St Bernard's RC Primary & Nursery School

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body on 1.9.26

This policy is due for review on 1.9.27

Safeguarding Children and Young People in Education
Policy and Procedures

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Safeguarding Statement

St Bernards RC Primary and Nursery School recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils and expects all staff, governors, and volunteers to share this commitment.

We recognise that all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or SEND have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.

We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued.

We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice.

We listen to our pupils and take seriously what they tell us, children are aware of the adults they can talk to if they have a concern.

When there are concerns for a child's welfare, we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies.

Where appropriate, the school will be open and transparent with children, parents and carers about safeguarding concerns and information sharing. However, when necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child, information may be shared with relevant agencies without prior discussion or agreement if seeking consent, or informing a parent/carer, could place a child at risk, prejudice support, protection or assessment processes, or otherwise be contrary to the child's welfare.

This Child Protection and Safeguarding policy underpins and guides our safeguarding procedures and protocols.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.

- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children)

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child/pupil includes everyone under the age of 18. References to care leavers will be considered in accordance with relevant statutory guidance

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers, adoptive parents and LA corporate parents.

Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been developed in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and reflects the school's commitment to implementing updated statutory safeguarding expectations including online safety, emerging technologies, Family Help, child-on-child abuse prevention, safeguarding children who may be questioning their gender, violence against women and girls, safer recruitment and information-sharing duties.

- Keeping Children Safe in Education:
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Education Act 2002 Section 175 (maintained schools only)
- Education Act 2002 Section 157 (Independent schools incl Academies and CTC's)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Teachers' Standards (Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies)
- Information Sharing 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused
- Filtering and monitoring standards in schools and colleges (DfE)
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK
- Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools - GOV.UK
- Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK
- Children's social care national framework - GOV.UK
- Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK
- UN Convention on Rights of a Child (UNCRC) - UNICEF UK
- Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff Feb 2024
- School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK
- Searching, screening and confiscation in schools - GOV.UK
- Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK

- Mental health and behaviour in schools - GOV.UK

Policy Principles, Aims and Values

The welfare of the child is paramount:

- All children regardless of age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity or religion have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities.
- We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff[1], volunteers and governors, all have a duty to protect our pupils from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, mental wellbeing and moral development of the individual child.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support and supervision.

This policy aims to:

- Raise the awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard children.
- Provide all staff with guidance on the procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child/young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of experiencing, harm. Including (by DSL/DDSL) consideration to the use of appropriate assessments, resources and agency support.
- Provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, and that they will be listened to should they make a disclosure.
- Raise awareness that abuse can be both Familial and/or Contextual; and abusers can be both adult/s to child/ren or child/ren to child/ren.
- Demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to pupils, parents and other partners.
- Provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- To emphasise the need for high levels of communication between staff and the designated safeguarding leads internally and with external agencies and partners, including our contribution to assessments, referrals, and support plans.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other partnership agencies, particularly Childrens Social Care, Police and Health.
- Support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence, and independence.
- Ensure that all staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity,

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

qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance)[2], and a single central record is kept for audit.
- Provide clarity and expectations on professional behaviours and code of conduct including lone working requirements.

Supporting and Protecting Children:

- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses' violence may feel helpless and humiliated and could experience barriers to making a disclosure. We understand that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn as well as exhibiting signs of mental health problems. We understand the impact on a child's mental health, behaviour, and education from familial and/or contextual abuse. School may not only provide stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm, but it plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children.

Our school will support all children by:

- encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying (incl. cyber bullying).
- promoting a caring, safe, and positive environment within the school and providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.
- responding sympathetically to any requests for time out to deal with distress and anxiety.
- offering details of helplines, counselling, or other avenues of external support.
- liaising and working together with all other settings, support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- notifying Childrens' Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- ensuring appropriate information is shared confidentially at key transition points in a child's journey to ensure continuous support (incl. school medical records).
- children are taught to understand and manage risk through our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and through all aspects of school life. This includes online safety.
- by accessing and utilising the necessary resources, guidance and toolkits to support the identification of children requiring mental health support, support services and assessments.
- reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

[2] Guidance regarding DBS checks recently updated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

The school community will protect children by:

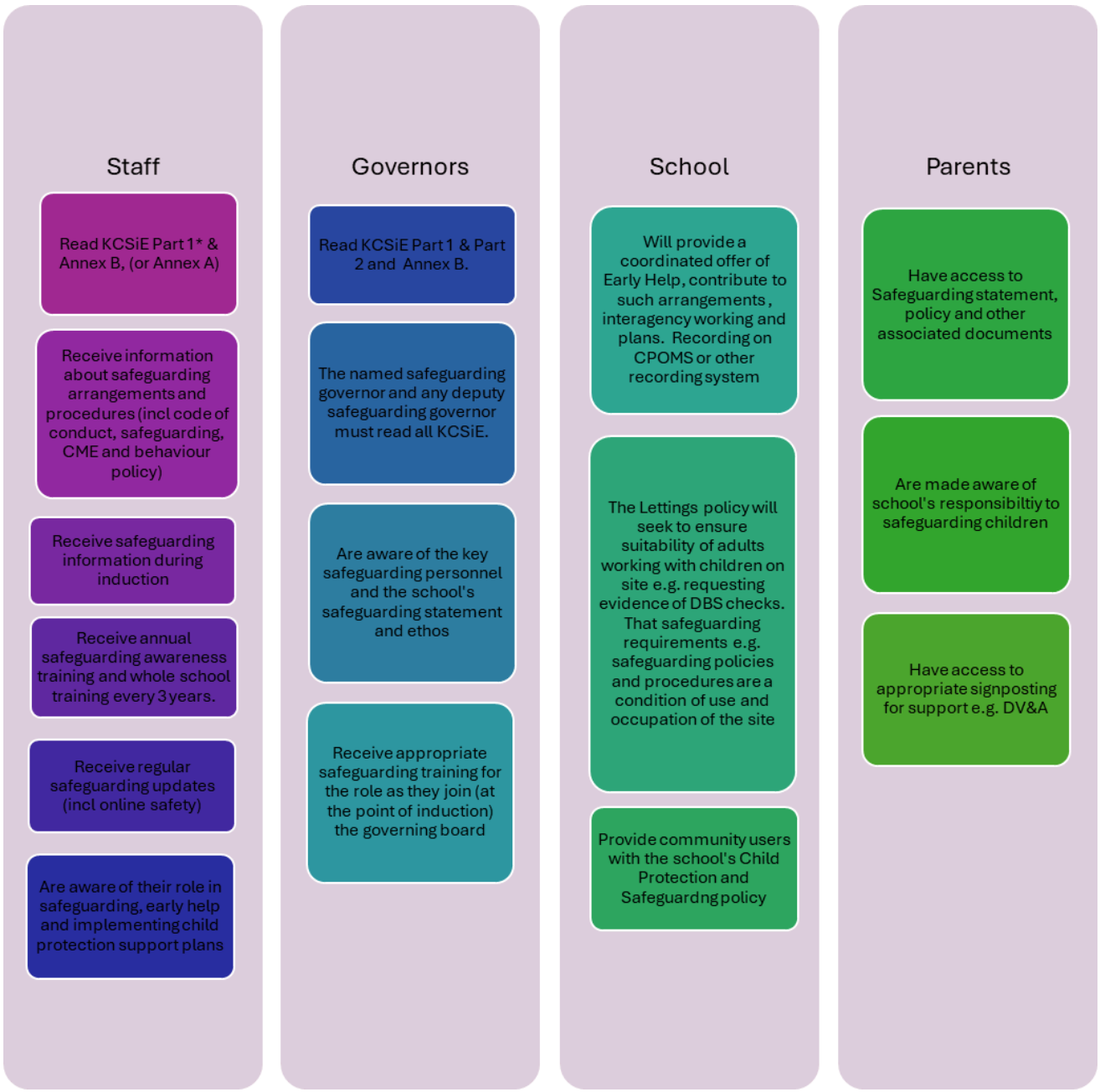
- working to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to.
- ensuring that all children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- including regular consultation with children, parents, and staff, gathering their voice.
- including safeguarding across the curriculum to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help; in particular this will include anti-bullying work, information about child on child abuse (sexual harassment and sexual violence, consent), online-safety, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training; provide focussed activities to prepare key year groups for transition to new settings and/or key stages.
- ensuring all staff, pupils and parents are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and the safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies, including the use of social media and their associated risks.
- implementing clear expectations regarding the safe and responsible use of mobile phones and personal devices. The school adopts a phone-free approach during the school day unless specific educational, medical or safeguarding reasons require otherwise.

Safe environment

The school is committed to creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for children and young people, identifying where there are child welfare concerns and taking action to address them in partnership with families and other agencies. This policy reflects the policies of Cheshire West's Safeguarding Children Partnership, Cheshire West SCP and is in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education

The school will also contribute through the curriculum by developing children's understanding, awareness and promoting their resilience by providing a safe environment within schools.

To provide a safe environment we will ensure that staff, governors, school, and parents:



Roles and Responsibilities

We will follow the statutory guidance as set out in the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (and associated documents and guidance), adhering to the roles, responsibilities and expectations identified for:

- Governing bodies, proprietors and management committees.
- The headteacher
- The designated safeguarding lead.
- The deputy designated safeguarding lead/s
- Staff

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Governing bodies, proprietors, and management committees:

All members of The Governing Body understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely, to ensure that there is a Child Protection and Safeguarding policy together with a Staff Behaviour policy (Code of Conduct).

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

Roles and responsibilities will include ensuring:

- Child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), are consistent with the Local Authority and statutory requirements, are reviewed annually and that the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is publicly available on the school website or by other means.
- All staff including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and staff Code of Conduct.
- The Governing Body will ensure that all staff, including volunteers and those who do not work directly with children, read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education annually and receive safeguarding updates throughout the year.
- The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff, disqualification by association regulations and by ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training.
- The school complies with KCSIE safer recruitment requirements including identity checks, qualifications, references, online searches on shortlisted candidates, prohibition checks, section 128 direction checks where applicable, DBS checks and appropriate checks on agency and contractor staff
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Headteacher), supply staff, volunteers and against other children and that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have had they not resigned.
- A member of the Governing Body/Board, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the Local Authority on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher.
- A member of the senior leadership team has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) by the Governing Body/Board who will take lead responsibility.

- On appointment, the DSL and deputy(ies) undertake appropriate Level 3 identified training offered by the Cheshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership every two years.
- All other staff undertake safeguarding training every 3 years and an update at least annually.
- At least one member of the governing body has completed safer recruitment training.
- Children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues to meet their needs, including children who have recognised vulnerabilities.
- Appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who go missing (are absent) from education.
- Appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems are in place.
- Enhanced DBS checks at the appropriate level are in place for all Governors.
- Any weaknesses in Child Protection are remedied immediately.

The Headteacher:

The Headteacher will support the governing body, designated safeguarding lead, deputies, staff and volunteers to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

Roles and responsibilities will include:

- Ensuring the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
- Enabling sufficient time, training, support, resources, including cover arrangements where necessary, is allocated to the DSL and deputy(ies) DSL(s) to carry out their roles effectively,
- Supporting and promoting an open and positive safeguarding culture and ethos in school so that child/ren's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Ensuring systems are in place for children to express their views and give feedback.
- Following the whistleblowing policy and procedures if an allegation is made against a member of staff, supply staff or volunteer staff, including liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and referring anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- That pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description. (They must be a member of SLT).

Roles and responsibilities will include:

- Availability – being available during school hours.
- Manage referrals – to e.g., Childrens Social Care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring service, the Police.
- Working with others – e.g., a point of contact with safeguarding partners, a source of support and advice for staff, to promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers and the SLT/Governing body.
- Information sharing and managing the child protection/safeguarding files.
- Raising Safeguarding and Child Protection Awareness.
- Updating training, knowledge and skills required to carry out the role of DSL e.g., additional training such as neglect, exploitation etc.
- Providing support to staff.
- Holding and sharing information.
- Overseeing and acting upon filtering and monitoring reports and checks to these systems.
- Ensure compliance with statutory information-sharing responsibilities, promoting a culture of timely, lawful and effective multi-agency information sharing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/s (DDSL):

Is/ are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL the deputy will assume all of the functions above.
Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

Staff:

Roles and responsibilities will include:

- maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- identifying concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare, and prevent concerns from escalating.
- to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

- knowing what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected.
- being able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- recognising the barriers for children when wanting to make a disclosure (verbal or non-verbal).
- identifying children who may benefit from early help, (providing support as soon as a problem emerges) and the part they play in these support plans.
- raising any concerns for a child following the school's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- being aware of local authority referral processes and supporting social workers and other agencies following any referral.
- adhering to Teachers' Standards 2012 - that teacher (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- Being aware of systems within school which support safeguarding e.g., safeguarding policy, behaviour policy, code of conduct, CME, online filtering, and monitoring.
- Attending regular safeguarding and child protection training.
- Recognising that children missing or absent from education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.
- All staff will demonstrate professional curiosity, respectfully seeking to understand the lived experience of children and families and exploring concerns rather than accepting explanations at face value.

Confidentiality

Volunteers

The school recognises that safeguarding responsibilities apply equally to volunteers working with children.

All recruitment and suitability decisions relating to volunteers will be undertaken in accordance with statutory safeguarding requirements and safer recruitment procedures.

The school will:

- assess the nature of the role undertaken by volunteers;
- obtain references and conduct risk assessments where appropriate;
- undertake identity checks;

- ensure appropriate enhanced DBS checks are completed;
- ensure barred list checks are undertaken where required for regulated activity;
- maintain appropriate records of safeguarding checks.

Volunteers will receive safeguarding induction, understand their safeguarding responsibilities and be aware of the identity of the DSL and Deputy DSLs.

Volunteers will be expected to follow the school's safeguarding, staff conduct, online safety and whistleblowing procedures at all times.

- Our school recognises that in order to effectively meet a child's needs, safeguard their welfare and protect them from harm, the school must contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2018[3] is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- However, we also recognise that all matters relating to child protection are personal to children and families. Therefore, in this respect they are confidential and the Headteacher or DSLs will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis.
- St Bernard's will be open and transparent with parents/carers wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so. However, information may be shared with I-ART, Children's Social Care, Family Help services, safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies without seeking consent where this is necessary to safeguard or promote a child's welfare, support assessment or decision-making, protect the child from harm, or fulfil statutory safeguarding responsibilities. Decisions and the rationale for sharing information will be appropriately recorded.
- In line with KCSiE, all children's safeguarding files will be kept confidential and stored securely. Safeguarding files will be kept on our School CPOMS system separate from all other children's files.

Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Recognising:

Any child, in any family, in any school, could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of **"It could happen here".** We also recognise that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are complex and are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. Staff are aware that in most cases multiple issues will overlap one another.

[3] The Data Protection Act 2018 is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data Protection in Schools Gov.UK DfE Feb 2023

- Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in the family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- Abuse and Neglect may also take place outside of the home, contextual safeguarding, and this may include (but not limited to), sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence and/or radicalisation.
- Staff are aware that behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger and that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse.

- There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, and they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed.
- We recognise that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill, or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or is in need of safeguarding.
- In these circumstances staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Further information on the different types of safeguarding concerns and schools' response can be found in the Appendices section.

Responding:

Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL and put them in writing, see FLOW CHART.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice in FLOW CHART and in the table below 'pupil making a disclosure'.

All concerns however small must be recorded and shared with the DSL as this information could provide the 'missing' piece of the bigger picture of the lived experience for the child.

Different types of safeguarding concerns and risks to children	
o child missing or absent from education. o child missing from home or care. o child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE) o bullying including cyberbullying o domestic abuse o drugs o fabricated or induced illness o faith abuse o female genital mutilation (FGM) o forced marriage. o gangs and youth violence	o gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG) o mental health difficulties o private fostering o radicalisation o youth produced sexual imagery (sexting) o teenage relationship abuse o trafficking o child on child abuse o up skirting o serious violence o sexual harassment

1. Offer reassurance, listen and take seriously what is being said. Never promise to keep secrets or be persuaded by the child, young person or their family not to take action.

2. Recognise that it is not your job to investigate, verify what is being said or examine the individual disclosing; this is the statutory responsibility of the child protection services and/or the Police.

However, it is important to ascertain relevant information.

3. Explain the process to the individual; that you will need to pass this information on, to whom, the reasons why and possible actions.

4. Any concerns will be recorded , including the child's voice, body map (if necessary) and other relevant information in line with our school's recording procedure. Concerns may also be shared with the DSL/DDSL verbally, these conversations will also be recorded in writing

If a pupil discloses to a member of staff

- We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty, or scared, their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Sometimes, they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.
- A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on a number of subsequent occasions to the police and/or social workers. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a positive one.

During their conversation with the pupil staff will:

- listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely.
- remain calm and not overreact or act shocked or disgusted – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener.
- reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk.
- take what the child is disclosing seriously.
- ask open questions and avoid asking leading questions.
- avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation or make accusations.

- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who is being abused.
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about it when it started' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong.
- tell the child what will happen next, that they cannot keep secrets and that information will be shared to ensure the right level of support is given.

Notifying Parents

- The school will normally seek to discuss concerns with parents/carers where appropriate and in the child's best interests. However, information may be shared, referrals made, or safeguarding action taken without parental agreement when necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child, support assessment or decision-making, or where seeking consent could increase risk, delay intervention, compromise professional enquiry or prejudice a safeguarding investigation.
- This must be handled sensitively and normally the DSL/DDSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure of abuse that the child has been harmed in some way.
- However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, I-ART will be contacted first e.g., familial sexual abuse.
- Where there are concerns about FGM, forced marriage or so-called honour-based abuse, parents should not be informed a referral is being made, as to do so may place the child at a significantly increased risk.

Making a referral

- Concerns about a child or a disclosure should be immediately raised with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to I-ART or other support is appropriate in accordance with the SCP's 's Providing the right support at the right time (Continuum of Need) thresholds framework. Chester West and Chester Safeguarding Children Partnership - Providing the Right Support at the Right Time
- If school are uncertain about whether a concern raised should be referred to I-ART, a consultation will be sought with the Local Authority SCIE team to seek further support and guidance. If there is a TAF in place, the school will consult the TAF advisor.
- If a referral is needed, the DSL should make this rapidly and have the necessary systems in place to enable this to happen. However, anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made, they can, and should, consider making a referral themselves.
- The school will seek to be transparent with children and parents/carers about referrals wherever appropriate. However, referrals may be made, and information shared, without prior notification where necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child, where

there are concerns about risk, or where informing those involved could prejudice safeguarding processes or multi-agency decision-making.

- The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.
- If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding lead (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly the child's situation improves (using the escalation and resolution policy).
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to I-ART and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral.
- Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.
- Decisions will be informed by the wishes, feelings and lived experiences of the child and these will be clearly recorded within safeguarding processes.

Supporting our Staff

- We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSLs and to seek further support as appropriate.

Early Intervention, Prevention and Family Help

Providing help and support as soon as problems emerge is a key safeguarding responsibility for all staff. The school recognises that safeguarding is most effective when concerns are identified early and children receive the right support at the right time.

The school operates within the Cheshire West and Chester **Right Support at the Right Time** framework and understands that children and families may require differing levels of support as their needs change.

When concerns are identified, the DSL will consider whether a child requires:

Community Services

Support available through universal services including education, health services, family hubs, early years provision, community organisations and voluntary sector services.

Family Help

Where emerging needs, additional vulnerabilities or multiple concerns are identified, children and families may benefit from coordinated Family Help support. This may include multi-agency planning, a Lead Practitioner, Family Network Meetings and targeted interventions designed to prevent concerns from escalating.

Keeping Children Safe and Well

Where concerns indicate that a child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, statutory safeguarding and child protection procedures will be implemented immediately. Family Help and Child Protection operate as one integrated system to ensure children receive both support and protection according to their needs.

All staff should remain professionally curious and alert to changes in a child's circumstances, presentation, attendance, behaviour, emotional wellbeing or vulnerability. Decisions will be informed by the child's lived experience, wishes and feelings, family circumstances, strengths and protective factors, alongside professional judgement and local threshold guidance.

The level of support provided will always be based on the child's current needs, with the aim of ensuring they receive the right support, at the right time, from the right person.

Children who are particularly vulnerable

St Bernards RC Primary and Nursery School recognises that some children are more vulnerable to abuse, neglect and contextual safeguarding concerns and that additional barriers exist when recognising abuse for some children. We understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures which fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment, or circumstances. In some cases, possible indicators of abuse such as a child's mood, behaviour or injury might be assumed to relate to the child's impairment or disability rather than giving a cause for concern. Or a focus may be on the child's disability, special educational needs, or situation without consideration of the full picture. In other cases, such as bullying, the child may be disproportionately impacted by the behaviour without outwardly showing any signs that they are experiencing it.
Some children may also find it harder to disclose abuse due to communication barriers, lack of access to a trusted adult or not being aware that what they are experiencing is abuse.

The school recognises that some children may have medical conditions, including severe allergies, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or other health needs, which require additional planning, support and risk management to ensure their safety and wellbeing in school. While these children may require individual healthcare arrangements and consideration of their needs, the presence of a medical condition alone does not mean that a child is at increased risk of abuse or neglect. Staff should,

however, remain alert to situations where a child's medical needs are not being appropriately met, as this may indicate a wider welfare or safeguarding concern.

Any child may benefit from early help,Family Help or statutory intervention but all school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for additional support for a child who:

- is disabled or has specific additional needs.
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care Plan).
- is a young carer.
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- is frequently missing from home, care or education.
- is at risk of, or is experiencing, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE) or other forms of exploitation.
- has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- is experiencing family difficulties, including parental mental ill-health, domestic abuse, substance misuse or housing instability.
- is experiencing mental health difficulties, emotional distress or wellbeing concerns.
- is vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist influences.
- is privately fostered.
- has returned home from care.
- is persistently absent from education or is at risk of suspension, permanent exclusion or placement breakdown.
- is experiencing bullying, prejudice-based incidents, discrimination or hate-related abuse.
- is questioning their gender and experiencing additional vulnerabilities or safeguarding risks.
- has experienced abuse, neglect, adverse childhood experiences or trauma.
- is subject to repeated suspensions or is at risk of permanent exclusion.
- attends alternative provision or has experienced placement breakdowns.
- demonstrates behaviour that may indicate unmet safeguarding, mental health or SEND needs.

The school expects all staff to exercise professional curiosity and share information proactively. Information relevant to a child's safety, welfare or wellbeing should be shared with appropriate professionals without unnecessary delay, and where necessary without consent, in accordance with statutory safeguarding duties. Practitioners should not work in isolation or make decisions based solely on individual pieces of information but should contribute to a shared understanding of a child's lived experience through effective multi-agency communication and information sharing.

Whistleblowing

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

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

Whistleblowing in relation to staff, agency staff and volunteers, should be raised with the Headteacher, and if the concerns are about the Headteacher, these should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body, whose contact details are readily available to staff. See the information above. (N.B. - The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk)

Allegations against staff

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers will be given at induction[4].

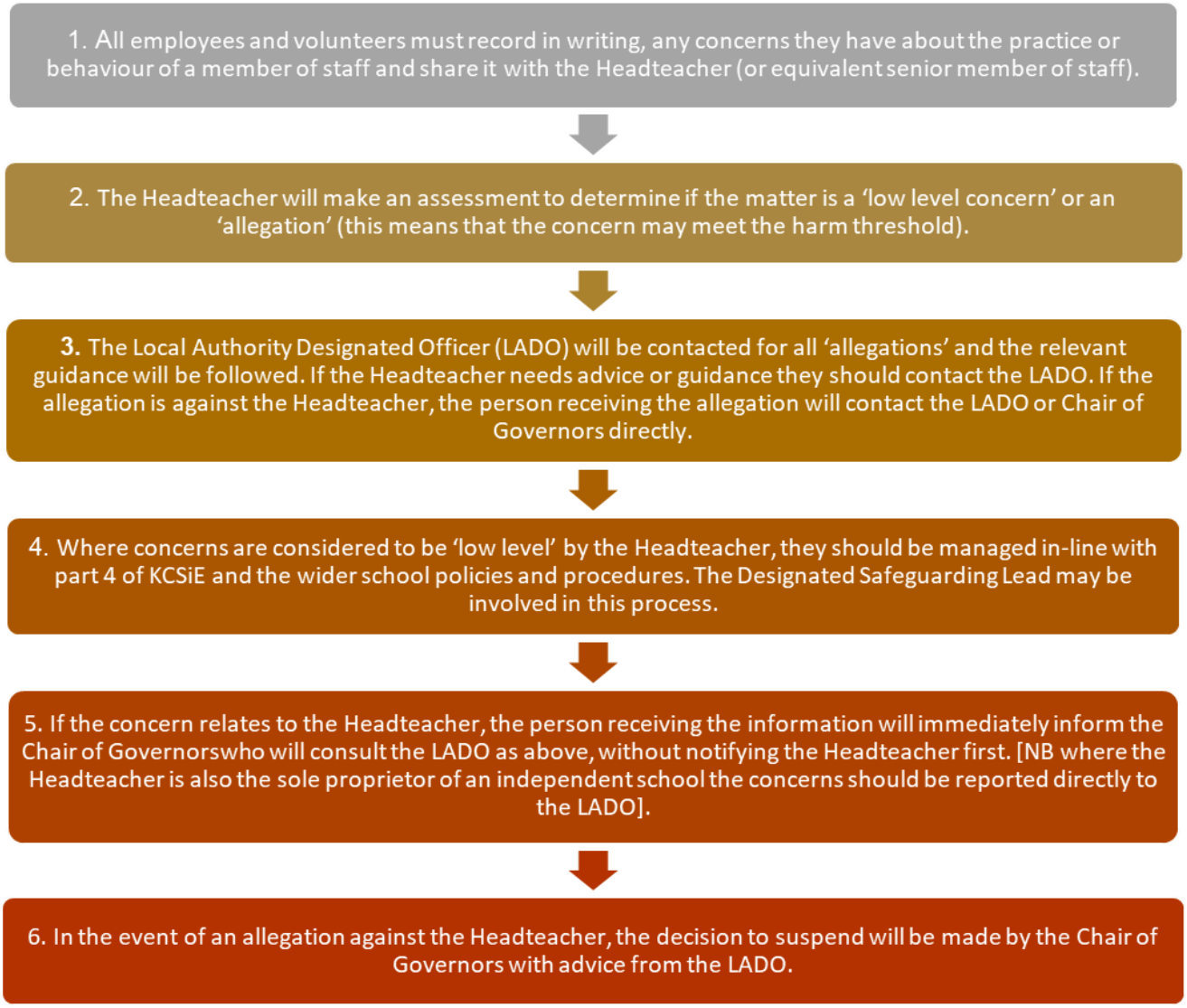
In line with KCSiE part 4 guidelines, the school has procedures for recording, managing and reviewing low-level concerns.

Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Headteacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration, and the Headteacher will seek the advice of the LADO and an HR Consultant in making this decision.

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

School will ensure that pupils are aware of how they can raise a concern should they be worried about a member of staffs conduct.

[4] Refer to "Guidance for Safe Working Practice"



Physical Intervention

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.
Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained.
We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that touch is appropriate in the context or working with children, and all staff have been given ‘Safe Practice’ guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundary.

Confidentiality, Sharing Information and Record keeping

The school recognises that consent is not a prerequisite for safeguarding information sharing. While practitioners should be open and transparent where appropriate, the Information Sharing Duty requires relevant information to be shared when necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. The absence of consent must not prevent lawful and proportionate information sharing.

Effective safeguarding relies on timely, appropriate and secure information sharing. All staff should be proactive in sharing information to identify, assess and respond to concerns about the safety and welfare of children at the earliest opportunity.

All staff must understand that:

- safeguarding concerns should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay.
- fears about sharing information must not stand in the way of protecting a child.
- the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information where this is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.
- children must never be promised confidentiality where a safeguarding concern exists.
- information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis and with those professionals who require it to safeguard the child.
- Consent is not required for safeguarding information sharing where there is a legal or statutory basis to share information in order to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. Practitioners should not delay sharing information if doing so could place a child at risk or prevent children and families receiving appropriate help and support.

The school will normally seek to discuss concerns with parents/carers before making a referral. However, this will not happen where doing so could:

- place a child at increased risk of harm;
- compromise a criminal investigation; or
- prejudice a safeguarding enquiry.

All safeguarding records will:

- be accurate, factual and contemporaneous;
- clearly record concerns, actions taken, decisions reached and outcomes;
- be stored securely and separately from the main pupil file;
- be accessed only by authorised personnel; and
- transfer securely to a new setting within statutory timescales when a child leaves the school.

Information sharing will always be:

- necessary and proportionate;
- relevant;
- adequate;
- accurate;
- timely; and
- secure.

At the point a child formally transfers to their new setting, their safeguarding file will be transferred securely in line with GDPR expectations as soon as possible, but within 5 working days.

Information Sharing Duty

The school recognises that effective safeguarding depends upon timely, accurate and proactive information sharing between practitioners and agencies. In accordance with the statutory Information Sharing Duty, staff should share relevant information with safeguarding partners and other appropriate agencies where this is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.

Staff should not assume that information can only be shared when a child is at risk of significant harm or subject to statutory intervention. Information may need to be shared at an earlier stage to support prevention, early intervention, assessment and decision-making. Where a practitioner holds information that may be relevant to safeguarding or promoting a child's welfare, they should ensure that it is shared appropriately, proportionately, securely and without unnecessary delay.

Concerns about consent or confidentiality must not prevent the sharing of information where doing so is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child. Practitioners should not seek consent where doing so would be inappropriate, unsafe, likely to cause delay, or undermine safeguarding activity. The absence of consent must not prevent lawful and proportionate safeguarding information sharing. Decisions to share, or not share, information should be clearly recorded, together with the rationale for those decisions

Photographing Children

St Bernard's will ensure that images of children used within publications, publicity and on the website has written parental consent prior to any images being taken and used. This consent will be obtained in line with school's annual data collection process.

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. We acknowledge, however, that some people abuse children through taking, using or circulating images.

Staff and Volunteers

- Parental consent will be sought and permissions noted via Arbor.
- Staff and volunteers must seek the authorisation of the Head Teacher prior to taking photographs/ videos of children and must only use school equipment unless given specific authorisation by the Head Teacher.
- The use of cameras on mobile phones or the downloading of images onto any internet site is forbidden
- Only the pupil's first name will be used with an image
- It will be ensured that pupils are appropriately dressed before images are taken
- Pupils are encouraged to tell us if they are worried or unsure about any photographs that are taken of them.

The Guidance for Safer working Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People provides detailed guidance on the taking of photographs and storage of images.

Parents or Members of the Public

We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the school production, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes.

However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this (e.g. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, causing an accident), we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.

We will not allow other people, including staff, to photograph or film pupils during a school activity without parental permission. This includes the use of cameras on mobile phones or any other device.

We will not allow images of pupils to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, including social networking sites, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.

The school cannot, however, be held accountable for the use of photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions where parental permission has been given.

Complaints and Compliments

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor

practice examples include unfairly singling out a pupil, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a pupil or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff e.g. the Headteacher and Governors. Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's Complaints, Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.

Additional information for parents

Contact arrangements and Parental responsibility

We recognise that a relationship breakdown can be very distressing for all involved, however, any contact arrangements must be agreed outside of school and school should not be put in a position where they are placed in the middle of contact disputes. We aim to make the school environment a calm and safe place for your children, as well as the whole school community, and would be unable to do this if we are placed at the centre of disputes. School is also unable to prevent anyone with parental responsibility (PR) from picking up a child from school unless there is a court order in place stating that the person with PR is not allowed to do so, although the school will attempt to seek permission from the primary carer before releasing the child.

Policy Links

This policy also links to our policies on:

• Behaviour • Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct • Whistleblowing • Anti-bullying • Health & Safety • Allegations against staff • Parental concerns • Attendance • Curriculum • PSHE • Teaching and Learning • Suspension and Exclusion • SEND • Mental Health and Wellbeing	• Administration of medicines • Relationships and Sex Education • Physical intervention • Online Safety, including staff use of mobile phones • Risk Assessment • Recruitment and Selection • Intimate Care • Data Protection/GDPR Guidance • Alternative Provision

Appendices

Categories of Abuse

Categories of Abuse:

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

Signs of Abuse in Children:

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

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

Risk Indicators

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

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

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

In an abusive relationship the child may:

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

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse

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

Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

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

Bruising

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

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

- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks on small children
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

Congenital Dermal Melanocytosis (formally known as Mongolian Blue Spot): Bruising in non-mobile children is rare and may indicate abuse or neglect. Birth marks, especially Congenital Dermal Melanocytosis, can mimic bruising. Congenital Dermal Melanocytosis can be identified (see below), however if in any doubt as to the cause of the bruise refer to local authority guidance and consultation.

- Areas of skin hyperpigmentation – flat, not raised, swollen or inflamed
- Not painful to touch
- Usually present at birth/ develop soon afterwards
- Will not change in shape or colour within a few days
- Normally uniform blue/ grey in colour across the mark
- Common in African, Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and Asian children
- While most occur at the lower back and buttocks, they can appear anywhere (e.g. back of shoulder or limb). Scalp/ face rarely affected
- Can be single/ multiple, vary in size, but mostly few centimetres diameter
- Gradually fade over many year

Bite Marks

Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child.
A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

Burns and Scalds

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

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation

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

Fractures

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

There are grounds for concern if:

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

Scars

A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

Recognising Emotional Abuse

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

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g. anxious, indiscriminate or not attachment
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others

Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about, and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family. Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child’s age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self-mutilation and suicide attempts

- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

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

Recognising Neglect

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

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

Educational Neglect

Educational neglect is a form of neglect that occurs when a parent or carer persistently fails to ensure that a child receives an appropriate education, or fails to take reasonable steps to address barriers preventing regular attendance, engagement and participation in education. Educational neglect may result in significant harm to a child's educational development, emotional wellbeing, social development, safety and future life chances. It is important to recognise that educational neglect is rarely an isolated issue and is often linked to wider concerns such as physical neglect, emotional neglect, domestic abuse, parental mental ill-health, substance misuse, exploitation, unmet special educational needs or a lack of parental capacity to prioritise the child's needs. Staff should consider the child's lived experience, cumulative harm and the impact of missed education when assessing concerns.

Possible Signs and Indicators of Educational Neglect

Indicators may include:

- Persistent, severe or recurring absence from school.
- Repeated unauthorised absences with limited or no parental engagement.

- Parents or carers failing to respond to attendance concerns, support plans or professional advice.
- Lack of engagement with interventions designed to improve attendance and educational outcomes.
- Failure to ensure a child attends alternative provision or receives suitable education when out of school.
- Poor punctuality resulting in significant loss of learning time.
- Frequent missed appointments with education or support services.
- A parent or carer repeatedly refusing access to the child for welfare checks, home visits or professional involvement.
- A lack of curiosity or concern from parents regarding the child's attendance, progress, attainment or wellbeing.
- Children presenting as tired, unprepared for school or lacking basic equipment on a regular basis.
- Children expressing that they are expected to remain at home without a clear or appropriate reason.
- Patterns of absence which result in the child becoming socially isolated, vulnerable or at increased safeguarding risk.
- Failure to engage with assessments relating to Emotional Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA/EBSA), special educational needs, medical needs or other identified barriers to attendance.
- Attendance concerns occurring alongside other indicators of neglect or safeguarding concerns.

No single indicator should be viewed in isolation. Schools should consider the frequency, duration, impact and cumulative effect of attendance concerns, exercise professional curiosity, and assess whether a child's educational needs are being consistently met. Where educational neglect is suspected, consideration should be given to the use of appropriate assessment tools and multi-agency processes to understand the child's circumstances and determine the level of support, intervention or safeguarding response required.

2. Anti-Bullying/Cyberbullying

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

If the bullying is particularly serious, or the anti-bullying procedures are seen to be ineffective, the Headteacher and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

The subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PHSE education.

3. Bullying, prejudice and racist incidents

Our policy on racist incidents is set out separately and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. We keep a record of racist incidents and provide them to Ofsted on request.

4. Radicalisation and Extremism

The Prevent Duty for England and Wales (2015) under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on education and other children's services to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Extremism is defined as 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised; adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous.
School is clear that exploitation of vulnerable children and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and follows the Department for Education guidance for schools and childcare providers on preventing children and young people from being drawn into terrorism[5].

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

School staff receive training to help identify early signs of radicalisation and extremism. Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are in detailed in the Appendix section.

Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014)[6].

The school governors, the Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include the use of school premises by external agencies, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

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[5] The Prevent duty
[6] Promoting Fundamental British Values

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the DSL. They should then follow normal safeguarding procedures e.g. a referral to Channel. If the matter is urgent, then the Police must be contacted by dialling 999. In non-urgent cases where police advice is sought then dial 101.

Indicators Of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:

   Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as:

   The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

   - Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs.
   - Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts.
   - Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
   - Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis – the student / pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
- Personal Crisis – the student / pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.

- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the student / pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- Unmet Aspirations – the student / pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration.
- Special Educational Need – students / pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters.
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature.
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour.
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

The Prevent duty ensures schools and colleges have 'due regard' to the need to prevent people from being draw into terrorism.

Channel is the voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to individuals that have been identified as being vulnerable to radicalisation. Prevent referrals may be passed to the multi-agency Channel panel to determine whether individuals require support.

The Prevent Duty can be accessed via this link. (School specific para's 57-76)
Summary of The Prevent Duty for Schools and Childcare Providers (June 2015)
The Prevent Duty, for Further Education Institutions
Guidance on Channel https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance
Further information can be obtained from the Home Office website.

5. Domestic Abuse (incl Operation Encompass)

The behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if—

- A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and

the behaviour is abusive.

The behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—

(a)physical or sexual abuse;
(b)violent or threatening behaviour;
(c)controlling or coercive behaviour;
(d)economic abuse;
(e)psychological, emotional or other abuse;

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

(“Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to—

(a)acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
(b)obtain goods or services.)

For the purposes of the domestic abuse Act 2021 A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).

The Domestic abuse Act 2021 introduces the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Domestic abuse represents one quarter of all violent crime. It is actual or threatened physical, emotional, psychological, financial (economic) or sexual abuse. It involves the use of power and control by one person over another. It occurs regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, and religion, mental or physical ability. Domestic abuse can also involve other types of abuse. We use the term domestic abuse to reflect that a number of abusive and controlling behaviours are involved beyond violence.

How does it affect children?

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. In some cases, children may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Children who witness domestic abuse are at risk of significant harm.

What are the signs to look out for?

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

Operation Encompass

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

Where Operation Encompass notifications are received, the school will consider the child's wishes, feelings and lived experience when determining support arrangements and recording safeguarding responses.

All Key adults have undertaken appropriate training Online Key Adult Training : Operation Encompass The Key adult in our school is: Sian Thomson and Julie Le Feurve

6. Exploitation (incl Child Sex Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation & County Lines)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. This power imbalance could be due to age, gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and /or access to economic or other resources. The abuse could be linked to an exchange for something the victim perceives that they need or want and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increase status) of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and adults or children (who themselves may be experiencing exploitation). The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It may involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

Victims can be exploited even when the activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different from boys, the indicators may not be the same and both boys and girls that are being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Any concerns that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited should be passed without delay to the DSL. We aware there is a clear link between regular school absence/truanting, CSE and CCE. Staff should consider a child to be at potential CSE/CCE risk in the case of regular school absence/truanting and make reasonable enquiries with the child and parents to assess this risk.

The DSL will use the Cheshire Contextual Safeguarding Assessment tool on all occasions when there is a concern that a child is being or is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited or where indicators have been observed that are consistent with a child who is being or who is at risk of being sexually or criminally exploited. These assessments will indicate to the DSL the potential level of risk and a referral to I-ART will be made for discussion at the Contextual Safeguarding Hub. If the DSL is in any doubt, they will contact the SCiE team.

School is aware that a child often is not able to recognise the coercive nature of the abuse and does not see themselves as a victim. As a consequence, the child may resent what they perceive as interference by staff. However, staff must act on their concerns as they would for any other type of abuse.

School includes the risks of sexual and criminal exploitation in the PHSE and RSE curriculum. Pupils will be informed of the grooming process and how to protect themselves from people who may potentially be intent on causing harm. They will be supported in terms of recognising and assessing risk in relation to CSE/CCE, including online, and knowing how and where to get help.

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

Signs include:

- going missing from home or school
- regular school absence/truanting
- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- sexually risky behaviour, 'swapping' sex
- repeat sexually transmitted infections
- in girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile
- online safety concerns such as youth produced sexual imagery or being coerced into sharing explicit images.
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- seen at known places of concern
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults

- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- contact with known perpetrators
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime
- police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

Child Criminal Exploitation can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

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

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

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex.

Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

For further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation: Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners.

For further information on County Lines: Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance

7. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM. If a member of staff, in the course of their work, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, the member of staff must report this to the Police.
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act"). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.
Section 5B of the 2003 Act1 introduces a mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. The duty came into force on 31 October 2015.

What is FGM?

It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

4 types of procedure:

Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris
Type 2 Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora
Type 3 Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia
Type 4 all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

Why is it carried out?

Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a girl's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community
- Fulfils a religious requirement

- Perpetuates a custom/tradition
- Helps girls be clean / hygienic
- Is cosmetically desirable
- Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier

Is FGM legal?

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act (2003). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. A mandatory reporting duty requires teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s, which are identified in the course of their professional work, to the police[7] .

The duty applies to all persons in our School who is employed or engaged to carry out 'teaching work' in the school, whether or not they have qualified teacher status. The duty applies to the individual who becomes aware of the case to make a report. It should not be transferred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead; however the DSL should be informed.
If a teacher is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her, or a teacher observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18, and they have no reason to believe the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth, the teacher should personally make a report to the police force in which the girl resides by calling 101. The report should be made by the close of the next working day.

School staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators of FGM identified in this section of the Appendix. Concerns about FGM outside of the mandatory reporting duty should be reported as per our school's child protection procedures. Staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupils about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period. There should also be consideration of potential risk to other girls in the family and practicing community. Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm the teacher should report the case immediately to the police, including dialling 999 if appropriate.

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

Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening are:

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

Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:

[7] FGM procedural information

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

The 'One Chance' rule
As with Forced Marriage (outlined below) there is the 'One Chance' rule. It is essential that settings /schools/colleges take action **without delay** and make a referral to I-ART.

8. Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities cannot) consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

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

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage which is common in several cultures. The families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

School staff should never attempt to intervene directly as a school or through a third party. Contact should be made with I-ART.

9. So-called Honour-based Abuse

So-called Honour based abuse (HBA) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code.

Honour based abuse might be committed against people who:

- become involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend from a different culture or religion.
- want to get out of an arranged marriage.
- want to get out of a forced marriage.
- wear clothes or take part in activities that might not be considered traditional within a particular culture.

It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual abuse. There is no, and cannot be, honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

10. One Chance Rule

All staff are aware of the 'One Chance' Rule' in relation to forced marriage, FGM and HBV. Staff recognise they may only have one chance' to speak to a pupil who is a potential victim and have just one chance to save a life.
School is aware that if the victim is not offered support following disclosure that the 'One Chance' opportunity may be lost. Therefore, all staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they become aware of potential forced marriage, FGM and HBV cases.

11. Mental Health

The school recognises that positive mental health and emotional wellbeing are fundamental to children's safety, learning and development.

All staff should be aware that mental health difficulties can be an indicator that a child has experienced, or is at risk of experiencing:

- abuse;
- neglect;
- exploitation;
- bullying;
- child-on-child abuse;
- trauma;
- family adversity;
- online harms.

Staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions. However, they are well placed to observe changes in children's behaviour, presentation, attendance, emotional wellbeing and relationships and should report concerns to the DSL in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

School will promote a whole-school approach to wellbeing through:

- positive relationships;
- early identification of concerns;
- emotional wellbeing support;
- pastoral intervention;
- safeguarding processes;
- attendance support;
- appropriate referrals to specialist services.

Where mental health concerns present a safeguarding risk, these will always be managed through safeguarding procedures.

12. Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are place in residential schools, children's homes or hospitals are not considered to be privately fostered.

Private fostering occurs in all cultures, including British culture and children may be privately fostered at any age.

School recognise that most privately fostered children remain safe and well but are aware that safeguarding concerns have been raised in some cases. Therefore, all staff are alert to possible safeguarding issues, including the possibility that the child has been trafficked into the country.

By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible. However, where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this will the DSL and the DSL will notify I-ART of the circumstances.

13. Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and neglect. Our school will ensure that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after/previously looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the Local Authority's virtual school head for children in care.
The designated teacher for looked after children works with the virtual school head to discuss how Pupil Premium Plus funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher will follow the statutory guidance 'Promoting the education of Looked After Children'.

14. Children Missing Education

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. The school will hold more than one emergency contact number for pupils and students where reasonably possible. A child going missing or absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual or criminal exploitation.

The DSL will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day in conjunction with 'Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities'[8].

Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

15. Attendance and Safeguarding

The school recognises that good attendance is a key protective factor in safeguarding children. Children who are absent from education, attend irregularly, or experience prolonged periods of absence can be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, poor mental health, online harm, radicalisation, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), and other safeguarding concerns.

Attendance will not be viewed solely as an educational issue. Staff will consider whether attendance concerns may indicate an unmet safeguarding need and will work with children, families and partner agencies to identify and address underlying concerns.

The school recognises that attendance information is safeguarding information and should be shared with relevant professionals where it may assist in identifying risk, understanding a child's lived experience or promoting their welfare. Attendance concerns should be considered alongside behaviour, exclusion, safeguarding, health and family information to ensure a holistic assessment of need and risk.

The school will be particularly alert to:

- persistent absence;
- severe absence;
- repeated unauthorised absence;
- patterns of attendance that cause concern;
- frequent lateness;
- part-time timetables;
- children who regularly miss particular lessons or parts of the school day;
- sudden changes in attendance patterns; and
- children who are absent and whose whereabouts are unknown.

[8] CME Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities

Where attendance concerns are identified, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider whether:

- additional pastoral support is required;
- Family Help intervention may be beneficial;
- there are emerging safeguarding concerns;
- a referral to the Integrated Access and Referral Team (iART) is required; or
- a child may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Attendance concerns will be considered alongside wider safeguarding information, including behaviour, emotional wellbeing, family circumstances, exploitation risks, online activity and the child's lived experience. Professional curiosity will be exercised when assessing the reasons for absence or poor attendance.

Alternative Provision

Prior to any placement in alternative provision, the school will undertake appropriate safeguarding checks and obtain assurance regarding safeguarding policies, safer recruitment arrangements, staff training, attendance monitoring, information-sharing arrangements and procedures for managing safeguarding concerns. Regular reviews of attendance, welfare and progress will be undertaken throughout the placement.

Where pupils attend alternative provision, the school will obtain written safeguarding assurances, monitor attendance and welfare, and regularly review placements.

Assessment, Professional Curiosity and Welfare Contact

The school recognises that attendance concerns can be an indicator of unmet need, educational neglect, emotional based school non-attendance (EBSNA/EBSA), abuse, neglect or other safeguarding risks. Attendance difficulties should not be viewed in isolation and should be considered within the context of the child's lived experience, vulnerabilities, wishes and feelings, family circumstances and any wider safeguarding information.

Where attendance concerns arise, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), attendance lead and relevant professionals should consider the use of appropriate evidence-based assessment tools and frameworks to support analysis and planning. This may include Emotional Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA/EBSA) assessment tools, education neglect assessments, neglect screening tools and other local authority or multi-agency assessment processes where appropriate. The purpose of these assessments is to better understand barriers to attendance, identify safeguarding concerns at an early stage and ensure children receive the right support at the right time.

Where there are repeated unauthorised absences, unexplained absences, welfare concerns or a child is not being seen regularly by professionals, consideration should be given to undertaking a home visit. The decision to undertake, or not undertake, a home visit should be clearly recorded,

including the rationale, any known risks, alternative actions taken and the views of the child and family where appropriate.

Whilst there is no specific statutory requirement for schools or agencies to see a child weekly, regular sight of a child is recognised as good safeguarding practice. Where a child is subject to significant attendance concerns, prolonged absence, a safeguarding plan, Family Help involvement or other identified vulnerabilities, the school should seek to ensure that the child is seen by school staff or another appropriate professional at least weekly wherever possible. This helps schools discharge their safeguarding responsibilities and enables professionals to understand the child's presentation, wellbeing and lived experience.

Where a parent or carer prevents professionals from seeing a child, refuses home visits, repeatedly fails to engage, or otherwise obstructs welfare checks, this should not be accepted at face value. Staff should exercise professional curiosity and carefully consider the potential safeguarding implications. The concerns, actions taken and outcomes should be clearly recorded. The DSL should consider whether escalation is required through Family Help, Children's Social Care, the Integrated Access and Referral Team (iART), police welfare checks or other relevant safeguarding processes, taking account of the child's level of vulnerability and any known risks.

Decisions regarding attendance, welfare contact, home visits and escalation will always be informed by the child's wishes and feelings, safeguarding information, professional judgement and the principle that the child's welfare is paramount.

16. Behaviour, Suspension and Exclusion

The school recognises that behaviour is a form of communication and that behavioural concerns may be an indication of unmet need, trauma, abuse, neglect, exploitation, mental health needs, special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), or other safeguarding concerns.

Decisions relating to suspension, permanent exclusion, managed moves, off-site direction and alternative provision will consider safeguarding, welfare and educational needs alongside behaviour.

Before making a decision to suspend or permanently exclude a child, the school will consider:

- whether the behaviour is a response to unmet safeguarding needs;
- any known vulnerabilities, safeguarding concerns or adverse childhood experiences;
- the impact of SEND, disabilities or unmet additional needs;
- the views, wishes and feelings of the child;
- whether appropriate support and reasonable adjustments have been provided;
- whether external agency involvement or Family Help support is required.

The school recognises that children who are suspended or permanently excluded can become increasingly vulnerable to exploitation, criminal activity, poor mental health outcomes, reduced educational achievement and becoming missing from education.

Where a child is suspended, the school will ensure appropriate safeguarding consideration, welfare monitoring and information sharing with relevant agencies. Where safeguarding concerns are identified, these will be shared with receiving education providers, alternative provision settings and other relevant professionals.

The school will not use informal exclusions, off-rolling or any practice designed to remove a child from education without following statutory procedures.

Separation of Pupils for Safeguarding Purposes

The school recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, the temporary separation of a pupil from other pupils may be necessary for safeguarding reasons. Separation should only be considered as a short-term protective measure where there are concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of any pupil and whilst a multi-agency risk assessment is undertaken and safeguarding measures are agreed and implemented.

Circumstances where temporary separation may be considered could include, but are not limited to:

- allegations of abuse, harmful sexual behaviour or serious violence;
- police investigations or criminal proceedings;
- bail conditions or other legal restrictions;
- child-on-child abuse concerns;
- situations where there is an identified risk to the safety or welfare of one or more pupils;
- safeguarding concerns linked to exploitation, intimidation, coercion or victimisation.

Any decision to separate a pupil must be proportionate, based on an assessment of risk and undertaken with the welfare of all children in mind, including the child who is being separated. Separation must not be used as a disciplinary sanction, informal exclusion or long-term arrangement.

The school will work collaboratively with relevant partners, which may include parents/carers, Children's Social Care, Police, Youth Justice Services, Safeguarding Children in Education (SCiE), health professionals and other involved agencies, to agree appropriate arrangements and risk management measures. The child's wishes and feelings, alongside the rights, welfare and safety of all pupils involved, will be considered throughout decision-making.

Separation arrangements will be reviewed regularly and will remain in place only for the minimum time necessary to complete a multi-agency risk assessment and implement an agreed safety plan. Once appropriate safeguards are established, arrangements will be reviewed with the aim of supporting safe participation in education wherever possible.

Where separation cannot be safely achieved within the school environment, consideration may be given to a temporary arrangement requiring a pupil not to attend the school site. Such arrangements will only be considered where there are no reasonable or practicable alternatives available to maintain separation and safety on site. This must not be used as a disciplinary measure, informal exclusion or substitute for formal suspension procedures.

Any decision of this nature must be supported by a multi-agency assessment of risk and agreed, where appropriate, with relevant professionals including Safeguarding Children in Education (SCiE), Children's Social Care, Police, Youth Justice Services, health professionals and parents/carers. The rationale, decision-making process, actions taken and review arrangements must be clearly recorded. Any period away from the school site will be kept to the shortest possible duration and will cease as soon as an appropriate multi-agency risk assessment, safety plan and arrangements for safe education have been established.

Schools must be able to evidence why separation on site could not be achieved safely and what alternative measures were considered before any temporary arrangement for a pupil not to attend the school site was agreed.

17. Elective Home Education (EHE)

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The school recognises that parents have the right to educate their children at home. However, elective home education can, in some circumstances, limit professional oversight of a child's wellbeing and increase the risk that safeguarding concerns remain unidentified.

Elective Home Education is not, in itself, a safeguarding concern. However, school staff should be alert to situations where a request for home education may be linked to:

- avoidance of safeguarding processes;
- concerns regarding attendance;
- exclusion or off-rolling;
- bullying or peer-on-peer abuse;
- mental health concerns;
- exploitation;
- domestic abuse;
- neglect; or
- other vulnerabilities impacting on the child's welfare.

Where a parent expresses an intention to educate their child at home, the school will:

- discuss the reasons for the request with parents/carers;
- consider any existing safeguarding concerns;
- seek the views, wishes and feelings of the child where appropriate;
- follow local authority procedures; and
- notify the Local Authority Elective Home Education Team as required by submitting a pupil tracking notification, along with a copy of the parent letter requesting de-registration in order to electively home educate.

Where a child is subject to:

- a Child Protection Plan;

- a Child in Need Plan;
- Family Help intervention; or
- other significant safeguarding concerns,

the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure relevant information is shared with appropriate professionals in accordance with safeguarding and information-sharing procedures.

Local Authority Responsibilities

The Local Authority has a duty to make arrangements to identify children who are not receiving a suitable education and to take appropriate action where concerns arise. The Local Authority may engage with families who elect to home educate in order to establish that a suitable education is being provided and to fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities.

The school will cooperate fully with the Local Authority and other agencies where safeguarding concerns are identified in relation to elective home education.

Key Safeguarding Principle

The school will always consider whether a request for elective home education is in the child's best interests and whether any safeguarding, welfare or vulnerability factors require further assessment, support or intervention before a child is removed from roll.

18. Child on Child Abuse (including Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment and HSB)

The school recognises that children can abuse other children and that child-on-child abuse can occur both inside and outside of school and online. All concerns will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately. Such behaviour will never be dismissed as banter, horseplay, growing up, part of adolescence or harmless experimentation.

Child-on-child abuse may cause significant harm and can have a lasting impact on a child's physical health, emotional wellbeing, development, safety and educational outcomes.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- sexual harassment;
- sexual violence;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- abuse within intimate personal relationships;
- coercive and controlling behaviour;
- image-based abuse;
- sharing of nude or semi-nude images and videos;
- AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfake content;
- misogyny and misandry;
- initiation, hazing and group-based abuse;

- physical abuse and violence;
- exploitation;
- online abuse.

The school recognises that girls are disproportionately affected by certain forms of abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, and that children may experience abuse based on sex, gender, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation or other protected characteristics.

The school adopts a preventative approach through the curriculum, positive relationships, behaviour expectations, online safety education and a whole-school culture of respect.

The term child-on-child abuse can refer to all of these definitions and a child may experience one or multiple facets of abuse at any one time. Therefore, our response will cut across these definitions and capture the complex web of their experiences.

There are also different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with child-on-child abuse (i.e. girls being sexually touched/assaulted, or boys being subjected to initiation/hazing type violence).

School aims to reduce the likelihood of child-on-child abuse through:

- the established ethos of respect, friendship, courtesy and kindness.
- high expectations of behaviour.
- clear consequences for unacceptable behaviour.
- providing a developmentally appropriate PSHE curriculum which develops pupils' understanding of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour, consent and keeping themselves safe.
- systems for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, valued and believed.
- robust risk assessments and providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils and those identified as being at risk.

Research indicates that young people rarely disclose child-on-child abuse and that if they do, it is likely to be to their friends. Therefore, School will also educate pupils in how to support their friends if they are concerned about them, that they should talk to a trusted adult in the school and what services they can contact for further advice.

Any concerns, disclosures or allegations of child-on-child abuse in any form should be referred to the DSL using the school's child protection procedures as set out in this policy. Where a concern regarding child-on-child abuse has been disclosed to the DSL(s), advice and guidance will be sought from the SCiE team and appropriate referrals made, and where it is clear a crime has been committed or there is a risk of crime being committed, the Police will be contacted.

Working with external agencies, the school will respond to the unacceptable behaviour. If a pupil's behaviour negatively impacts on the safety and welfare of other pupils, then safeguards will be put in

place to promote the well-being of the pupils affected and the victim and perpetrator will be provided with support.

Weapons, Knives and Serious Violence

The school recognises that carrying, possessing or using weapons poses a significant safeguarding risk. Any incident involving a weapon will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with safeguarding, behaviour and police procedures.
The DSL will ensure:

- appropriate recording of incidents;
- safeguarding assessment of all children involved;
- consideration of exploitation, serious violence and contextual safeguarding risks;
- appropriate referral to external agencies where necessary;
- support for victims and those presenting risk.

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviour such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, fetishism, bestiality and sexual abuse against adults, peers or children.

Staff should be vigilant to:

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

Developmental Sexual Activity

Encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural

relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and of the seeking of consent.

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour

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

Abusive sexual activity included any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base. In order to more fully determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration.

The presence of exploitation in terms of:

Equality – consider differentials of physical, cognitive and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies
Consent – agreement including all the following:

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

Coercion – the young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide. Further information can be accessed on the SCP website - Chester West and Chester Safeguarding Children Partnership - Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Violence Against Women and Girls

The school recognises the national focus on preventing violence against women and girls. Through safeguarding, behaviour, RSE and PSHE curricula, pupils will be supported to understand:

- healthy relationships;
- consent;
- misogyny;

- sexual harassment;
- online abuse;
- respectful behaviour;
- gender-based violence.

19. Online Safety, filtering and monitoring

Online safety is an essential part of safeguarding. The school recognises that children are increasingly exposed to risks associated with internet use, social media, online gaming, messaging platforms and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI) and deepfake content.

Reports involving AI-generated images, deepfake imagery, nudification applications or manipulated content will be treated as safeguarding incidents and managed in accordance with child protection, online safety and child-on-child abuse procedures. Staff will not dismiss such incidents on the basis that images are artificially created.

The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to protect children from harmful online content while supporting teaching, learning and safeguarding responsibilities.

The school will:

- maintain effective filtering and monitoring arrangements in line with DfE standards;
- regularly review the effectiveness of these systems, including safeguarding risks associated with emerging technologies;
- ensure identified concerns are acted upon promptly;
- maintain clear operational responsibility for filtering and monitoring systems; and
- provide regular online safety training and updates for staff.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- oversee safeguarding responses to filtering and monitoring alerts;
- review trends and emerging online risks;
- maintain appropriate safeguarding records;
- contribute to system reviews; and
- provide advice and guidance to staff where online safeguarding concerns arise.

Children will be taught about:

- online relationships and consent;
- respectful online behaviour;
- cyberbullying;
- misinformation and disinformation;
- artificial intelligence and deepfake and manipulated content;
- privacy and personal data protection;
- reporting concerns; and

- safe and responsible use of technology.

All concerns identified through filtering, monitoring or online activity will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and, where appropriate, in partnership with other agencies.

The Governing Body will receive and review an annual report on the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems. This review will assess the effectiveness of technical controls, safeguarding responses, emerging online risks, AI-related harms and staff awareness. Findings and actions will be recorded and monitored through governance processes.

School has an online safety policy which explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and how we respond to online safety incidents (See flowchart)

ONLINE SAFETY CONCERN – RESPONSE FLOWCHART

Keeping Children Safe

1 IDENTIFY

ONLINE SAFETY CONCERN RAISED

Any concern about something a child or adult has seen, experienced or been involved in online.

WHO IS THE CONCERN ABOUT?

- A CHILD
- A MEMBER OF STAFF
- THE HEADTEACHER
- ANY CONCERN ABOUT STAFF CONDUCT ONLINE

2 REFER

- Refer to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
- Refer to the **Headteacher**
- Refer to the **Chair of Governors**
- **CONSULT LADO** before taking any further action

3 ASSESS

ESTABLISH THE NATURE OF THE INCIDENT

- Child as Victim
- Child as Instigator
- Staff as Victim
- Staff as Instigator

ILLEGAL ACTIVITY OR SAFEGUARDING RISK?

YES

IMMEDIATE SAFEGUARDING ACTIONS

- Preserve evidence (screenshots, logs etc.)
- Secure and/or disconnect devices if appropriate
- Do not delete or alter anything
- Notify the DSL immediately

NO

SCHOOL RESPONSE

- Provide advice, support or counselling as appropriate
- Manage through school procedures
- Complete a risk assessment
- Record actions taken

4 DECIDE & ACT

DSL TO CONSIDER

- Child Protection Referral (where appropriate)
- External Agency Involvement (e.g. Police, Children's Services, CEOP)
- Police Referral (where appropriate)

5 FOLLOW PROCEDURES

FOLLOW RELEVANT PROCEDURES

- Child Protection Procedures
- School Discipline Procedures
- LADO Procedures (for staff concerns)
- Parental Involvement (where appropriate)

6 REVIEW & CLOSE

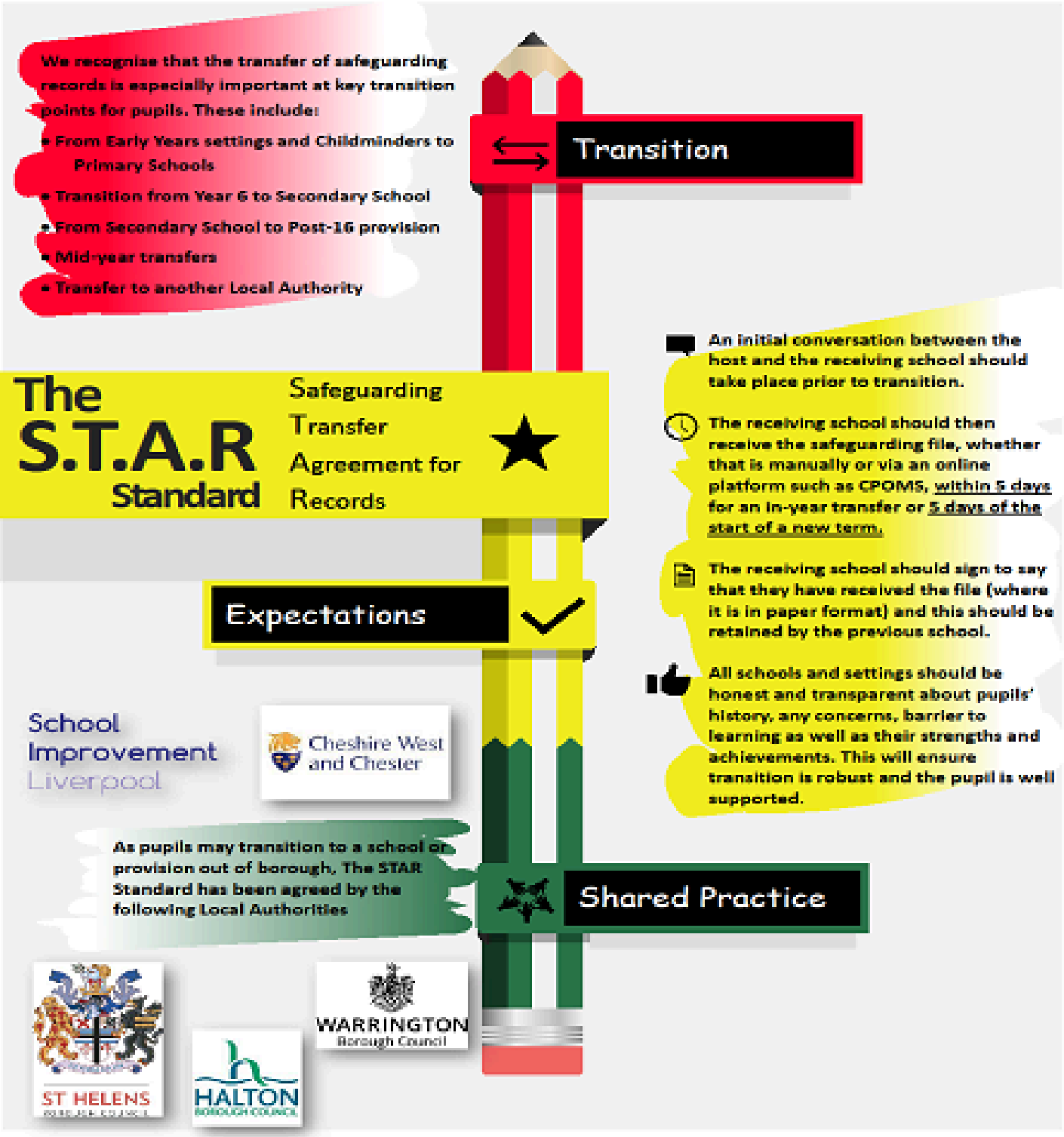
RECORD, REVIEW AND CLOSE

- Record all actions and decisions
- Provide ongoing support to those affected
- Review any lessons learned
- Close case when all actions are complete

All online safety concerns must be recorded in accordance with school safeguarding procedures.

DSL:	Deputy DSL:	LADO:	Document Control:
Name: _____	Name: _____	Tel: _____	Version: 1.0
Tel: _____	Tel: _____	Email: _____	Review Date: May 2026
Email: _____	Email: _____	(Consult before taking further action)	

26. Transfer of Records



27. Schools with a Nursery and Wrap around Care

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Nursery and Wraparound Care Safeguarding Statutory Framework

Where the school provides Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision, nursery education, pre-school provision, breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, wraparound childcare or holiday provision, safeguarding arrangements will be implemented in accordance with:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children**
- **The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2
- **Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 Guidance**. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006
- **Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings (Ofsted)**. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills

The school recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and that younger children are particularly vulnerable because of their age, dependency and emerging communication skills.

Safeguarding in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The school will ensure that all practitioners working within nursery, EYFS and wraparound provision understand and comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the **Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage**.

We will provide a safe, stimulating and nurturing environment in which children can learn and develop. Safeguarding arrangements for EYFS children form part of the school's wider safeguarding and child protection procedures but recognise the additional vulnerabilities of younger children.

The school will ensure:

- all children are protected from harm and abuse.
- children's welfare is promoted at all times.
- safeguarding concerns are identified and acted upon promptly.
- children are supervised appropriately and remain safe.
- staff understand local safeguarding procedures.
- staff understand their responsibilities under the EYFS framework.
- effective information sharing and multi-agency working arrangements are in place.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will take lead responsibility for safeguarding within EYFS, nursery and wraparound care provision.

In accordance with EYFS requirements, all practitioners will know:

- who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are.
- how to report safeguarding concerns.
- how to access safeguarding policies and procedures.
- what action to take if concerned about a child's welfare.

Staff Training and Induction

The school will ensure that all practitioners receive safeguarding training that enables them to:

- recognise signs of abuse and neglect.
- understand safer working practices.
- identify concerns relating to exploitation and online safety.
- understand local referral procedures.
- respond appropriately to disclosures.
- understand the safeguarding requirements of the EYFS framework.

All staff will receive safeguarding updates regularly and at least annually.

New staff, students and volunteers will receive safeguarding induction before having unsupervised access to children.

Safer Recruitment and Suitability

The school will ensure that all staff, volunteers, students and other adults working within nursery and wraparound provision are suitable to work with children.

The school will:

- follow safer recruitment procedures.
- undertake appropriate DBS and barred list checks.
- maintain an accurate Single Central Record.
- comply with childcare disqualification requirements where applicable.
- notify relevant agencies where concerns about suitability arise.
-

Further information can be found in:
Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006
Guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006

Health, First Aid and Medication

The school will comply with all EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements relating to health, accidents and medical needs.

The school will ensure:

- at least one person holding a current Paediatric First Aid qualification is available at all times when EYFS children are present, as required by the EYFS framework.
- medicines are stored and administered safely.
- accidents, injuries and first aid treatment are recorded.
- parents/carers are informed appropriately of significant injuries, accidents or medical incidents.

Mobile Phones, Cameras and Electronic Devices

In accordance with EYFS safeguarding requirements, the school will implement clear policies regarding the use of mobile phones, cameras and other devices.

The school will ensure that:

- personal mobile phones are not used in areas accessed by EYFS children except in exceptional circumstances authorised by senior leaders.
- photographs are only taken using approved school equipment.
- images are stored securely.
- children's images are used only in accordance with parental consent and data protection requirements.

Wraparound Childcare and Extended Provision

Where the school provides breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, holiday provision or other wraparound childcare, these services will operate under the same safeguarding expectations and procedures as the school day.

All wraparound provision will:

- follow this safeguarding policy.
- have access to the DSL and safeguarding procedures.
- maintain appropriate staffing ratios.
- ensure staff are appropriately trained.
- share safeguarding information with school leaders where required.
- maintain robust collection, handover and emergency contact procedures.

Any safeguarding concern identified during wraparound provision will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Multi-Agency Working and Family Help

Where concerns are identified, the school will work in partnership with families and relevant agencies to safeguard children and promote positive outcomes.

This may include:

- Family Help Services.
- Children's Social Care.
- Health Visitors.
- School Nursing Services.
- Speech and Language Services.
- Early Years Inclusion Teams.
- Educational Psychology Services.
- Police and safeguarding partners.

Information sharing will be undertaken in accordance with statutory guidance and information-sharing duties. Where necessary to safeguard or promote a child's welfare, information will be shared lawfully, proportionately and without unnecessary delay. Consent is not required where safeguarding duties provide a lawful basis for sharing.

Notification of Significant Events

The Headteacher and DSL will ensure that any significant safeguarding concern, allegation or serious incident relating to EYFS provision is managed in accordance with statutory guidance and referred to relevant agencies where required.

Further information can be found within the:
Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and **Keeping Children Safe in Education**