Requests may relate to matters such as a pupil's name, pronouns, uniform or other aspects of school life.

When considering a request, the school will take a careful, individual and safeguarding-led approach. Decisions will not be made on a one-size-fits-all basis. The school will take time to understand the pupil's individual circumstances, wishes and feelings and consider their best interests, safeguarding, wellbeing and wider needs.

In making decisions about requests for support with social transition, the school will apply the following principles:

- **Safeguarding and welfare:** The school has statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. The first consideration will therefore be what is in the best interests of the individual child and other children. A decision about what support is appropriate may not always be the same as the child's expressed wishes.
- **Parental involvement:** Parents/carers will be actively involved and their views given appropriate consideration, except in the rare circumstances where involving them would create a greater safeguarding risk to the child.
- **A careful approach:** The school recognises that supporting social transition is an active intervention. Requests will therefore be considered carefully, taking account of the individual child's circumstances and the potential impact of any proposed changes.
- **The child's voice:** The pupil's wishes and feelings will be listened to and taken seriously. They will be given appropriate opportunities to express their views and will be supported by a trusted adult where appropriate.

- **Wider needs and vulnerabilities:** The school will consider whether the child has wider pastoral, mental health, SEND, family, friendship, bullying or safeguarding needs that require support.
- **Clinical advice:** Where relevant clinical advice is available to the child and family, this will be appropriately considered.
- **Legal duties:** The school will comply with its obligations under safeguarding legislation and the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998, considering the rights, welfare and best interests of the child alongside those of other children and members of the school community.

The DSL will be involved in the consideration of requests, and the Headteacher will retain appropriate oversight of decisions. The decision-making process, information considered, decisions reached and reasons for those decisions will be appropriately documented.

The circumstances and needs of a child may change over time. Any arrangements will therefore be kept under revi**ew**, and the school may reconsider an earlier decision where circumstances change or new information becomes available.

16.4 Single-sex toilets and changing arrangements

The school provides separate toilet facilities for boys and girls in every year group, including Reception. These arrangements support the privacy, dignity and safeguarding of all pupils.

Pupils will use the toilet facilities designated for their biological sex and will not be permitted to use toilet facilities designated exclusively for the opposite biological sex.

Where a pupil who is questioning their gender does not wish to use the toilet facilities designated for their biological sex, the school will consider whether a **suitable alternative individual toilet facility** can be made available. Any such arrangement will be considered sensitively and on an individual basis, with appropriate involvement of the pupil and their parents/carers. Arrangements will seek to protect the pupil's privacy, dignity and wellbeing while maintaining the school's single-sex provision.

On days when pupils have PE lessons, pupils come to school already dressed in their PE kit and therefore do not routinely need to change clothing during the school day.

Pupils may occasionally need to change clothing in school where they are taking part in an after-school sports or activity club. Where changing is necessary, the school will make appropriate arrangements to protect pupils' privacy, dignity and safety. Pupils will not be required to change in the presence of pupils of the opposite biological sex.

Where an individual pupil requires alternative changing arrangements, these will be considered sensitively on a case-by-case basis, taking account of safeguarding, the pupil's individual needs and wishes, parental views and the privacy, dignity and safety of other children.

The school's arrangements for toilets and changing facilities will be implemented consistently with its safeguarding responsibilities and applicable equality and education law**.**

16.5 Single-sex sport and physical education

The school is committed to enabling all pupils to participate positively and safely in PE, physical activity and sport**.**

The school may organise particular sports, games or competitive activities in single-sex groups where this is lawful and appropriate, including where considerations of physical strength, stamina or physique mean that mixed-sex participation could disadvantage one sex, or where separation is necessary for safety.

Where a sport or activity needs to be played in single-sex groups for safety reasons, pupils will participate in the group appropriate to their biological sex where this is necessary to maintain safety and fairness.

Where safety does not require an activity to be single sex, the school will consider appropriate arrangements having regard to the age of the pupils, nature of the activity, safety, fairness, inclusion and the needs of all children involved**.**

Decisions about PE and sport will be made in accordance with the school's safeguarding responsibilities and applicable equality and education law, with the safety and wellbeing of all pupils remaining central to the school's approach.

17. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

Long Meadow School takes all complaints and concerns relating to safeguarding seriously. Concerns will be responded to promptly, fairly and in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and Complaints Policy.

Where information received through a complaint indicates that a child may be at risk of harm, safeguarding action will take priority over the normal complaints process. Necessary action to protect a child will not be delayed while a complaint is being considered.

17.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints or concerns about members of staff, supply staff, volunteers, contractors or other adults working in or on behalf of the school that may indicate that a child has been harmed, may be at risk of harm, or may otherwise meet the harm threshold will be handled in accordance with our procedures for managing allegations of abuse made against staff (see Appendix 3).

Any allegation or safeguarding concern about a member of staff should be reported immediately to the Headteacher. Where the concern relates to the Headteacher, it should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Staff should not investigate allegations themselves. Appropriate action will be taken in accordance with statutory guidance and, where the criteria for referral are met, the Milton Keynes Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted without delay and within one working day.

Milton Keynes LADO contact details:

- **Telephone:** 01908 254307
- **Email:** **LADO@milton-keynes.gov.uk**
- **Office hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9.00am–5.00pm; Friday, 9.00am–4.30pm

The LADO may also be contacted for advice and guidance where the school is unsure whether the criteria for a referral have been met.

Where there is a significant safeguarding concern about a child, the school will also contact the Milton Keynes Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**:**

- Telephone: 01908 253169 or 01908 253170
- Out of hours – Emergency Social Work Team: 01908 265545
- Where a child is in immediate danger or there is an immediate risk of serious harm: 999

Concerns about adults that do not meet the harm threshold, including low-level concerns, will be managed in accordance with the school's procedures for responding to low-level concerns, the Staff Code of Conduct and the relevant sections of this policy.

17.2 Other safeguarding-related complaints

Safeguarding-related complaints that do not concern the conduct of a member of staff will normally be dealt with under the school's Complaints Policy, alongside this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy where appropriate.

Such complaints may include concerns about:

- The school's response to a safeguarding concern or incident
- Bullying, including prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Child-on-child abuse
- Online safety
- The behaviour or safety of pupils
- Supervision of pupils
- School premises, security or site safety
- Toilets or changing arrangements
- Educational visits, clubs or other school activities
- The implementation of the school's safeguarding procedures
- The accessibility of safeguarding arrangements for pupils with SEND, disabilities or other additional needs
- Any other matter that a parent/carer, pupil or member of the school community believes may affect the safety or welfare of a child

Parents/carers should normally raise concerns with the class teacher or appropriate member of staff in the first instance, unless the nature or seriousness of the concern means that it should be raised directly with the Headteacher or DSL.

Formal complaints will be managed in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy.

Where information received through a complaint suggests that a child may be at risk of harm, the matter will be referred immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL and dealt with under the school's safeguarding procedures. The school will not delay necessary safeguarding action while a complaint is being considered.

Safeguarding information arising from a complaint will be recorded appropriately and securely. Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to safeguard the child, investigate the matter or fulfil the school's legal responsibilities.

Complaints relating to Reception/EYFS

As Long Meadow School includes Reception provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**,** complaints relating to the school's fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will also be handled in accordance with the complaints requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Written complaints relating to the school's fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated, and the complainant will be notified of the outcome within 28 days of the complaint being received.

The school will maintain a written record of complaints relating to the EYFS requirements and their outcomes and will make these records available to Ofsted on request.

Parents/carers of children in Reception may make a complaint to Ofsted if they believe the school is not meeting the requirements of the EYFS.

Ofsted contact details:

- Telephone: 0300 123 4666
- Complaints may also be made through the Ofsted complaints procedure on GOV.UK.

17.3 Whistleblowing

Long Meadow School follows and adopts the Milton Keynes City Council Whistleblowing Policy**.**

The school is committed to maintaining a culture in which staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements without fear of inappropriate repercussions.

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to raise concerns where they believe safeguarding procedures are not being followed, inappropriate conduct or malpractice is taking place, or the safety or welfare of a child may be at risk.

Whistleblowing concerns may include:

- A failure to follow safeguarding or child protection procedures
- A failure to make or appropriately follow up a safeguarding referral
- Poor or unsafe safeguarding practice
- Inappropriate conduct towards children
- A failure to respond appropriately to allegations or low-level concerns about adults
- Unsafe working practices
- Inappropriate or unsafe use of restraint or physical intervention
- Concerns about online safety, filtering or monitoring
- Inappropriate use of mobile phones, cameras, recording equipment or personal devices
- Attempts to conceal safeguarding concerns or incidents
- Falsification, concealment or inappropriate alteration of safeguarding records
- A failure to comply with safer recruitment requirements
- Concerns about the safety or suitability of the school environment
- Any other malpractice, wrongdoing or behaviour that may place a child at risk

Staff should normally raise concerns with the Headteacher as soon as possible. Where the concern relates to the Headteacher, or where it would not be appropriate to raise the matter with the Headteacher, the concern should be raised with the Chair of Governors.

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise a concern internally, believes that a genuine concern has not been appropriately addressed, or believes that the school is failing to take appropriate action, they should follow the Milton Keynes City Council Whistleblowing Policy and may raise the matter through the appropriate external route.

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is available to professionals who have concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation:

- Telephone: 0800 028 0285
- Email: **help@nspcc.org.uk**

Depending on the nature of the concern, staff may also contact an appropriate external safeguarding or regulatory body, including the Milton Keynes LADO, Milton Keynes Children's Social Care or Ofsted**.**

The school will take all genuine whistleblowing concerns seriously and respond promptly and appropriately. Information will be handled sensitively and shared only with those who need to know in order to investigate the concern, safeguard children or fulfil a legal obligation.

Staff who raise a genuine concern in the public interest should not suffer detrimental treatment as a result. The school will not tolerate victimisation, harassment or retaliation against a person who raises a concern appropriately.

Where a whistleblowing concern indicates that a child is or may be at risk of harm, safeguarding action will be taken immediately. Action to protect a child will not be delayed while a whistleblowing or internal investigation process is taking place.

Whistleblowing within Reception/EYFS

These arrangements also apply to staff working within Reception and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**.**

Reception staff must be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice and must know how to escalate concerns where they believe those concerns have not been appropriately addressed.

All Reception staff will be made aware of the school's safeguarding, allegations against staff, low-level concerns and whistleblowing arrangements through induction and ongoing safeguarding training.

18. Record-keeping

Long Meadow School will maintain accurate, secure and confidential safeguarding records in accordance with its records retention schedule, data protection requirements and statutory safeguarding guidance.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded in writing promptly**.** This includes decisions to make, or not to make, a referral to Children's Social Care, the Prevent programme or another agency. Staff who are unsure whether something should be recorded must speak to the DSL or a Deputy DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- The child's own words where appropriate
- Details of how the concern was followed up
- Details of any discussions, referrals or advice received
- Any actions taken, decisions reached and the reasons for them
- The outcome and any ongoing support or monitoring required

Records must be factual, accurate and objective and completed as soon as possible after the concern arises.

Safeguarding and child protection records will be kept separately from the main pupil file. Electronic records will be held securely on the school's safeguarding recording system, with access restricted to the DSL, Deputy DSLs and other authorised staff who have a legitimate need to know. Any paper safeguarding records will be stored securely with restricted access.

Safeguarding information will be treated as confidential and shared only where necessary and proportionate to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or to meet a legal requirement. Information may be shared with Milton Keynes Children's Social Care, the police, health services, the local authority and other relevant safeguarding partners or agencies where appropriate. Data protection legislation does not prevent the appropriate sharing of information for safeguarding purposes.

Safeguarding records will be retained in accordance with the school's records retention schedule and securely disposed of when the relevant retention period has expired.

Transfer of safeguarding records

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school or college, the DSL will ensure that the child protection file is transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file**.**

This will take place as soon as possible and:

- Within 5 days for an in-year transfer
- Within the first 5 days of the start of a new term for a transfer at the beginning of a term

The school will obtain confirmation that the safeguarding file has been received and will keep a record of the transfer.

Where concerns are significant or complex, and/or Children's Social Care is involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL at the receiving school before the child transfers, where possible, so that appropriate safeguarding and support arrangements can be put in place.

When safeguarding information is received for a child joining Long Meadow School, the DSL will review it promptly and ensure that relevant staff are provided with the information they need to safeguard and support the child**.**

The DSL will maintain oversight of safeguarding records and consider previous concerns when assessing new information so that patterns, repeated concerns and emerging risks can be identified.

In addition:

- **Appendix 2** sets out our record-keeping arrangements relating to recruitment and pre-appointment checks.
- **Appendix 3** sets out our record-keeping arrangements relating to allegations of abuse made against staff.

19. Training

19.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistleblowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse, exploitation or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school 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
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
  - Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
  - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

19.2 The DSL and deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

They, or any other designated Prevent lead, will also undertake more in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies.

19.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding

As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

19.4 Recruitment – interview panels

At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

See appendix 2 of this policy for more information about our safer recruitment procedures.

19.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families

All staff who have contact with children and families will have supervision, which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues.

The headteacher will hold an approved qualification at level 3 or above and at least half of all other staff must hold at least an approved level 2 qualification. We will make sure that children are adequately supervised, especially whilst eating, and decide how to use staff to ensure children's needs are met. We will inform parents and/or carers about how staff are organised, and, when relevant and practical, aim to involve them in these decisions. Children will usually be within both sight and hearing of staff and always within sight or hearing.

20. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by Emma Kidd, Deputy Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

21. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Staff code of conduct

- Complaints
- Health and safety
- Attendance
- Online safety
- AI
- Mobile phone use
- Equality
- Relationships and sex education
- First aid
- Curriculum
- Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Privacy notices

These appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.

Appendix 1: types of abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others.

This can be particularly relevant in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children
- Verbal abuse such as criticism, belittling, or name-calling

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse

Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 2: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

Safer recruitment policy

Recruitment and selection process

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

Application forms

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

Shortlisting

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we may ask for includes:
  - If they have a criminal history
  - Whether they are included on the barred list
  - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
  - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
  - Any relevant overseas information
  - If they are known to the policy and children's local authority social care and
  - If they have been disqualified from providing childcare
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references we will:

- Not accept open references (for example, “To whom it may concern”)
- Not rely on applicants to obtain their reference
- Not accept references from a family member
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate’s current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate’s most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children. If the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference is from their current employer training provider or education setting
- Ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- Contact referees to clarify where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- Establish the reason for the applicant leaving their current or most recent post, and ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate’s suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school’s single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals’ personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- New staff members will not be permitted to begin working in our EYFS provision until we have received the applicant's enhanced DBS certificate including barred list information
- Obtain a separate barred list check:
  - For newly appointed staff or volunteers if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
  - Where an individual has worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than three months prior to their appointment to the school
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
  - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
  - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity is work that a barred person must not do. It means a person who will be:

Activity	**Frequency**
• Teaching, training, instructing, caring for, or supervising children • Providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational wellbeing • (For paid workers) Doing any other paid work in school that provides an opportunity for contact with children	• Frequently (once a week or more), or • On more than 3 days in a 30-day period, or • Once at any time between 2am and 6am and with opportunity to have face-to-face contact with children

□ Driving a vehicle only for children and their carers or supervisors	□ Frequently (once a week or more), or □ On more than 3 days in a 30-day period, or
Providing intimate or personal care, including: □ Assisting with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing due to a child's age, illness or disability □ Assisting with eating and drinking due to illness or disability □ Providing health care (physical or mental health)	□ Any time, even if only once
Moderating a public electronic interactive communication service (e.g. the school's social media platforms) which is likely to be used wholly or mainly by children	□ Any time

The above applies to both paid staff and volunteers, aside from where stated '(For paid workers only)'.

Existing staff and volunteers

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff or volunteers as if the individual was a new member of staff or a new volunteer. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's or the volunteer's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

This duty applies equally to paid staff and volunteers where they were engaged in regulated activity.

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors, or request to see the certificate if the self-employed person has obtained their own check and ensure that it is at the level required by the school.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never allow an unchecked volunteer to work in regulated activity, or leave them unsupervised
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- For any existing volunteer who is considered to be engaging in a regulated activity from 1 September 2026:
    - Obtain an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information; or
    - Obtain a standalone barred list check where:
        - We wish to allow the volunteer to undertake regulated activity prior to obtaining the enhanced DBS check certificate; or
        - We have recently obtained an enhanced DBS check without children's barred list information, and there has been no break in service since that certificate was issued
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment

Volunteers will not be permitted to begin volunteering in our EYFS provision until we have received the applicant's enhanced DBS certificate including barred list information.

- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Governors All schools include:

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Pupils staying with host families

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff

Allegations against staff (including low-level concerns) policy

Section 1: allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- 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 they 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 includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO).

We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

If we receive an allegation of an incident happening while an individual or organisation was using the school premises to run activities for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures and inform our LADO.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension of the accused will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the local authority

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and local authority children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation

- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded**: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis that supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or local authority children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or local authority children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or local authority children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or local authority children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to local authority children's social care
- If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or local authority children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with local authority children's social care services and/or the police, if

applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the school will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply teachers, trainee teachers, and all contracted staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher, trainee teacher, or contracted staff member provided by an agency, the school shares safeguarding responsibilities with the employment agency or business. We will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate. Teacher training providers are expected to follow the same procedures as supply agencies.

Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days

- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or local authority children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to local authority children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to local authority children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and local authority children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with local authority children's social care or the police as appropriate.

We will retain all records at least until the accused individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations that have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are substantiated, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified

- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

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

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school 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 designated officer at the local authority

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

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils

Sharing low-level concerns

Long Meadow School recognises the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency, in which staff feel confident to share concerns about the behaviour of adults working in or on behalf of the school. A low-level concern does not mean that it is insignificant; it is any concern that an adult may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside work, but which does not meet the harm threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring all staff understand the expected standards of behaviour set out in the Staff Code of Conduct
- Ensuring staff understand the difference between appropriate behaviour, a low-level concern and an allegation that may meet the harm threshold
- Encouraging staff to report low-level concerns promptly in accordance with section 7.7 of this policy
- Encouraging staff to self-refer where they believe they may have acted in a way that could be misinterpreted or may fall below expected professional standards
- Ensuring staff know that concerns will be taken seriously and handled sensitively and proportionately
- Addressing unprofessional or inappropriate behaviour at an early stage
- Using concerns to identify possible patterns of behaviour or weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements
- Reinforcing these expectations through induction, safeguarding training and regular reminders to staff

Low-level concerns should normally be reported to the Headteacher. The DSL will support the Headteacher with safeguarding considerations where appropriate.

Where a low-level concern relates to the Headteacher, it should be reported to the Chair of Governors, who will follow the appropriate procedures and seek advice from the Milton Keynes LADO where necessary.

Responding to low-level concerns

All low-level concerns will be taken seriously and considered promptly.

Where a concern is raised by a third party, the Headteacher will establish the facts as necessary and proportionate. This may include speaking:

- To the person who raised the concern, unless it was raised anonymously
- To the individual about whom the concern was raised
- To any relevant witnesses

The Headteacher will consider the information available and determine whether the behaviour:

- Is consistent with the Staff Code of Conduct and the law
- Constitutes a low-level concern
- May indicate misconduct or a performance issue
- May form part of a wider pattern of concerning behaviour
- May meet the harm threshold and therefore require referral to the Milton Keynes LADO

The Headteacher is the ultimate decision-maker in respect of low-level concerns and may consult the DSL where appropriate. Where there is any doubt about whether a concern meets the harm threshold, advice will be sought from the Milton Keynes Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**.**

Milton Keynes LADO:

- Telephone: 01908 254307
- Email: **LADO@milton-keynes.gov.uk**

Where a concern meets, or may meet, the harm threshold, it will no longer be managed solely as a low-level concern and the school will follow its procedures for managing allegations against staff, as set out elsewhere in this policy and Appendix 3.

Any necessary safeguarding action to protect a child will be taken immediately and will not be delayed while the school determines how the adult's conduct should be managed.

Where appropriate, action in response to a low-level concern may include advice, additional training, professional guidance, management support, changes to working practices, or action under the school's disciplinary or capability procedures.

Record-keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. Records will include:

- Details of the concern
- The context in which the concern arose
- Relevant information gathered
- Any action taken
- Decisions reached and the rationale for those decisions
- The outcome, where known

Records will be kept confidentially and securely and managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and UK GDPR.

Records will be reviewed where appropriate so that **p**atterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Where a pattern is identified, the school will consider whether further action is required through its disciplinary or other appropriate procedures. Where concerns, individually or collectively, meet the harm threshold, the matter will be referred to the Milton Keynes LADO in accordance with the school's procedures for managing allegations against adults.

Low-level concern records will be retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school, or for longer where required by the school's records retention arrangements.

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher, contractor or other individual employed by another organisation, the school will notify the individual's employer so that relevant information can be considered in the context of any other concerns and potential patterns of behaviour.

References

Low-level concerns will not normally be included in employment references.

They will only be included where:

- The concern, or group of concerns, has met the threshold for referral to the LADO and has been found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern, or group of concerns, relates to matters that would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as substantiated misconduct or poor performance

Any information included in a reference will be factual, accurate and fair, and will be provided in accordance with safer recruitment requirements and relevant statutory guidance.

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

Assessing adult-involved 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. 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 this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nude and semi-nudes directly from a child or young person using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present as themselves or use a false identity on the platform, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender often grooms the child or young person on social media, in chatrooms or on gaming platforms, and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made. To encourage the child or young person to create and share nude or semi-nude, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material (images of other young people), including AI-generated material.

Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, an offender may blackmail the child or young person into sending more images by threatening to release them online and/or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- Coerced/pressured into doing sexual things, including creating nudes and semi-nudes
- Offered something of value such as money or gaming credits
- Threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing the image or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person to extort ‘real’ images

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often known as ‘sextortion’) is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender (or offenders) threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else to benefit them.

Unlike other adult-involved incidents, financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by offenders working in sophisticated organised crime groups (OCGs) overseas and are only motivated by profit. Adults are usually targeted by these groups too.

Offenders will often use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or hack another young person’s account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- Groom or coerce the child or young person into sending nudes or semi-nudes and financially blackmail them

- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person taken through hacking their account
- Use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child or young person

The offender may demand payment or the use of the victim's bank account for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person. They may be contacted by a hacked account of a child or young person
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing an image first
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- Pressured into taking nudes or semi-nudes
- Told they have been hacked and they have access to their images, personal information and contacts
- Blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated images of the child or young person

Children who are absent from education

A child being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk of becoming missing from education. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

If a pupil is absent for a prolonged period of time, or if a child is absent without notification from the parent or carer, attempts will be made to contact the child's parents and/or carers and alternative emergency contacts.

We will consider patterns and trends in a child's absences and their personal circumstances and use our professional judgement when deciding if the child's absence should be considered as prolonged.

Consideration will be given to the child's vulnerability, parent's and/or carer's vulnerability and their home life. Any concerns will be referred to local children's social care services and/or a police welfare check requested.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being absent, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent or person with legal responsibility. Staff will also be alert to community safety risks such as attempted abduction, unsafe adults, gang activity or other incidents near the school. Age-appropriate safety education is provided through the curriculum and assemblies. Any concern will be reported immediately to the DSL; where a child is missing, at immediate risk or a crime may have occurred, the police will be contacted and Milton Keynes safeguarding procedures followed.

Children and the court system

Children may be affected by criminal or family court proceedings, including where they are a witness or where decisions are being made about their care or contact arrangements. Staff will respond sensitively, maintain appropriate confidentiality and provide pastoral support. Any safeguarding concern arising from court involvement will be reported to the DSL and referred through Milton Keynes safeguarding arrangements where necessary.

Children with family members in prison

A child with a parent or close family member in prison may experience stigma, separation, financial difficulty or emotional distress. Staff will be alert to changes in wellbeing, attendance or behaviour and offer appropriate pastoral support. Safeguarding concerns will be reported to the DSL and referred for Early Help or to Milton Keynes MASH where appropriate.

Cybercrime

Children may become involved in cyber-dependent crime, for example unauthorised access to computer systems, malware or denial-of-service activity. Staff will not assume that technical ability alone indicates criminal intent, but will report concerns to the DSL. The school will use age-appropriate online-safety education and secure filtering and monitoring, and will seek specialist or police advice where there is evidence of criminal activity or risk of harm.

Modern slavery and trafficking

Modern slavery includes human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Child criminal and sexual exploitation can be forms of modern slavery. Staff will be alert to indicators such as unexplained travel, missing episodes, control by others, exploitation, debt or fear. Concerns will be reported immediately to the DSL, who will follow Milton Keynes safeguarding procedures and refer to MASH and/or the police as appropriate. Where a child may be a victim of modern slavery, Children's Social Care or the police can consider a referral to the National Referral Mechanism.

Child criminal exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can be perpetrated by organised networks or gangs, and the victim may identify as part of this group.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. It can include children who have been moved for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

County lines

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation in which gangs use children or vulnerable people to move drugs, money or other items between areas. Indicators can include unexplained money or possessions, repeated absence, travel, new older associates, multiple phones, changes in behaviour or unexplained injuries. Staff must report concerns to the DSL. The DSL will follow Milton Keynes procedures, including referral to MASH and the police where appropriate; local contextual safeguarding support is accessed through MASH.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. Most sexual abuse is committed by individuals known to the victim. It can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. Victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take while under coercion.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may

be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. Most sexual abuse is committed by individuals known to the victim.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images. It can include children who have been moved for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery.

In addition to the CCE indicators above, indicators of CSE can include a child:

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the two.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both victim and alleged perpetrator, it is preventable and it may involve serious physical harm or threats involving weapons.

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are there no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Discriminatory behaviour (including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon
- Harmful sexual behaviour (an umbrella term widely used in child protection, and which applies to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both), sexual violence and sexual harassment, which may include misogyny/misandry
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including those generated using AI
- Upskirting, which is a criminal offence, 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)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or if a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and will offer them appropriate support.

Domestic abuse

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children including physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and stalking) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological 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. Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

Police must notify a school of a domestic abuse incident where a child is involved, has witnessed or been present, lives at (or is linked to) the address where it occurred, or where a Child Concern Notification has been issued, regardless of whether the child was there at the time. 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. This notification should reflect the 'voice of the child' (for example, statements made the child or behaviour observed). This is the procedure set out in the statutory Operation Encompass guidance for information sharing.

The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

The DSL and deputies will be aware of contact details and referral routes in to the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to local authority children's social care. Where children are living independently from their parent/carers (e.g. if they've been excluded from their family home), we will work with the local authority children's social care team to support them.

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

So-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
  - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
  - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
  - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
  - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
  - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
  - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
  - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
  - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
  - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
  - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl’s family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl’s community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
  - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
  - Having limited level of integration within UK society

- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a “special procedure” or to attend a special occasion to “become a woman”
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her ‘red book’ (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 1 or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

It is also illegal to cause a child under the age of 18 to marry, even if violence, threats or coercion are not involved.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the ‘1 chance’ rule, i.e. we may only have 1 chance to speak to the potential victim and only 1 chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority’s designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

Preventing radicalisation

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence
- **Extremism** is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  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.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. The DSL, or designated Prevent lead, will undertake in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist

ideologies. They'll make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

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.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

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
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

Further information on the school's measures to prevent radicalisation and meet its responsibilities under the Prevent duty is set out in the school's Prevent Policy and Prevent Risk Assessment. These should be read alongside other relevant school policies and procedures, including the Online Safety Policy, Behaviour Policy and Curriculum Policy.

Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

The school will respond to all signs, reports and concerns of harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence. This includes incidents occurring outside of the school premises, and/or online.

Sexual violence refers to specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 involving:

- Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents
- Assault by penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents
- Sexual assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. Sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault)
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party)

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity, and each time activity occurs. A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity, the age of consent is 16, and sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

HSB can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence. It can occur online or face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable. Sexual violence and sexual harassment may overlap.

Children who are victims of HSB, sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

- Reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them
- Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt

- Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns
- Consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again
- Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay and bisexual children, or children questioning their gender are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them
- Recognising the intersection of misogyny/misandry and harmful sexual behaviour. It's important not to dismiss issues that may seem minor at first, such as derogatory language, as behaviours can escalate into more severe forms of child-on-child abuse

If staff have any concerns about HSB, sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

Serious violence

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern which may involve:

- Physical assault
- Carrying, threatening with or using weapons (often in the context of peer conflict or bullying)
- Criminal exploitation

Indicators which may signal that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime may include:

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above))

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- Having been frequently absent, suspended, spent time in alternative provision, or permanently excluded from school
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery
- Being male
- Having experienced child maltreatment
- Having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence
- Having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors and will be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example, immediately after school).

If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, including a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so), they will report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, consider wider information or concerns and take appropriate action
- Put in place a safety and support plan for the pupil (depending on the risk)
- Where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

The school has procedures in place to manage visitors to the premises and to ensure that pupils are safeguarded while visitors are on site.

All visitors must report to the school office/reception on arrival. Visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of school staff, sign in using the school's visitor system and wear the appropriate visitor identification/badge for the duration of their visit.

Where a visitor is not known to the school, staff will establish their identity, credentials and reason for visiting before allowing access to the school. Visitors should be prepared to provide appropriate photographic identification where requested.

For visitors attending the school in a professional capacity, such as educational psychologists, social workers, local authority officers, health professionals and other education-related practitioners, the school will check their identity and be satisfied that any appropriate DBS and other relevant checks have been completed. This may be confirmed in advance by the visitor's employer or the organisation that has arranged the visit. The school will not routinely require a professional visitor to produce their DBS certificate where appropriate assurance has already been obtained from their employer or organisation.

The Headteacher, or another appropriately authorised member of staff, will use professional judgement to determine whether a visitor needs to be accompanied or supervised while on the school premises, taking account of the purpose and nature of the visit and any safeguarding considerations.

Other visitors, including parents, carers and family members attending school events, will be managed in accordance with the school's visitor procedures and the nature of the event. The school will not request DBS or barred list checks for visitors where there is no legal entitlement or safeguarding requirement to do so.

Visiting speakers and organisations will be subject to appropriate checks before their visit. In accordance with the school's responsibilities under the Prevent duty, the school will not knowingly invite an individual or

organisation that seeks to promote extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff. Appropriate checks will be undertaken to establish the suitability of visiting speakers and organisations and the content and purpose of their visit.

Where a visitor is unable to provide satisfactory identification or the school has concerns about their identity, suitability or purpose for visiting, they will not be permitted unsupervised access to pupils and may be refused entry to the school.

All visitors are expected to comply with the school's safeguarding, security, confidentiality and conduct requirements while on the premises. Any safeguarding concerns arising from a visitor's conduct will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy and managed in accordance with this policy.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the school day or an after-school activity, the school will ensure that the child remains appropriately supervised and safe until suitable arrangements have been made for their collection.

The school will:

- Attempt to contact the child's parents/carers using the contact details held by the school.
- If contact cannot be made, attempt to contact the other authorised contacts recorded for the child.
- Ensure that the child remains supervised by an appropriate member of staff and is not left alone.
- Only release the child to a parent/carer or another person who has been authorised to collect them. Where there is any uncertainty about the identity or authority of the person collecting the child, the school will seek confirmation from the parent/carer before releasing the child.
- Record the incident, including the steps taken to contact parents/carers and other authorised contacts.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a deputy, where there are safeguarding concerns, where non-collection is repeated, or where staff are unable to contact an appropriate adult.

Where all reasonable attempts to contact parents/carers and authorised contacts have been unsuccessful, the DSL or a senior member of staff will consider the circumstances and seek advice and/or make a referral to the appropriate children's social care service in accordance with local safeguarding procedures. Where there is an immediate concern for the child's safety, the police may also be contacted.

The school will not allow a child to leave the premises unsupervised unless this has been expressly agreed in accordance with the school's arrangements for children travelling home independently.

Missing pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child is found to be missing, staff will act immediately and prioritise the child's safety.

We will:

- Immediately inform the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a deputy, and establish when and where the child was last seen.
- Check the school premises and grounds promptly, including the child's classroom and other areas they may reasonably be expected to be, while ensuring that other pupils remain appropriately supervised.
- Check relevant information, including attendance records and, where appropriate, speak to staff and pupils who may know the child's whereabouts.
- Contact the child's parents/carers as soon as possible to inform them that the child is missing and establish whether they have any information about the child's whereabouts.
- If there is reason to believe that the child has left the school premises, or the child cannot be located promptly, contact the police. The urgency of the response will take account of the child's age, vulnerability, individual needs and the circumstances in which they went missing.

- Provide the police and other relevant agencies with information necessary to assist in locating and safeguarding the child.
- Ensure that other children continue to be appropriately supervised while the search is taking place.
- Record the incident, including when the child was identified as missing, when and where they were last seen, the searches and enquiries undertaken, people contacted, actions taken and the time and circumstances in which the child was located.
- Once the child has been found, ensure that they are safe and appropriately supported. The DSL will consider the circumstances of the incident, speak with the child where appropriate, and consider whether there are any underlying safeguarding concerns or whether further action or referral is required.
- Inform parents/carers when the child has been located and explain any further action the school intends to take.

Any incident involving a pupil going missing will be reviewed to establish how it occurred and whether changes are required to the child's individual arrangements, risk assessments or wider school procedures to reduce the likelihood of it happening again.

Where there are concerns that a child going missing is linked to abuse, neglect, exploitation or another safeguarding risk, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures and make referrals to Children's Social Care and/or the police as appropriate.