



# OLD BUCKENHAM HALL

*A leading co-educational preparatory school for children aged 2-13 years*

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

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Lent 2026

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<b>Suffolk Police Main Switchboard</b>	Telephone Number: 01473 613500
<b>Sgt 3482 Andy Hill</b>	Telephone Number:101 (Norfolk/Suffolk)
<b>Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership</b>	<a href="http://www.suffolksp.org.uk">www.suffolksp.org.uk</a>
<b>FGM reporting - non-emergency police contact number</b>	101
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<b>Childline</b>	Telephone: 0800 1111
<b>Children’s Commissioner Help at Hand Service</b>	Telephone: 0800 528 0731  Email: <a href="mailto:help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk">help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk</a>

<p><b>Reporting serious wrongdoing to the Charity Commission</b></p>	<p>For further guidance see:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-serious-wrongdoing-at-a-charity-as-a-worker-or-volunteer">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-serious-wrongdoing-at-a-charity-as-a-worker-or-volunteer</a>                      Email:  <a href="mailto:whistleblowing@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk">whistleblowing@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Report Abuse in Education helpline</b></p>	<p>A dedicated helpline for children and young people who have experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance, including for non-recent abuse.                      0800 136 663 or email <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Teaching Regulation Agency</b></p>	<p>Telephone: 0207 5935393                      Email: <a href="mailto:TRA.Caseworker@education.gov.uk">TRA.Caseworker@education.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>OFSTED Safeguarding Children</b></p>	<p>Telephone: 0300 123 4666                      (Monday-Friday 8am-5pm)                      Email <a href="mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk">enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk</a></p>
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**CONTENTS**

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	7
<b>1.1 AIMS</b> .....	7
<b>1.2 CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD</b> .....	7
<b>1.3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK</b> .....	7
<b>1.4 DEFINITIONS</b> .....	8
<b>1.5 EQUALITY ACT 2010</b> .....	9
<b>1.6 INFORMATION SHARING</b> .....	10
<b>1.7 MANAGEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING</b> .....	10
<b>2. SCOPE AND APPLICATION</b> .....	11
<b>3. 1 PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD</b> .....	11
<b>3.1.1 EARLY HELP</b> .....	12
<b>3.1.2 IF A CHILD IS IN DANGER OR AT RISK OF HARM</b> .....	13
<b>3.1.3 IF A CHILD MAKES A DISCLOSURE</b> .....	14
<b>3.1.4 RECORDING A CONCERN/DISCLOSURE</b> .....	14
<b>3.1.5 THE CHILD’S VOICE</b> .....	15
<b>3.1.6 CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING</b> .....	15
<b>3.1.7 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD</b> .....	15
<b>3.1.8 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF A CHILD IS SEEN AS AT RISK OF RADICALISATION</b> .....	15
<b>3.1.9 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY DISCOVER AN ACT OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION ("FGM")</b> .....	16
<b>3.1.10 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS THAT CHILDREN ARE AT RISK FROM OR INVOLVED WITH SERIOUS VIOLENT CRIME</b> .....	16
<b>3.1.11 HOW STAFF SHOULD RESPOND TO AN INCIDENT OF NUDES AND SEMI-NUDES BEING SHARED BY PUPILS</b> .....	16
<b>3.1.12 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF A CHILD IS ABSENT FROM EDUCATION</b> .....	18
<b>3.1.13 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF A CHILD NEEDS A SOCIAL WORKER (CHILDREN IN NEED AND CHILD PROTECTION PLANS)</b> .....	19
<b>3.1.14 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF A CHILD REQUIRES MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT</b> .....	19
<b>3.2.1 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT ANOTHER STAFF MEMBER</b> .....	19
<b>3.2.2 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES IN THE SCHOOL</b> .....	19
<b>3.3 SAFER RECRUITMENT</b> .....	20
<b>3.4 TRAINING</b> .....	20

<b>3.4.1 ALL STAFF</b> .....	20
<b>3.4.2 DSL(s)</b> .....	22
<b>3.5 OVERSIGHT OF SAFEGUARDING, INCLUDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b> .....	22
<b>3.6 THE SCHOOL’S ARRANGEMENTS TO FULFIL OTHER SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES</b> .....	23
<b>3.6.1 TEACHING CHILDREN HOW TO KEEP SAFE</b> .....	23
<b>3.6.2 FILTERING AND MONITORING</b> .....	23
<b>3.6.3 RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION AND/OR RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (“RSE”)</b> .....	24
<b>3.6.4 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN</b> .....	25
<b>3.6.5 ARRANGEMENTS FOR VISITING SPEAKERS</b> .....	25
<b>3.6.6 ARRANGEMENTS FOR USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES FOR NON-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES</b> .....	25
<b>3.6.7 OPERATION ENCOMPASS</b> .....	26
<b>3.6.8 USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND CAMERAS</b> .....	26
<b>3.7 EARLY YEARS PROVISION SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS</b> .....	27
<b>3.7.1 DISQUALIFICATION FROM WORKING IN CHILDCARE</b> .....	27
<b>3.7.2 DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR THE EYFS</b> .....	27
<b>3.7.3 DUTY TO NOTIFY OFSTED</b> .....	27
<b>4. POLICY OWNER</b> .....	28
<b>5. RELATED POLICIES AND GUIDANCE</b> .....	28
<b>APPENDIX 1 –SIGNS AND TYPES OF ABUSE</b> .....	30
<b>APPENDIX 2 DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE</b> .....	43
<b>APPENDIX 3: ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND LOW LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY</b> .....	47
<b>APPENDIX 4: PASTORAL SUPPORT AND EARLY HELP</b> .....	56

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 AIMS

The aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- timely action is taken to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- staff understand their statutory responsibilities and the procedures in place to enable them to fulfil them
- staff are trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns

### 1.2 CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

The School has a duty to consider at all times the best interests of the pupil and take action to enable all pupils to achieve the best outcomes. The School adopts a 'whole school' approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the School, and ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.

Parents are encouraged to raise any concerns directly with the School, if necessary, using this safeguarding policy for concerns about the safety and/or welfare of children. Parents may contact the ISI directly if they wish.

The School has arrangements for listening to children and providing early help. Details of these arrangements can be found in Appendix 4.

### 1.3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2025) ("KCSIE")
  - *KCSIE incorporates the additional statutory guidance Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006* (September 2018)
  - *KCSIE also provides links to various toolkits and additional advice and support*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (December 2023) ("WT")
  - *WT refers to the non-statutory advice: Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers* (May 2024)
- *Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales December 2023*. *Prevent* is supplemented by a briefing note:
  - *How social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq* (July 2015)
- *Relationships Education, Relationships, and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (July 2025).
- *Behaviour in schools* (February 2024)
- *Working together to improve school attendance: statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities* (August 2024)
- *Children Missing Education* (August 2024)
- *Digital and technology standards in schools and colleges* (March 2025)

- *After school clubs, community activities, and tuition (safeguarding guidance for providers) (September 2023)*
- *The Charity Commission guidance Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees (June 2022)]*
- *Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for group and school-based providers (July 2025)*
- *The National Minimum Standards for boarding schools (September 2022)]*

This policy also takes into account the procedures and practice of Suffolk Local Authority as part of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements set up by the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership's three safeguarding partners: Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Police and the NHS Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board.

#### **1.4 DEFINITIONS**

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). 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 can be:

- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- sexual abuse; and/or
- neglect.

Staff are referred to Appendix 1 of this policy for further detail of the types of abuse and possible signs of abuse, as well as further information regarding specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal and/or sexual exploitation.

**Safeguarding** is the protection of people from harm.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in WTSC (2023) and KCSIE 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

**Child Protection** is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined as activity that is undertaken to protect children who are suspected of suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

**Children's Social Care** includes, depending on the context, the team based in the local authority where the School is located and, where appropriate, the team based in the local authority where the child is resident.

**DSL** means the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead. References to the DSL include the Deputy DSLs (DDSL) where the DSL is unavailable.

**Designated Officer** means designated officer at the local authority (often referred to as the **LADO**). The designated officer(s) has overall responsibility for oversight of the procedures for dealing with allegations, for resolving any inter-agency issues, and for liaison with the three safeguarding partners

References to **the Governing Body** are references to the proprietor of the School.

**Local Safeguarding Partners** means the three safeguarding partners (local authority, Integrated Care Systems' (ICSs) and the chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area) who make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

References to **harmful sexual behaviour** in this policy refer to problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage, may be harmful towards self or others, or abusive towards another child, young person or adult.

References to the **Head Master** mean the Head Master of Rugby School, references to the Head mean the Headmaster of Old Buckenham Hall School.

Reference to **staff** includes all those who work for or on behalf of the School, regardless of their employment status, including contractors, supply staff, volunteers and Governors unless otherwise indicated.

**Senior Management Team at Old Buckenham Hall School (SMT):** Head, Interim Director of Finance and Operations, Deputy Head Pastoral and DDSL, Deputy Head Academic, Head of Pre Prep and EYFS, Director of Senior School Admissions, Head of Boarding ), ESafety Lead and DDSL, and DSL

References to **working days** mean Monday to Friday, even though, during term time, lessons and activities occur at weekends. The dates of terms are published on the School's website. If referrals to an external agency are required outside term time, references to working days are to the days on which the relevant external agency is working

## 1.5 EQUALITY ACT 2010

The School understands and recognises its obligations under the Equality Act and that the School must not discriminate against pupils because of a protected characteristic including sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, or sexual orientation. In the context of safeguarding, the School will consider how to support pupils with regard to particular

protected characteristics in order to meet their specific needs. The School will also consider their duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

The School also complies with its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, including putting special provision in place to support dialogue with children who may not be able to convey their wishes and feelings as they may want to. This might include, for example, those who have communication difficulties and those who do not speak English or for whom English is not their first language.

## **1.6 INFORMATION SHARING**

The guidance, *Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers* (May 2024) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. The governing body recognises the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies, including ensuring arrangements for sharing information within the School and with local authority children's social care, the safeguarding partners and other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required. Fears regarding sharing information under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation ("UK GDPR") must not be allowed to stand in the way of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and neither the DPA 2018 or the UK GDPR prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. If in doubt about what information can and should be shared, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead ("DSL").

The governing body will ensure that staff understand the relevant data protection principles which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, including:

- being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal and should be treated as 'special category personal data'
- understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows the sharing of special category personal data, including without consent where there is good reason to do so. For example, information may be shared without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected to gain consent; and, gaining consent would place a child at risk
- not providing pupils' personal data where the serious harm test is met.

## **1.7 MANAGEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING**

The School's DSL is a member of the leadership team. The DSL's role covers the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage. In the absence of the DSL, reports should be made to the DDSL. This ensures there is the required cover for the role at all times. The DSL and DDSL's contact details can be found on the Key Contacts page at the start of this policy.

The DSL's role is to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters in the School. The DSL's responsibility is to maintain an overview of safeguarding within the School, to open channels of communication with local statutory agencies, refer incidents to third parties (including the local authority children's services, the DBS, Channel and the police) where appropriate, to support staff in carrying out their safeguarding duties and to monitor the effectiveness of the School's policies and procedures in practice. The DSL will also take lead responsibility for online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes the School has in place. The DSL and the Director of Safeguarding work- with the governors to review and update the School's safeguarding policy.

Where a pupil leaves the School, including for in-year transfers, the DSL will also ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school (separately from the main pupil file) as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first five days of the start of a new term. The DSL will ensure secure transit and obtain confirmation of receipt. In addition to the child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school.

The DSL regularly reviews the School's and their own practices and concerns about welfare and safeguarding matters. This includes the personal and professional duty of all staff to report welfare and safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or in the absence of action, directly to local children's services.

During term time, the DSL or a DDSL will always be available in person (during school hours) for staff in the School to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If a DSL or DDSL is not available in person, they can be contacted using the contact details at the front of this policy. During the holidays or after hours the DSL can be contacted on her school mobile: 07776 691665.

The DSL or DDSL should liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with *WT. "NPCC When to call the police: guidance for schools and colleges"* ([npcc.police.uk](http://npcc.police.uk)) can assist the DSL or DDSL understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect when they do. If the School has questions about any police investigation, it will ask the police. The DSL or DDSL will also be responsible for liaising with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health. The DSL and DDSL should be confident as to what local specialist support is available to support all children involved in sexual violence and sexual harassment and be confident as to how to access this support when required.

Whilst the Head should ensure that the policies and procedures adopted, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, exploitation and neglect, are understood and followed by all staff, and the Governors are ultimately responsible for ensuring staff are competent, supported and regularly reviewed in relation to safeguarding, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility should not be delegated.

Full details of the DSL's role can be found at Annex C of *KCSIE*.

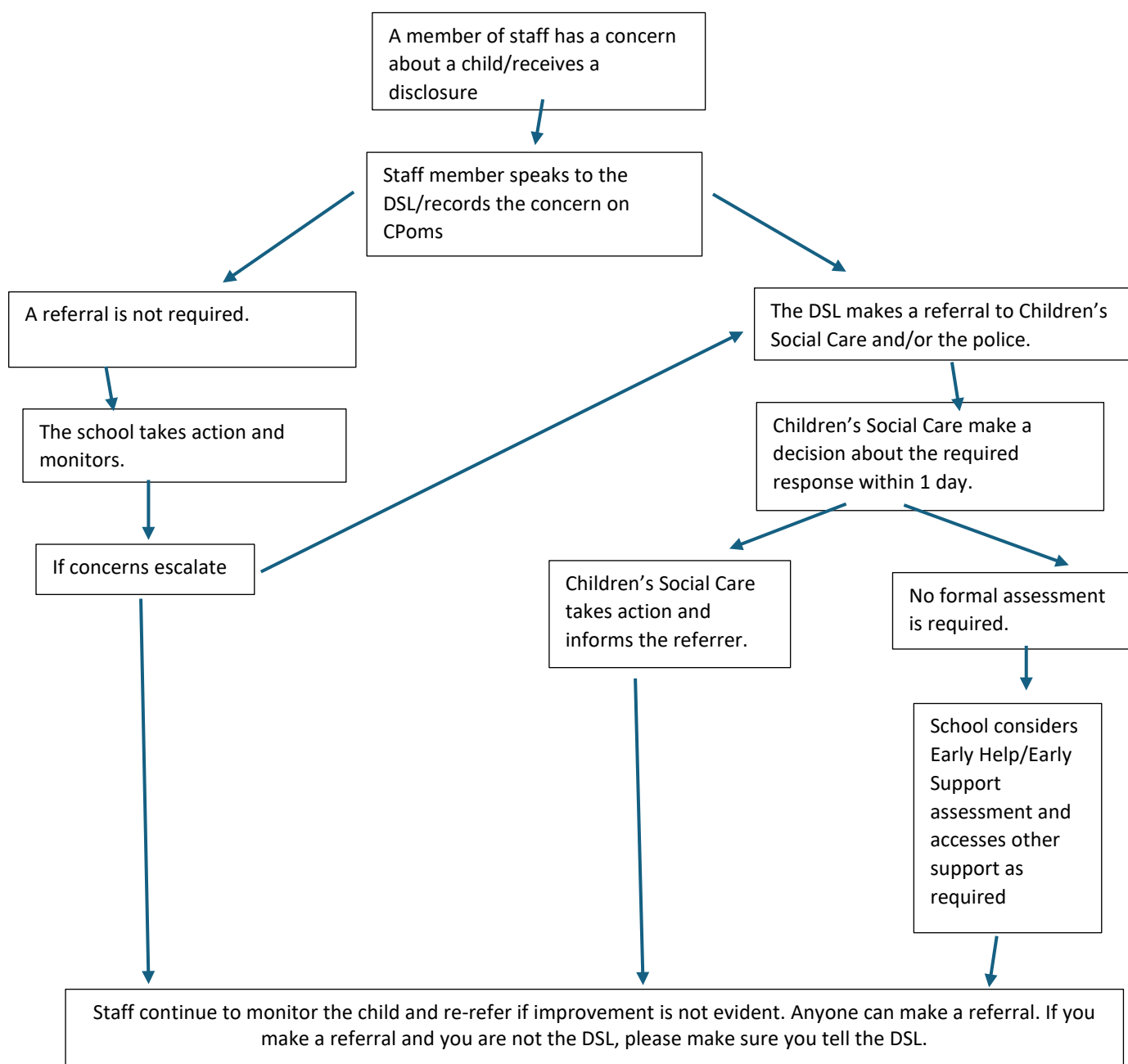
## **2. SCOPE AND APPLICATION**

This policy applies **at all times** including where pupils or staff are away from the school, whether they are on school arranged activities or otherwise, and whether or not the school is open i.e. it applies out of school hours and in the holidays.

### **3. 1 PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD**

If staff suspect or hear any allegation or complaint of abuse, exploitation, or neglect from a child or any third party, they must act immediately and follow the relevant procedure below. Staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

**Flow Chart showing what happens when a member of staff has a concern about a child**



**3.1.1 EARLY HELP**

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

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health, and care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement as association with organised crime groups or county lines

- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, or in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is misusing drugs and other alcohol themselves
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, and/or sexual or criminal exploitation
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is a privately fostered child
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage

Early help is support for children of all ages that improves resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Early help may be appropriate for children who have several needs, or whose circumstances might make them more vulnerable.

The School has effective measures in place to identify emerging problems and potential unmet needs of individual pupils. All staff undertake appropriate training to ensure that they know when to share information with other agencies and what action to take to support early identification and assessments.

In the first instance, staff identify a pupil who may benefit from early help should keep a written record of their concerns using CPoms and discuss this with the School's DSL. If appropriate, the DSL will work with Customer First (Children's Social Care) to undertake an assessment of the need for Early Help. The DSL will support staff in liaising with parents, external agencies and professionals in an inter-agency assessment, as appropriate. Further guidance on effective assessment of the need for early help can be found in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (December 2023) ("WT").

If early help is appropriate, the matter will be kept under review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the pupil's situation does not appear to be improving.

### **3.1.2 IF A CHILD IS IN DANGER OR AT RISK OF HARM**

Tell the DSL so that they can make an immediate referral to Customer First (local authority children's social care) and/or the police.

**Anyone can make a referral.** You should make a referral directly if you cannot contact the DSL or the DDSL. **Do not delay.**

If a child is at immediate risk, phone the police on 999.

If you have an urgent child protection concern and need to get in touch, phone on Customer First 0808 800 4005

Further information about referrals can be found at:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/keeping-children-safe/reporting-a-child-at-risk-of-harm-abuse-or-neglect-safeguarding>

Parental consent is not needed for referrals to statutory agencies such as the police and children's social care. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL as soon as

possible that a referral has been made. The local authority social worker should acknowledge receipt to the referrer within 24 hours and make a decision about the next steps and type of response required. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL and children's social care as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing.

### **3.1.3 IF A CHILD MAKES A DISCLOSURE**

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue, staff should:

- listen carefully
- avoid asking leading questions
- observe the child's behaviour
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- reassure the child that the allegation/complaint will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- ensure that the child is not made to feel ashamed for making the report or given the impression that they are creating a problem by making the report
- not guarantee absolute confidentiality (as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child)
- explain that the information needs to be passed to the appropriate person who will ensure that the correct action is taken
- be aware that the child may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.

Where an allegation relates to harmful sexual behaviours, *if possible*, the disclosure should be managed with two members of staff present (preferably one of them being the DSL or their deputy). Staff should exercise professional curiosity and speak to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.

### **3.1.4 RECORDING A CONCERN/DISCLOSURE**

Staff must record all concerns about a pupil/disclosures on the school's proforma record which is available on CPoms. Staff should write up any concern/conversation/disclosure as soon as possible. They should use the child's words and stick to the facts. Staff should not add their own opinions judgements or feelings at the time of the disclosure.

All concerns, discussions, and decisions (including the rationale for those decisions) made under these procedures should be recorded in writing. This includes instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency, such as children's social care or the Prevent programme. This will help if/when responding to any complaint about the way a case has been handled. The record should include:

- the pupil/student's details: name; date of birth; address and family details;
- the date and time of the event/concern/conversation
- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, and by whom, decisions reached and the outcome
- the name and position of the person making the record.

The information should be kept confidential and stored securely, ensuring that the file is only accessible to those who need to see it, and is shared in accordance with the guidance set out in Parts one and two of *KCSIE*.

### **3.1.5 THE CHILD'S VOICE**

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the School will ensure the pupil's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. This is particularly important in the context of harmful behaviours, such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. The School manages this by ensuring that there are systems in place, that are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

The School implements a child-centred approach to safeguarding. Whilst the School is committed to working collaboratively, and in partnership, with parents and carers as far as possible the wishes and feelings of the child and what is in their best interest is always central to the School's decision-making process.

### **3.1.6 CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING**

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and can occur between children outside School. All staff, but especially the DSL and any deputies, should consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. The School will as part of the wider assessment of children, consider whether environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The School will share as much information with Customer First (Children's Social Care) as possible as part of the referral process to enable consideration of all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

### **3.1.7 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD**

If staff (including governors, supply staff, agency staff and volunteers) have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger), they should, where possible, speak with the School's DSL to agree a course of action, although staff can make a direct referral to children's social care.

As set out above, staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical to keep a child safe; they should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here". If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible that a referral has been made. If a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL should press children's social care for reconsideration. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL and children's social care as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing.

### **3.1.8 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF A CHILD IS SEEN AS AT RISK OF RADICALISATION**

Staff should follow the School's normal referral processes and tell the DSL if they have concerns about a child who may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. If the DSL or DDSL is not available, the member of staff should speak to a member of the SMT and/or make a referral to Children's Social Care (Customer First see key external contacts for details), informing the DSL afterwards that a referral has been made.

The DSL may make a Prevent referral or referral to children's social care depending on the level of risk or seek further advice from the Prevent team. However, if staff have concerns that there is an

immediate/significant risk of a child being drawn into terrorism, they must call 999. Advice and support may also be sought from children's social care.

The School, in recognition that pupils may be susceptible to being drawn into terrorism or other forms of extremism, carries out appropriate risk assessments (following consultation with local partners, such as the police) which assess how their learners or staff may be at risk of being radicalised into terrorism, including online. Such risk assessments are discussed with the Head, DSL and DDSLs and governors responsible for safeguarding to ensure the School's safeguarding arrangements are sufficiently robust to ensure that those at risk of radicalisation are identified and appropriate support is provided and is regularly revised as needed.

### **3.1.9 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY DISCOVER AN ACT OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION ("FGM")**

Staff must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the member of staff has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. Staff are referred to Appendix 1 of this policy for the procedure to be followed where they suspect that a pupil may be at risk of FGM.

### **3.1.10 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS THAT CHILDREN ARE AT RISK FROM OR INVOLVED WITH SERIOUS VIOLENT CRIME**

All staff should be aware of the indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from School, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

If staff have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger), they should, where possible, speak with the School's DSL to agree a course of action, although staff can make a direct referral to children's social care.

### **3.1.11 HOW STAFF SHOULD RESPOND TO AN INCIDENT OF NUDES AND SEMI-NUDES BEING SHARED BY PUPILS**

All members of staff in an education setting have a duty to recognise and refer any incidents involving nudes and semi-nudes and will be equipped with the necessary safeguarding training and support to enable them to recognise concerns.

For this purpose, 'sharing nudes/semi-nudes' means the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams by persons under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media (including Snapchat), gaming platforms, chat apps (including WhatsApp and iMessage) or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes may happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and/or via closed social media accounts. The images, videos or live streams may include more than one child. The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of image sharing incidents. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'.

Many professionals may refer to 'nudes and semi-nudes' as:

- youth produced sexual imagery or 'youth involved' sexual imagery
- indecent imagery. This is the legal term used to define nude or semi-nude images and videos of children and young people under the age of 18.
- 'sexting'. Many adults may use this term, however some young people interpret sexting as 'writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know' rather than sharing images
- image-based sexual abuse. This term may be used when referring to the nonconsensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

Terms such as 'revenge porn' and 'upskirting' are also used to refer to specific incidents of nudes and semi-nudes being shared. However, these terms are more often used in the context of adult-to-adult non-consensual image sharing offences outlined in s.33-35 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015, Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 and s.67A of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Terms such as 'deep fakes' and 'deep nudes' may also be used by adults and young people to refer to digitally manipulated and AI-generated nudes and semi-nudes. Any direct disclosure by a child will be taken seriously and staff will ensure the child is feeling comfortable and will only ask appropriate and sensitive questions, in order to minimise further distress or trauma to them.

If staff are notified or become aware of an incident of nudes or semi-nudes being shared by a pupil or of a pupil, they should refer the incident to the DSL as soon as possible. **Members of staff must not intentionally view any nude or semi-nude images which are reported to them, or copy, print or share the images under any circumstances.** In referring any incident of sharing images, members of staff should describe the content of the images as reported to them.

The DSL will follow the DDMSC / UKCIS guidance "*Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people*" (March 2024) when responding to a report of sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes. This will include:

- holding an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This may include the staff member(s) who heard the disclosure and the safeguarding or leadership team who deal with safeguarding concerns.
- carrying out interviews with the children involved (if appropriate).
- informing parents and carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process in order to best support the pupil unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put the child at risk of harm. Any decision not to inform them should be made in conjunction with other services such as children's social care and/or the police, who would take the lead in deciding when they should be informed.
- carrying out a risk assessment to determine whether there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm at any point in the process.

An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care through the MASH will be made if any of the following points apply:

- the incident involves an adult. Where an adult poses as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person, the incident may first present as a child-on-child incident.
- there is reason to believe that a child or young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs).
- the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent.

- the images involves sexual acts and any child or young person in the images or videos is under 13.
- there is reason to believe a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, for example, they are presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

If none of the above apply, the School may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. All incidents relating to nudes and semi-nudes being shared need to be recorded, whether they have been referred externally or not. The decision to respond to an incident without involving the police or children's social care will only be made in cases where the DSL (or equivalent) is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to any child or young person involved and the risks can be managed within the School's pastoral support and disciplinary framework. Any decision in this regard will be made by the DSL (or equivalent) with input from the Head. The decision will be made and recorded in line with this Policy and will be based on consideration of the best interests of any child or young person involved. Any decision will take into account proportionality as well as the welfare and protection of any child or young person. The decision will be reviewed throughout the process of responding to the incident. If doubts remain, local safeguarding arrangements will be followed.

This guidance does not apply to the sharing of images of persons under 18 by an adult over 18 as this constitutes child sexual abuse. In the event that staff become aware of such an incident, they should notify the DSL immediately, who should always inform the police as a matter of urgency.

### **3.1.12 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF A CHILD IS ABSENT FROM EDUCATION**

Children who are absent from education particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect and child sexual and/or criminal exploitation, particularly county lines. It is important that the School's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.

The School's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent, repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing from education set out in the Attendance Policy are to be used for searching for, and if necessary, reporting, any pupil missing from education. Further detail can also be found at Appendix 1 of this policy.

Where reasonably possible, the School will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil to provide the School with additional options to make contact with a responsible adult particularly when a child who is repeatedly absent and/or absent for prolonged periods is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

The School will report to Suffolk Local Authority a pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent from school without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

When working with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns the School will have regard to the statutory DfE guidance *'Working together to improve school attendance: statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (August 2024)* and to the EYFS Statutory Framework for children aged 0-5 years.

### **3.1.13 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF A CHILD NEEDS A SOCIAL WORKER (CHILDREN IN NEED AND CHILD PROTECTION PLANS)**

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect, exploitation and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, and mental health.

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

### **3.1.14 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF A CHILD REQUIRES MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

The School has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of its pupils. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the DfE *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools* guidance. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing, and resilience among young people.

If a member of staff has a concern about the mental health and well-being of a pupil, they should follow the procedure set out in this policy: tell the DSL and log their concerns on CPoms.

### **3.2.1 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT ANOTHER STAFF MEMBER**

If staff have safeguarding concerns about another staff member (including supply staff, agency staff, volunteers and contractors), then this should be referred to the Head. Where there are concerns about the Head, they should be referred to the Chair of Governors: see Key Contacts at the front of this policy. See Appendix 3 Allegations against staff and low level concerns policy. Allegations of abuse against the Head, should be reported to the Chair of Governors who will report them to the LADO.

### **3.2.2 WHAT STAFF SHOULD DO IF THEY HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES IN THE SCHOOL**

The School aims to ensure there is a culture of safety and raising concerns and an attitude of 'it could happen here'. Where staff have concerns about poor or unsafe practices and potential failures in the School's safeguarding systems, these should be raised in accordance with the School's whistleblowing procedures which can be found in the Whistleblowing Policy which is published on the School's website. There will be no disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith.

If staff and volunteers feel unable to raise an issue with the School, or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may use other whistleblowing channels, such as the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line. Contact details for the NSPCC helpline can be found on the Key Contacts page at the start of this policy.

### **3.3 SAFER RECRUITMENT**

The School is committed to safer recruitment processes to create a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children in the School whilst deterring and preventing people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities, within the School.

Members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the School including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches are subject to the necessary statutory child protection checks before starting work, for example, right to work checks, additional overseas checks (if necessary), verifying identity, taking up references, checking work history and confirming medical fitness for the role. For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with “barred list” information will be appropriate. A DBS certificate will be obtained from the candidate before or as soon as practicable after appointment. Alternatively, if the applicant has subscribed to it and gives permission, the School may undertake an online update check through the DBS Update Service.

As part of the shortlisting process, the School will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of its due diligence. This may help to identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online, which the School may want to explore with an applicant at interview. This forms part of the School’s wider safeguarding due diligence which aims to prevent and/or deter individuals who may be unsuitable to work with children from working in a school environment.

Full details of the School’s safer recruitment procedures for checking the suitability of staff, Governor and volunteers to work with children and young people are set out in the School’s Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy and its Pre-Employment Vetting Policy.

The School’s protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or pupils themselves, are suitable and appropriately supervised is set out in the Visitors and Visiting Speakers’ Policy.

A copy of the School’s procedures for managing contractors attending the School site is available from the Interim Director of Finance and Operations.

### **3.4 TRAINING**

#### **3.4.1 ALL STAFF**

Induction and training are in line with advice from Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership’s three safeguarding partners.

All new staff will be provided with induction training that includes:

- the child protection and safeguarding policy (including the policy and procedures to deal with child on child abuse);
- the role and identity of the DSL and DDSL(s)
- the Discipline and Rewards policy (including measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);

- the staff code of conduct, the School's whistleblowing policy and the staff acceptable use agreement, the social media policy;
- the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods or children missing education;
- the online safety policy, including an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring;
- a copy of Part one of *KCSIE* at least (or, for staff that do not work directly with children, Annex A); and
- Staff who work directly with children will also be required to read Annex B of *KCSIE*.
- Senior Leaders and governors will be required to read the whole of *KCSIE*.

Copies of the above documents are provided to all staff during induction.

Temporary staff and volunteers are asked to read Part One and Annex B of *KCSIE*, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct and receive a safeguarding induction briefing.

All staff are also required to:

- Read at least Part one of *KCSIE* or, for staff that do not work directly with children, Annex A and confirm that they have done so. Each time Part one of *KCSIE* is updated by the Department for Education, staff will be updated on the changes via a briefing.
- Understand key information contained in Part one or, for staff that do not work directly with children, Annex A of *KCSIE*. The School will ensure staff understanding by means of a safeguarding quiz.
- Receive training in safeguarding and child protection regularly, in line with advice from Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership's three safeguarding partners. Training will include online safety (including the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) and harmful sexual behaviours (including child on child sexual violence and harassment). It will also include Prevent awareness training to equip staff to understand the factors that lead people to support terrorist ideologies or engage in terrorist related activity, be able to recognise susceptibility to terrorism and be aware of what action to take in response, including the School's internal Prevent arrangements.
- Undertake regular informal updates, at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively, including online. The School provides these via, for example, emails, briefings, staff meetings and INSET.

All EYFS staff are required to attend safeguarding training specifically designed for staff caring for 0-5 year olds which covers all the areas set out in Annex C to the EYFS Statutory Framework: "Criteria for effective safeguarding training." and are supported to implement the Policy on an ongoing basis.

Training must be renewed every two years by the DSL and all staff are required to attend. EYFS staff are supported to put their training into practice via regular updates and reminders from the DSL and in INSET training sessions, as well as through termly supervision meetings. The School will consider whether staff need to undertake annual refresher training during any two-year period and to keep up to date with changes to safeguarding procedures or as a result of any safeguarding concerns that may occur at the school.

The governing body will ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) 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 the School are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

The governing body is aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA), the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR, and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Under the Human Rights Act 1998, it is unlawful for the School to act in a way that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Convention. Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach conventions set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Convention. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

In addition, the governing body complies with the DfE's Data Protection guidance for schools, ensuring school staff, governors/trustees know how to comply with data protection law, develop their data policies and processes, what staff and pupil data to keep and the importance of good practices for preventing personal data breaches.

### **3.4.2 DSL(s)**

The DSL receives updated child protection training at least every two years to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This includes local inter-agency working protocols, participation in child protection case conferences, supporting children in need, identifying children susceptible to radicalisation, record keeping and promoting a culture of listening to children, training in the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Partnership's three safeguarding partners' approach to *Prevent* duties and harmful sexual behaviours. The DSL also receives more in-depth training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies, how to make referrals and how to work with Channel panels. This training is updated at least every two years, enabling the DSL to support other staff on *Prevent* matters and update them on relevant issues. Further details of the required training content for the DSL are set out in Annex C of *KCSIE*.

In addition to their formal training, the DSL's knowledge and skills are updated at least annually to keep up with any developments relevant to their role. In particular, the School will support the DSL in developing their knowledge and skills to understand the views of children including to encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes, as well as having an awareness of the difficulties children may face in approaching staff with a disclosure.

The DDSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL.

## **3.5 OVERSIGHT OF SAFEGUARDING, INCLUDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Mrs Flora McLean is the board-level lead designated to take a lead in relation to responsibility for the safeguarding arrangements in the School. She is a member of the governing body.

The School considers its obligation to review safeguarding practices a matter of its everyday concerns. A review of the School's child protection policies takes place at least annually, including an update and review of the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation, including lessons learnt and will form part of the agenda for the Advent meeting of the governors' Safeguarding

Committee. The School draws on the expertise of staff, including the DSL(s), in shaping the School's safeguarding arrangements and policies.

The School's safeguarding policies and procedures should be transparent, clear, and easy to understand for staff, pupils, students, parents, and carers.

If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the School will work with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the School's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

### **3.6 THE SCHOOL'S ARRANGEMENTS TO FULFIL OTHER SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **3.6.1 TEACHING CHILDREN HOW TO KEEP SAFE**

The governing body ensures that all pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through the curriculum and PSHE to help children to adjust their behaviours, both inside and outside of School, in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to radicalisation and extremism. This includes teaching pupils about the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet and the risks posed by adults or young people, who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults. The School recognises that a "one size fits all" approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some children with SEND might be needed.

Internet safety (including when children are online at home) is an integral part of the School's PSHCE and Relationships Education and/or Relationships and Sex Education ("RSE").

#### **3.6.2 FILTERING AND MONITORING**

The School has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate material online when using the School's IT system.

Such systems aim to reduce the risk of children being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful materials online for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories (**content risk**); reduce the risk of children being subjected to harmful online interaction with others including commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes (**contact risk**); restrict access to online risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams (**commerce risk**); and help manage online behaviour that can increase a child's likelihood of, or causes, harm for example making, sending and receiving explicit images e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying (**conduct risk**).

The School recognises however that children with mobile phones have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G) which means that they may consensually and/or non-consensually share indecent images, sexually harass their peers via mobile and smart technology, and view and share pornography and other harmful content whilst at school undetected.

The School ensures compliance with the DfE's 'Cyber security/filtering and monitoring standards for schools' by;

- Identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- Reviewing the filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- Blocking harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- Having effective monitoring strategies in place that meet our safeguarding needs.

The School utilises the DfE's 'plan technology for your school' service to self-assess compliance against the filtering and monitoring standards and ensures that any recommendations are incorporated as appropriate.

The School has regard to the DfE's guidance 'Generative AI: product safety expectations' when considering how the filtering and monitoring arrangements in place apply to the use of generative AI within education. The School ensures that any Generative AI products effectively and reliably prevent access to harmful and inappropriate content by pupils by:

- integrating the highest standards of filtering possible within the product, and
- using additional filtering solutions that work on top of an AI product.

The School has in place an E Safety Policy OBHP09 which sets out further detail in this regard.

Further detail of the School's policy and procedures in relation to online safety can be found in the School's E Safety Policy which also includes detail on the use of mobile and smart technology in School, including the School's management of the associated risks, and the School's filtering and monitoring arrangements to ensure that children are safe from harmful and inappropriate content, including terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet through the School's systems.

The School will liaise with parents to reinforce the importance of children being safe online and the systems the School uses to filter and monitor online use. Parents and carers will be made aware of what their children are being asked to do online when undertaking remote learning, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the School their child is going to be interacting with online.

### **3.6.3 RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION AND/OR RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION ("RSE")**

The School understands that children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships.

The School's Relationships Education/RSE curriculum is delivered as part of a whole school approach to wellbeing and positive relationships that prepares children for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic, and sexual violence/harassment. The School focusses on building positive attitudes and skills, promoting healthy norms about relationships, including sexual relationships where relevant, and about health, including mental health. The School recognises that discussions about sensitive topics in Relationships Education/RSE can lead to increased safeguarding reports. All staff know what to do if they have concerns that a pupil is being neglected or abused, including those who have seen, heard or experienced the effects of domestic abuse.

The School has regard to the DfE's statutory guidance *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* when making arrangements for and teaching Relationships Education and/or RSE.

The School's RSE Policy OBHP58 sets out the curriculum content, how and when it will be taught, and who is responsible for teaching it, including any external providers the School will use. The School proactively engages and consults parents in the development and review of this policy. Parents will be informed of their right to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education.

### **3.6.4 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

The governing body ensures that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe any children on roll who are looked after by a local authority.

The DSL is the designated member of staff who has responsibility for their welfare and progress. The School ensures that the designated member of staff receives appropriate training in order to carry out their role.

### **3.6.5 ARRANGEMENTS FOR VISITING SPEAKERS**

The School has clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers are appropriately supervised and suitable. See the Visitors and Visiting Speakers' Policy for further details. The School's responsibility to pupils is to ensure that they can critically assess the information they receive as to its value to themselves, and that the information is aligned to the ethos and values of the School and the British values of democracy.

The School will undertake a risk assessment before agreeing to a visiting speaker being allowed to attend the School. This will take into account any vetting requirements considered appropriate in the circumstances and may include a DBS check if relevant.

Visiting speakers will be expected to understand that, where appropriate, their session should actively promote the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and at no point undermine these. The School may request a copy of the visiting speaker's presentation and/or footage in advance of the session being provided.

Visiting speakers, whilst on the School site, will be supervised by a School employee. On attending the School, visiting speakers will be required to show original current identification documents including a photograph such as a passport or photo card driving licence. The School shall also keep a formal register of visiting speakers retained in line with its Data Protection Policy.

### **3.6.6 ARRANGEMENTS FOR USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES FOR NON-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

When services or activities at the School are provided under the direct supervision or management of school staff, this policy will apply in relation to any safeguarding concerns or allegations.

Where services or activities are not under the direct supervision or management of the School, the School will seek assurance that any organisation has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (and the School will inspect these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the organiser to liaise with the School on these matters where

appropriate. This applies regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll.

The School will ensure that the DSL and/or the Director of Safeguarding can be contacted and/or is available at all times the school premises are in use, whether that activity is a school or non-school activity and regardless as to whether the children attending are on the school roll. See school contacts at the front of this policy.

The School will ensure that safeguarding requirements are included in any agreement for use of the school premises (such as a lease or hire agreement) as a condition of use and occupation of the premises and that failure to do so by the provider to comply with this will lead to termination of the agreement.

When considering the safeguarding arrangements any providers have in place the School will have regard to the DfE's non statutory guidance '*After school clubs, community activities, and tuition (safeguarding guidance for providers)*' (September 2023).

### **3.6.7 OPERATION ENCOMPASS**

The School is part of Operation Encompass, a national police and early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children who experience domestic abuse. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult in school, usually the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs.

The School's Key Adult (the DSL) and the DDSL have completed the National Online Operation Encompass Key Adult training. The DSL will provide training for all staff and Governors about Operation Encompass, the prevalence of domestic abuse and the impact of this abuse on children.

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

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

Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or school will make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare.

We ensure our parents are fully aware that we are an Operation Encompass setting, including when a new child joins the School.

### **3.6.8 USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND CAMERAS**

The School's policy on the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting can be found in the E Safety Policy. Staff are permitted to bring in personal devices for their own use. Staff are not permitted under any circumstances to use their personal devices when taking images, videos or

other recording nor to have any images videos or other recording of any student on their personal devices. Please read this policy in conjunction with the with the OBHP 08 Acceptable Use of ICT for Staff Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, School Trips and the Taking, Storing and Use of Images policy.

In Early Years and Foundation Stage, personal mobiles phones and mobile devices cannot be used in the presence of children. All mobile phones must be stored securely out of reach within the setting during contact time with children (this includes staff, visitors, parents and volunteers). Mobile phones must not be used in any teaching area or within the bathroom area. School equipment must be used to make any record of classroom activities. Staff who act in breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. Where parents are invited into school e.g. to watch a performance, they will be reminded of the rules in relation to the taking of photographs and recordings which are set out in the Taking, Storing and Use of Images Policy.

### **3.7 EARLY YEARS PROVISION SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS**

The School adheres to the requirements set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework including the requirements regarding paediatric first aid training, safer eating and children's privacy in relation to toileting and nappy changes.

#### **3.7.1 DISQUALIFICATION FROM WORKING IN CHILDCARE**

Where staff work in, or are involved in the management of, the School's early years or provision of care of pupils under the age of eight, the School will take steps to check whether those staff are disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006. These checks will be undertaken pre-appointment, and from time to time during employment. This forms part of the School's safer recruitment practices, further details of which can be found in the School's Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy.

The School records all checks of staff employed to work in or manage relevant childcare on the Single Central Register. This includes the date disqualification checks were completed.

Where a member of staff is found to be disqualified or if there is doubt over that issue then, pending resolution, the School will remove them from the work from which they are or may be disqualified. Suspension or dismissal will not be an automatic response; the School will consider if there is scope in principle to redeploy them with other age groups or in other work from which they are not disqualified, subject to assessing the risks and taking advice from the LADO when appropriate.

#### **3.7.2 DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR THE EYFS**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the early years settings is named at the front of this policy.

#### **3.7.3 DUTY TO NOTIFY OFSTED**

The School will inform Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children on the premises where childcare is provided. For example, where the School is satisfied that a person working in a relevant setting falls within one of the disqualification criteria. Any significant event must be notified to Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the date the School became aware (or ought reasonably to have become aware) of it.

The School will notify Ofsted within 14 days of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere).

#### **4. POLICY OWNER**

This policy is owned by the Director of Safeguarding Charlotte Marten [CM1@rugbyschool.net](mailto:CM1@rugbyschool.net) (RSG) and the Governing Body. This is version 1 of this policy.

This policy is published on the school website. It is available in hard copy on request. A copy of this policy is available for inspection from the Head's Office during the School day. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required. This policy and all policies referred to in it are also available to staff on the school's Employment Self Service (EES).

#### **5. RELATED POLICIES AND GUIDANCE**

The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:

Code of Conduct;  
Acceptable Use of ICT for Staff OBHP08;  
Whistleblowing policy;  
Safer recruitment and selection policy;  
Taking Storing and Use of Images;  
Behaviour and Discipline policy OBHP04;  
Anti-bullying policy OBHP03;  
Safeguarding information for visitors  
Risk assessment policy for pupil/student welfare;  
Attendance policy;  
E Safety Policy OBHP09;  
SEN policy OBHP27;  
First aid policy OBHP11;  
Health and safety policy OBHP13;  
Relationships and sex education policy OBHP58;  
Medical care policy OBHP22;  
School Restraint Policy OBHP48  
Education guardianship policy;  
Visitors and Visiting Speakers Policy

In addition to the guidance listed in 1.3, an extensive list of guidance and resources is published at the end of Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education.



## APPENDIX 1 –SIGNS AND TYPES OF ABUSE

All School staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap. Therefore, staff should always be vigilant and always raise any concerns with the DSL (or DDSL).

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the DSL and DDSLs, should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside the home. This is often referred to as “extra-familial harm.’ Extra-familial harm can occur in a range of extra-familial contexts, including in school, peer groups, or within community/public spaces, and/or online. Children may experience this type of harm from other children and/or from adults. Forms of extra-familial harm include exploitation by criminal and organised crime groups and individuals (such as county lines and financial exploitation), serious violence, modern slavery and trafficking, online harm, sexual exploitation, teenage relationship abuse, and the influences of extremism which could lead to radicalisation. Children of all ages can experience extra-familial harm.

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and should recognise that children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently online and in daily life. Staff should be aware that children can also abuse their peers online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

**In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL (or DDSL).**

**Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child (including through corporal punishment). Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-

penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Sexual abuse also includes sexual violence and sexual harassment (see below) which can occur between two children of any sex (also known as child on child abuse). This can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence are sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, such as rape, sexual assault, and assault by penetration. Schools should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.

The Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has introduced new resources to help education professionals identify and respond to concerns of child sexual abuse and abusive behaviours. There are also the below resources available:

[Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy - GOV.UK](#)

[Working together to stop child sexual abuse - GCS](#)

**Sexual harassment:** is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names; sexual "jokes" or taunting; physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes; or upskirting, and sharing of unwanted explicit content (for example displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature); and online sexual harassment, which might include consensual or non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos (often referred to as the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes, or sexting – see below); inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats. Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

**Sexual violence:** refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, and/or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity, but not another, or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16, and sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

**Child-on-child sexual violence and/or harassment:** Sexual violence and sexual harassment (as defined above) can occur between two children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and harassment, and it is more likely that it will be perpetrated by boys. It can however occur between children of any sex. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. Children who are victims of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment wherever it happens, will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all

likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college.

**Harmful sexual behaviour:** problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is “harmful sexual behaviour”. Harmful sexual behaviour can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years’ age difference, or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation in collaboration with the Home Office, has developed ‘Shore Space’, an online resource which works to prevent harmful sexual behaviour. Shore Space offers a confidential chat service supporting young people who are concerned about their own or someone else’s sexual thoughts and behaviour.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has developed a harmful sexual behaviour toolkit, which amongst other things, provides support, advice and information on how to prevent it, links to organisations and helplines, resources about harmful sexual behaviour by children, internet safety, sexual development and preventing child sexual abuse.

The NSPCC provides free and independent advice about harmful sexual behaviour: NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour and NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework.

Beyond Referrals | The Contextual Safeguarding programme based at the University of Durham provides a school self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing harmful sexual behaviour in schools.

StopItNow – Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children: provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

**Sharing of nudes and/or semi-nudes:** the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple’s AirDrop which works offline. The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes can happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and closed social media accounts and may include images or footage of more than one child or young person.

Alternative terms used by children and young people may include ‘dick pics’ or ‘pics’ or may be referred to by adults or professionals as ‘youth produced/involved sexual imagery’, ‘indecent imagery’, ‘image based sexual abuse’ or ‘sexting’. Terms such as ‘deep fakes’ and ‘deep nudes’ may also be used by adults and young people to refer to digitally manipulated and AI-generated nudes and semi-nudes.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated. Such images may be created and shared consensually by

young people who are in relationships, as well as between those who are not in a relationship. It is also possible for a young person in a consensual relationship to be coerced into sharing an image with their partner. Incidents may also occur where:

- children and young people find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from a peer
- children and young people digitally manipulate an image of a young person into an existing nude online or use artificial intelligence (AI) to generate a new nude or semi-nude image of a young person
- images created or shared are used to abuse or blackmail peers. Situations could include:
  - o children and young people selling nudes or semi-nudes of others online
  - o children and young people coercing a peer into sharing a nude or semi-nude to blackmail them for money, further images, or force them into illegal activity
  - o children and young people hacking a peer's account to share images more widely without consent to publicly shame
- children and young people create and share a nude or semi-nude with an adult who has presented themselves as someone under the age of 18 to groom, sexually abuse or blackmail them.

For this reason, incidents can either be classified as 'aggravated' or 'experimental'. The DDCMS / UKCIS guidance "*Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people*" (March 2024) sets out the classification of incidents, and how each should be handled.

**Upskirting:** is a criminal offence and typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Anyone of any sex can be a victim.

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**Serious violence:** indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime include increased absence from School, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. All

staff should be aware of the associated risks which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence (for example, being male, frequent absence from school or permanently excluded from school, experienced child maltreatment or having been involved in offending) and understand the measures in place to manage these.

**Specific safeguarding issues:** behaviours linked to drug taking, alcohol abuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education and sexting put children in danger. Safeguarding issues can also manifest themselves via child on child abuse, such as abuse within intimate partner relationships, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults, sexting and upskirting. Safeguarding issues can also be linked to, for example, children being absent, repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, children missing from education; child sexual exploitation; domestic violence; fabricated or induced illness; faith abuse (including ostracism of families); female genital mutilation; forced marriage; gangs and youth violence; gender-based violence / violence against women and girls; hate; mental health; preventing radicalisation; relationship abuse; sexting; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes; and trafficking.

**Child sexual exploitation (CSE):** CSE is a form of child sexual abuse (see above) which occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any persons (male or female) under the age of 18 years (including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex) who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media). Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

CSE can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The below CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends, and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

The DfE has published guidance on this entitled "*Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners*". The Children's Society and Home Office has also published guidance on Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation.

CSE may occur alone, or may overlap with CCE, and/or county lines, as well as other forms of abuse.

**Child criminal exploitation (CCE):** CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in any criminal activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or (for the financial or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines, see below), forced to shoplift or pickpocket. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals (especially when they are older children). It is important in these circumstances that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts, money, or new possessions
- children who associate with other children involved in exploitation
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however staff should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

CCE may occur alone, or may overlap with CSE, and/or county lines, as well as other forms of abuse.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

**County lines:** County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK – no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults exploited to sell drugs and move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number

of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes. Children are increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the ways of identifying indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
- that have been the victim, perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime);
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity;
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters;
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals.

**Modern Slavery:** Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism is available in the statutory guidance "*Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims (June 2025)*".

**Cybercrime:** is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DdoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network, or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying, or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets, and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre – NCSC.gov.uk.

**Mental health:** all staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse, exploitation and neglect, or potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, attendance and progress at school.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following this policy, and speaking to the DSL or DDSL.

More information can be found in the Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children.

**So called 'honour based' abuse:** encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take.

**FGM** comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can also be found on pages 38-41 of the Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM. To give an example of indications that a girl has already been subjected to FGM:

- A pupil may have difficulty walking, sitting, or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- A pupil may have frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems or spend longer than normal in the bathroom due to difficulties urinating.

- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from School and/or noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the pupil's return.
- A pupil is reluctant to undergo medical examination.<sup>239</sup>

**If staff have a concern that a pupil may be at risk of FGM, they should speak to the DSL or DDSL who will (where appropriate) activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and Children's Social Care.**

There is a statutory duty on teachers to personally report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. If the teacher is unsure whether this reporting duty applies, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL in accordance with this policy. Where a teacher suspects that a pupil is at risk (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or it involves a pupil over 18, teachers should follow the School's local safeguarding procedures.

Further information can be found in the *Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation and the FGM resource pack*, particularly section 13.

**Forced marriage:** Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage. There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of forced marriage, details of which can be found in the *Multi-agency guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage (last updated April 2023)* Further information on forced marriage is available in guidance published on gov.uk and by the Forced Marriage Unit. School staff can also contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email [fm\\_u@fcd\\_o.gov.uk](mailto:fm_u@fcd_o.gov.uk).

**Radicalisation:** is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Extremism is the 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. It can also call for the death of members of the armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern. However, it is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be susceptible and act proportionately, which may include making a Prevent referral.

Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders in colleges should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales especially paragraphs 141-210, which are specifically concerned with education. Staff should contact the DSL or the DDSL, who should be aware of the local procedures in place, before making a Prevent referral.

In the event of a child leaving, the DSL should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives at the new school.

**Special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or pupils with certain health conditions:**

Pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. These children may not outwardly show signs of abuse and/or may have difficulties in communication about abuse or neglect, or bullying.

These can include:

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

Staff will support such pupils in expressing any concerns they may have and will be particularly vigilant to any signs or indicators of abuse, discussing this with the DSL as appropriate.

**Lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning:** A child or young person being lesbian, gay or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a pupil who is perceived by their peers to be lesbian, gay or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

When supporting a gender questioning child, the School will take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of the pupils individual needs, in partnership with the parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. The School will adopt (to the extent that it is reflected in *KCSIE*), the draft

DfE guidance for schools and colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, when deciding how to proceed.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. The School endeavours to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

**Domestic abuse:** The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces a 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 but not limited to, psychological, sexual, 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).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government will issue statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child on child abuse is sometimes referred to as ‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Domestic abuse may lead to other safeguarding concerns and should therefore be managed under this policy.

**Homelessness:** Being homeless, or at risk of homelessness presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The School should be aware of potential indicators of homelessness including household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse, and anti-social behaviour, as well as a family being asked to leave a property. If staff are made aware or suspect that a pupil may be at risk of homelessness they should talk to the DSL in the first instance. Whilst referrals to the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not and should not replace a referral to the LADO where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, in accordance with this policy.

**Children who are absent from school:** A child being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education is a potential indicator of a range of safeguarding issues such as abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, CSE and CCE. It can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Staff must follow the School's procedures for dealing with children who are absent, particularly persistently or for prolonged periods. The School's procedure for dealing with children who are absent and/or missing can be found in its Attendance Policy. All unexplained absences will be followed up in accordance with this policy.

The School shall inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points in accordance with the requirements of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. This will assist the local authority to:

- a) fulfil its duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are missing from education; and
- b) follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or radicalisation.

School registers are carefully monitored to identify any trends. The School will inform the local authority (and the local authority where the child is normally resident) of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the School and the local authority.

Action should be taken in accordance with this policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare. The School's policy supports identification of abuse and provides preventative measures against the risk of the child being absent and/or becoming a child missing education in the future. This applies when issues are first emerging as well as where children are already known to the local authority children's social care and need a social worker.

**Child abduction and community safety incidents:** Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends, and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: [www.actionagainstabduction.org](http://www.actionagainstabduction.org) and [www.clevernevergoes.org](http://www.clevernevergoes.org).

**Children and the court system:** Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age

appropriate guides to support children 5-11 year olds and 12-17 year olds available on the gov.uk website.

The guides explain each step of the process and support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. The School may refer some parents and carers to this service where appropriate.

**Children with family members in prison:** Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation, and poor mental health.

The Prison Service will undertake a child safeguarding enquiry with children's social care for all sentenced prisoners to identify any who present an ongoing risk to children from within custody. Prisons will also decide on the level of contact, if any, they will allow between a prisoner and a child based on a child contact risk assessment.

The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

## **APPENDIX 2 DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE**

### **1. CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE**

Children of any age can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse) and this can happen inside and/or outside school and/or online. This includes, but is not limited to:

- bullying (including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse within intimate personal relationships between peers (teenage relationship abuse)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (including grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia under or over clothes, flicking bras, unwanted kisses or embraces) possibly with an online element which encourages sexual violence
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images (also known as "youth produced sexual imagery") means the taking and sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or lives streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It can also involve sharing between devices offline, for example via Apple's AirDrop
- upskirting, typically involving taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- initiation / hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may include an online element)

### **2. THE SCHOOL'S APPROACH TO CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE**

Staff understand that, even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse at the School, it does not mean it is not happening; it may be the case that it is just not being reported. Staff understand the importance of reporting any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse to the DSL (or the DDSL in the DSL's absence). Such behaviour is never accepted and should be considered as both a safeguarding issue and potentially a disciplinary one. The School will adopt a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. Downplaying certain behaviours (by, for example, dismissing sexual harassment as "banter", "having a laugh" or "part of growing up") can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and, at its worst, to a culture that normalises abuse.

All staff should challenge inappropriate behaviour between pupils/students and anyone who suffers, witnesses or hears of abuse of any form between pupils/students is asked to report it in accordance with this policy and/or the school's behaviour and discipline and anti-bullying policies, so that appropriate action can be taken.

Appropriate action will involve supporting all members of the school community who may be involved as a priority. This may require investigation by the school or other agencies. Until investigations have been undertaken and findings made, the school will work on the basis that the allegations may or may not be true and undertake careful risk assessment of the welfare of those involved to determine how best to manage the situation. This should be undertaken whether or not the incident is alleged to have occurred at school, or when the pupils/students involved was under

the school's care and whether or not the pupil/student is under 18, as an issue which may impact pupil/student welfare. Disciplinary action will follow separately, if appropriate.

### **3. SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT (SVSH)**

Where the misconduct may constitute sexual violence (rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent) or sexual harassment (unwanted conduct of a sexual nature), it should be reported to the DSL and will be managed in accordance with this policy. SVSH is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff are aware that it is more likely that girls will be the victims of SVSH and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys.

SVSH can occur between two or more children of any age or sex from primary to secondary stage. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. SVSH exists on a continuum and may overlap. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even where it seems to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention which helps to prevent problematic or abusive behaviour in the future by setting and enforcing clear expectations of behaviour, supporting victims and encouraging them and others to speak out and facilitating targeted support for those demonstrating harmful sexual behaviour.

The 2021 Ofsted report concluded that, whether or not schools are aware of reported instances of SVSH in their community, it is likely to be occurring. The school acknowledges this and that children are likely to report such matters, if at all, to people they trust. All staff are therefore trained to identify signs of abuse and on how to respond to a report.

## **4. MANAGEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD-ON-CHILD SVSH**

### **4.1 The initial report**

The School recognises that it is not easy for children to tell staff about abuse. Staff are trained in signs of abuse and required to look out for them and act upon them; and to respond to all reports of abuse, however they are reported and whether they are made by victims directly or third parties.

The school recognises that:

- Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions are three times more likely to be abused by their peers, can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to peer on peer group isolation or bullying open brackets including prejudice-based bullying close brackets than other children
- Certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident of abuse because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and or sexual orientation
- Children can be particularly vulnerable in residential settings
- Children may not find easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally and that instead they may show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to
- The first disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported. It is not necessarily representative of a singular incident

The School acknowledges that the initial response is incredibly important and may impact not just the management of that issue, but others of SVSH. Staff are also trained in how to receive a report. Where possible, they should be accompanied by the DSL or other member of staff.

They should:

- listen carefully and respectfully, reassuring the person making the report that they are being taken seriously and offer support without promising confidentiality or making a judgement about its veracity;
- where possible they should ask open questions about whether the pupil(s)/student(s) have been harmed, the nature of the harm or if they may be at risk of harm
- where there is an online element, considering the searching, screening and/or confiscation of devices and the UKCIS [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#). **Staff must not view, delete or forward illegal images of a child**
- explain the next steps and how the report will be progressed
- make a written record of the report (recording the facts as the child has presented them) and log on CPOMS
- inform the DSL (or deputy) as soon as practically possible, if they are not involved in the initial report and then only share the report with those necessary in order to progress it.

#### 4.2 DSL'S CONSIDERATIONS

Reports of SVSH are often complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made. Further disclosures may follow and the facts may be difficult to establish. These decisions are made on a case-by-case basis taking all of the circumstances into account, in the best interest of the pupils/students involved. The School's response is led by the DSL who will always have regard to Part 5 of KCSIE in the management of the issue.

#### 4.3 SCHOOL'S CONSIDERATIONS

The school will consider:

- the victim's wishes in terms of how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions made about investigation and support, but their wishes will not always be determinative as the school may have to take action to protect other children;
- the nature of the alleged incident (including whether it was a one-off or sustained pattern), whether a crime may have been committed and whether harmful sexual behaviour has been displayed;
- the ages and developmental stages of the children involved and any imbalance between them;
- if there is an intimate personal relationship between the children;
- whether there are any ongoing risks to those involved;
- the time and location of any incident, and any action required to make the location safer;
- the wider context.

Before deciding how best to support and protect those involved, the School will undertake immediate risk and needs assessments. These will be undertaken in cases of sexual violence and considered otherwise. Where appropriate, they will be discussed with those involved and their parents. This may involve suspension pending investigation. Risk and needs assessments will be recorded and kept under review in the knowledge that police investigation and criminal proceedings can take several months to conclude. The School will make a proportionate response to these matters in light of the circumstances and the factors identified above and decide, if any, further action is appropriate.

The School will do all it reasonably can to protect the anonymity of children involved in sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things, this will mean carefully considering, based on

the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved.

## **5. INVESTIGATIONS AND FINDINGS**

The School will record the findings of investigations undertaken by the police and/or the CPS, and if the police decide not to take any further action, will consider whether investigation should be undertaken or commissioned by the School to enable it to determine, whether or not it is likely that the allegations are substantiated, unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious. There may be circumstances where this is not appropriate, as it may prejudice a possible future investigation, for example if a victim does not currently wish to make a victim statement. In those circumstances the School will consider whether a limited investigation is appropriate. The concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for these should be recorded.

The School will continue to support those involved, with reference to the range of support options set out in Part 5 of KCSIE and will also consider whether further referral and/or disciplinary action may be appropriate against either the perpetrator where concerns are substantiated and/or harmful sexual behaviours identified or the victim where concerns were found to be deliberately invented or malicious.

The School will reflect on reported concerns, including the decisions made and actions taken, in order to identify any patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour which may indicate an unacceptable culture, or any weaknesses in the School's safeguarding system which may require additional training or amendments to relevant policies. Where a pattern is identified the School will decide on an appropriate course of action.

### **APPENDIX 3: ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND LOW LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for all concerns (whether low level concerns or allegations) to be raised, recorded, investigated and dealt with effectively by the School working in partnership with its three local safeguarding partners as appropriate.

#### **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all concerns and allegations raised in relation to staff, (including supply staff), volunteers and contractors.

#### **3. CONTENT**

##### **3.1 ALLEGATIONS MADE ABOUT STAFF (INCLUDING SUPPLY TEACHERS), VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS**

The School's procedures for managing concerns or allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) who are currently working in the School whether in a paid or unpaid capacity follow DfE statutory guidance and Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership's three safeguarding partners' arrangements and applies when staff (including volunteers) have (or are alleged to have):

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicated that they may pose a risk of harm if they were to work regularly or closely with children; and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, including behaviour that may have happened outside of school.

Reference to 'allegations' also covers concerns. Allegations that do not meet the above harm test should be dealt with using the School's procedure for handling low level concerns set out below.

##### **3.2 HISTORICAL ALLEGATIONS**

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the police. Historical (non-recent) allegations of abuse should be referred to the police and also the LADO. Non-recent allegations made by a child will be reported to the LADO in line with the local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. The LADO will coordinate with children social care and the police.

##### **3.3 MANAGING ALLEGATIONS**

When dealing with an allegation about a staff member, the School will apply common sense and judgment, deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently and will support the person subject to the allegation.

If an allegation is made against anyone working with children in the School, before contacting the LADO, the School will conduct a basic enquiry in line with local procedures to establish the facts in order to determine whether there appears to be any foundation to the allegation. The School should not undertake their own investigation of the allegation(s) without prior consultation with the LADO or, in the most serious cases, the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations.

##### **3.3.1 REPORTING ALLEGATIONS**

Allegations which appear to meet the harm threshold are to be reported straight away to the Head ('the case manager'). However, staff may consider discussing any concerns/allegations with the DSL and make any referral via them. If an allegation is reported to the DSL, the DSL will act as the 'case manager' and keep the Head informed. Where the DSL is the subject of the allegation, reports

should be made to the Head. Where the Head is the subject of the allegation, reports should be made to the Chair of Governors, who will report the allegation to the LADO. Where the Head is the subject of the allegation, the Head must not be informed of the allegation prior to contact with the Chair of Governors and LADO.

The case manager should immediately discuss the allegation with the LADO and consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action including any involvement of the police. Where the case manager deems there to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence, or it is an emergency situation, the case manager should contact children's social care and, as appropriate, the police immediately. All discussions should be recorded in writing, and any communication with both the individual and the parents of the child(ren) agreed. The LADO should be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to the School's attention and appear to meet the harm threshold or that are made directly to the police and/or children's social care. The DSL is responsible for ensuring the child is not at risk.

Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community, or the member of staff's family, they will discuss these concerns with the LADO and make a risk assessment of the situation. It may be necessary for the LADO to make a referral to children's social care.

When to inform the individual who is the subject of the allegation will be considered on a case-by-case basis and with guidance from the LADO, and if appropriate, the police and/or children's social care. Subject to any objection, the case manager will ensure that the individual who is subject of the allegation is informed as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course or action. The case manager will appoint a named representative to keep the individual informed of the progress of the case and will consider what other support is appropriate for the individual e.g. pastoral support.

The School has a duty of care to its staff, and whilst the welfare of a child is paramount, the School must offer appropriate welfare support to the adult subject to the investigation and potentially their family. The School will also make every reasonable effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst an allegation is being investigated or considered. Information will also not ordinarily be shared with other staff or with children or parents who are not directly involved in the investigation.

### **3.3.2 INFORMING PARENTS**

The case manager will ensure that parents are informed as soon as possible and kept informed about progress of the case, subject to any advice from children's social care or the police. Parents and others will be made aware that there are restrictions on publishing information which may lead to the identification of the teacher subject to the allegation.

### **3.3.3 SUSPENSION**

The case manager should give careful consideration as to whether the circumstances of the case warrant suspension from contact with children at the School or whether alternative arrangements should be put in place until the allegation is resolved. The following alternative arrangements should be considered by the case manager before suspending a member of staff:

- redeployment within the School so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned;
- providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children;
- redeploying to alternative work in the School so the individual does not have unsupervised access to children;

- moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the member of staff, but this decision should only be made if it is in the best interests of the child or children concerned and their views should be taken into account. It should be made clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted; or,
- temporarily redeploying the member of staff to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school where available.

These alternatives allow time for an informed decision regarding the suspension, this will, however, depend upon the nature of the allegation.

Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. It should be considered only in cases where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the School is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. The case manager will give due weight to the views of the LADO, *WT* and *KCSIE* when making a decision about suspension (including with respect to considering alternatives). Where the individual is suspended, the case manager will confirm the decision within one working day, and will ensure the individual knows who their point of contact is in the School and the case manager shall provide them with their contact details. The case manager will also record the rationale and justification for the suspension, including what alternatives were considered and why they were rejected.

Where a member of boarding staff is suspended pending an investigation, the case manager will consider whether arrangements for alternative accommodation away from children should be made.

#### **3.3.4 INVESTIGATION**

Where further enquiries are required to enable a decision about how to proceed, the LADO and case manager should discuss how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. The LADO will provide advice and guidance to the School to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out. In straightforward cases, the investigation should usually be undertaken by a senior member of staff at the School. Where there is lack of resource, or the nature or complexity of the allegation requires it, an independent investigator may be appointed to undertake the investigation.

#### **3.3.5 REVIEW**

Reviews are conducted at fortnightly or monthly intervals, depending on the complexity of the case. The first review will take place no later than four weeks after the initial assessment and subsequent review dates will be set at the review meeting.

#### **3.3.6 INVESTIGATIVE OUTCOMES**

The case manager will monitor the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible in a thorough and fair process. The outcome of the investigation of an allegation will record whether it is substantiated (sufficient evidence to prove it), unsubstantiated (insufficient evidence either to prove or disprove it), false (sufficient evidence to disprove it), malicious (sufficient evidence to disprove it and that there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation) or unfounded (to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made).

#### **3.3.7 REFERRALS**

The case manager will discuss with the LADO whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service or Teaching Regulation Agency should be made where an allegation is substantiated and the person

is dismissed or the School ceases to use their services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services. The School has a legal obligation to report promptly to the Disclosure and Barring Service any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. Further, or in the alternative, if an investigation leads to the dismissal or resignation prior to dismissal of a member of teaching staff specifically, the School must consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency and a prohibition order may be appropriate (because that teacher has displayed unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence).

Where an individual is removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had the individual not left, including when they are suspended, redeployed to work that is not regulated activity, are dismissed, or have resigned, and the individual has engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults, and/or satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults, and/or been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, the School will make a referral to the DBS.

### **3.3.8 LESSONS LEARNED**

On conclusion of the case, the case manager should review the circumstances of the case with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the School's safeguarding procedures or practices to help prevent similar events in the future. Learning lessons where the allegation is concluded to be either, unfounded, false, malicious or unsubstantiated, the case manager (and if they have been involved, the LADO) should consider the facts and determine whether any lessons can be learned and if improvements can be made.

Where initial discussions lead to no further action, the case manager and the LADO should record the decision and justification for it and agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned, and by whom.

Allegations found to be malicious or false will be removed from the individual's personnel records unless the individual gives consent for retention of the information. In all other circumstances a written record will be made of the decision and retained on the individual's personnel file in accordance with *KCSIE* and a copy will only be provided to the individual concerned. The information to be kept on file includes a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcomes, and a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference. All records should be retained until the accused has reached pension age, or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation, whichever is longer. Records should be reviewed at the end of the retention period in case it is necessary to keep it for longer.

Allegations proven to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious will not be included in employer references. If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the DSL should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Head will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against a pupil who

made it in accordance with the School's behaviour policy; or whether the police should be asked to consider if action might be appropriate against the person responsible even if they are not a pupil.

In all cases where there are concerns or allegations of abuse, the School will make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission whenever the Commission's guidelines deem it appropriate to do so.

### **3.3.9 PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING AND ALLEGATIONS ABOUT SUPPLY TEACHERS AND CONTRACTORS**

The School's procedures for managing allegations against staff above also apply to staff not directly employed by the School, for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency or business ('the agency'). The School will usually take the lead but agencies should be fully involved (because they have their own policies and procedures) and co-operate with any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social care.

In no circumstances will the School decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome. The School will discuss with the agency (or agencies where the supply teacher is working across a number of schools) whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

The School will advise supply teachers being investigated to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support. The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the School during the investigation.

When using an agency, the School should inform the agency of its process for managing allegations but also take account of the agency's policies and their duty to refer to the DBS as personnel suppliers. This should include inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about its policies.

Where the agency dismisses or ceases to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left the School first, the School must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (via the Teaching Regulation Agency).

### **3.3.9 DEALING WITH SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS ABOUT ORGANISATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS USING SCHOOL PREMISES**

The School may receive an allegation or concern relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children and/or vulnerable adults (for example community groups, sports associations that use the school's facilities)..

When services or activities at the School are provided under the direct supervision or management of school staff, this policy will apply in relation to any safeguarding concerns or allegations. Where services or activities are not under the direct supervision or management of the School, the School will seek assurance that the organisation/provider has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (and the School will inspect these as needed); and ensure that there

are arrangements in place for the organisation/provider to liaise with the School on these matters where appropriate. The School will expect, where appropriate, organisations/providers to fully comply with the DfE guidance *After school clubs, community activities, and tuition (safeguarding guidance for providers) (September 2023)* and will seek assurance in this regard.

#### **4. LOW LEVEL CONCERNS**

The School's Staff Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour and the actions it expects staff to take. This document can be found in the policies section of the school's website.

##### **What is a low level concern?**

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the School may have acted in a way that:

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

Addressing low level concerns is important in creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and the expected behaviour of its staff are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by staff. It enables unprofessional behaviour to be at an early stage and the individual to be supported to correct it. Staff are encouraged self-report if they have found themselves in a situation which may be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in a way that may be considered to fall below the expected professional standard. All concerns will be handled sensitively and will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately.

##### **Reporting a low level concern**

The procedure for confidentially reporting concerns is either to verbally report them to the Head, or to the DSL. Alternatively, staff should put the concern in writing. There is a structured form for doing this which is available in the safeguarding section of ESS. Where a low-level concern is raised about the Head, it should be referred to the Chair of Governors. **Staff must share any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff or any other adult with the Head or DSL without delay** so that they can be recorded and dealt with appropriately, sensitively, and proportionately and in a timely manner.

The Head is the decision maker in respect of low level concerns. If the Head is in any doubt as to whether a low-level concern meets the harm threshold, the Head will consult with the LADO.

Wherever possible if a concern is reported to the DSL, the DSL must speak to the Head in person about it as soon as possible after the concern is raised, and always on the day it is raised. If it is not possible to speak to the Head in person about the concern, the DSL must e-mail the Head with a summary of the concern on the day that the concern is raised.

If a concern is raised by a third party, the Head will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking to the person who has raised the concern (if known), to the individual involved and any witnesses. The concern will be recorded in accordance with this policy in the usual way.

##### **Record Keeping**

All low level concerns will be recorded in writing. The record of the concern will be retained enabling patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour to be identified and

addressed. Records of low level concerns that have been addressed with an individual will usually be kept on the individual's personnel file. All low level concerns will also be securely recorded in a central file (Concerns and Allegations Record).

The Concerns and Allegations Record will set out the name of the individual involved (if an individual is named), a brief description of the concern and the context in which it arose, any investigation that has been carried out, and the outcome / result of the investigation into the concern. The name of the individual who has raised the concern will also be noted. Where that individual wishes to remain anonymous, the School will try to accommodate this as far as reasonably possible, but cannot guarantee anonymity in all circumstances.

Details of low level concerns and allegations found to be malicious or false will be removed from personnel records and the Concerns and Allegations Record.

The concerns and allegations record will be securely stored by HR in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 under UK GDPR and will be accessible by the Head, the chair of governors, the nominated safeguarding governor, the Director of Safeguarding, and the DSL only.

In line with the school's information and records retention policy, information stored on staff personnel files about low level concerns and allegations that may meet the harm threshold, and the concerns and allegations record will be retained by the school for at least ten years or until the member of staff reaches pension age, whichever is the longer when the decision to retain it will be reviewed. The school may decide to retain the information indefinitely. The school may in future be required to produce this information if it is notified of an allegation of historic abuse relating to a current or former member of staff, if a former member of staff is accused of committing safeguarding offences elsewhere or if a former member of staff is the subject the safeguarding allegations arising elsewhere.

### **References**

Low level concerns will not be disclosed in a reference unless they were addressed formally and resulted in a sanction under the school's disciplinary or capability policies and procedures and it is otherwise appropriate to disclose them.

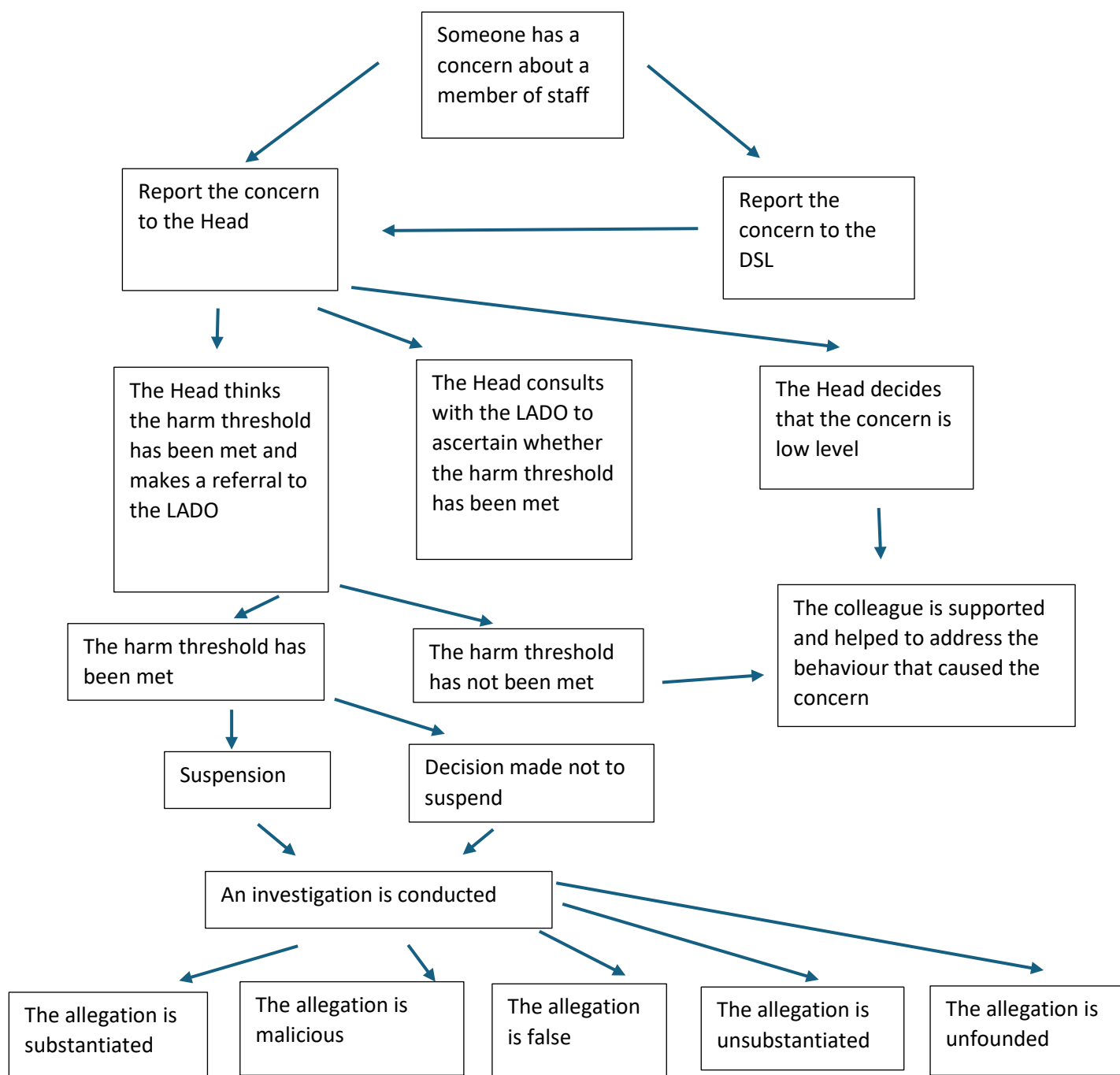
### **Lessons Learned**

The School will reflect on reported concerns to identify any patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour which may indicate an unacceptable culture, or any weaknesses in the School's safeguarding system which may require additional training or modified policies. Where a pattern is identified, the School will decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures, or, where the pattern meets, or may meet the harms threshold, it will refer the matter to the LADO.

Where a low-level concern relates to a person employed by a supply agency or a contractor, the individual's employer will be notified about the concern, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Although this policy directly relates to those who work for the School, the School recognises that its safeguarding role extends to the protection of everyone associated with it. Should concerns be raised about people who are not staff or pupils, then they should be reported to the Head or DSL who will take appropriate action and co-operate with the relevant agencies as appropriate.

**Flow Chart Summarising what happens when someone has a concern about a member of staff**



**4. POLICY OWNER**

This policy is owned by the Director of Safeguarding Charlotte Marten [CM1@rugbyschool.net](mailto:CM1@rugbyschool.net) (RSG) and the Governing Body (as part of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy). This is version 1 of this policy. This policy is published on the school website. It is available in hard copy on request. A copy of this policy is available for inspection from the Head’s Office during the school day. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required. This policy and all policies referred to in it are also available to staff on the school’s Employment Self Service (EES).

**5. RELATED POLICIES AND GUIDANCE**

**POLICIES**

Child protection and safeguarding

Staff code of conduct

Discipline policy and procedure

Capability procedure

**STATUTORY GUIDANCE**

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, December 2023)

**OTHER REGULATORY GUIDANCE**

Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees (Charity Commission, June 2022)

How to report a serious incident in your charity (Charity Commission, June 2019)

Guidance on reporting safeguarding concerns in a charity (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, March 2022)

#### **APPENDIX 4: PASTORAL SUPPORT AND EARLY HELP**

OBH aims to provide support as soon as a problem emerges. Literature and posters around the school encourage resilience and a school that openly discusses mental health and wellbeing.

- Parents have regular, easy contact with form teachers and boarding staff, who are the first point of reference for pupils' wellbeing. The Parent Handbook explains procedures and lists contact details.
- The Independent Person, James Martin, joined us in March 2023. He will take a termly assembly allowing pupils to become aware of his role. He is a local Pastor; he will visit school often to establish himself to the boarders. His contact details are available in the pupils' planners and on posters around school and in the boarding houses.
- Information and concerns are shared at daily staff briefings attended by all staff. A weekly safeguarding and pastoral meeting is led by the Head of Pastoral Care. It concentrates on specific children with needs and formulates and reviews welfare plans. Boarding meetings and Staff Meetings also highlight concerns that are then taken to the Pastoral meeting and SMT.
- Children have access to medical support from the school nurse and school doctor. The DSL, nurse and matrons have undertaken a Mental Health First Aid course.
- OBH has a school counsellor who can offer 1:1 counselling and further referral to outside agencies if required.
- CAF (assessment referral threshold) process used as appropriate.
- Liaison with other agencies who support the children such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, and Behaviour Support Services.
- E-safety awareness training is organised every year for pupils.
- An extensive Year 8 leavers programme which include Drug, alcohol, relationships and consent workshops run by outside agencies.
- Talks and lectures are organised for parents and carers offering up-to-date advice and practical tools, to help children with the pressures of growing up.
- Regular and ongoing training is provided for staff.

