LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
Statutory

Each Headteacher and Local Governing Body holds responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection in their school. This template policy must therefore be adopted (and amended) in each Trust school.

Policy Template Approved by Board of Trustees and CEO	
Signed: Name: Mr M Blackman **Chair of Trustees**	Date:2 September 2026
Signed: Name: Dr G Lewis **Chief Executive Officer**	Date: 2 September 2026
School Policy Approved by Local Governing Body	
Signed: Name: P. HEATING **Chair of Local Governing Body**	Date: 22nd September 2026
Authorised for Issue	
Signed: Name: Hannah Cunnane-Dillan **Headteacher**	Date: 22nd September 2026

Document History

Version	Author/Owner	Drafted	Comments
3.1	Gary Lewis	16.07.19	Changes to bring policy in line with KCSIE 2019.
3.2	Gary Lewis	10.09.19	Clarification re external contractors requiring DBS and addition of social care team contact details for Bristol and Somerset LAs.
3.3	Dan McGilloway	12.07.20	Changes to bring policy in line with KCSIE 2020.
4.1	Gary Lewis	09.08.21	Changes to bring policy in line with KCSIE 2021. Significantly rewritten and conformed to The Key Model Policy.

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- 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 the 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, and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

All LSP staff (including support and non-teaching staff) must read Part One: Safeguarding Information for all staff in full of the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Guidance

2. Introduction

Lighthouse School Partnership Board of Trustees and Local Governing Bodies (LGB) recognise the need to ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation and this policy has regard to statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2026 and locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership /Bath & NE Somerset Safeguarding Children Board/ Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (LA safeguarding bodies). This policy will be reviewed annually, as a minimum, and be made available publicly on the school website and on request.

The term safeguarding covers a wide area and numerous policies and guidance which all staff should be aware of. These policies and procedures are detailed below and can be found on the school website, LSP Website, or are available on request.

- LSP Attendance Policy
- LSP Health and Safety Policy
- LSP Complaints Policy
- LSP Staff Anti-Bullying Policy
- LSP Staff Code of Conduct
- The school's Internet/e-safety Policy
- LSP Restrictive Interventions and Safe Touch Policy
- LSP Recruitment Policy
- LSP Preventing Extremism & Radicalisation Policy
- The school's Mental Health Policy
- The school's RHSE policy

School staff play a critical role in Safeguarding and Child Protection as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children and young people, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children and young adults in education. This system is described in statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026). Schools should work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Where the term 'staff' is used in this policy it embraces teachers, support staff, members of the Trust's Central Team, agency and third-party staff and volunteers. Where the term 'Governors' is used it will also include Members and Trustees. Where records are referred to, these may be written or digital. Schools in Lighthouse Schools Partnership use the CPOMS system

- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- Crime and Policing Act 2026, tightens schools safeguarding and corporate accountability.
- *The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children*
- *This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

5. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is where children share nude or semi-nude images consensual and non-consensual, videos or live streams. The risk includes AI-generated content e.g. deepfakes.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

- The local authority (LA)
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

- The early help process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation
- All staff should recognise that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination. Such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health and willingness to seek help. Staff should be alert to this and ensure concerns are considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe

Section 16 and Appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

7.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

A member of the LSP Central Senior Leadership Team provides oversite for safeguarding across the Trust. They can be contacted via 01275 841396 or enquiries@lsp.org.uk for help, advice or support if required. Each School within Lighthouse Schools Partnership must have a DSL who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Out of hours advice can also be sought by email or telephone (staff will have contact details).

When the DSL is absent, the deputy DSL will act as cover. There should be robust cover arrangements in place when the DSL is absent (e.g. illness or leave). There should be a confidential hard mailbox for the DSL and, arrangements to ensure there is no breakdown in safeguarding cover should be in place.

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

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children

8. Information sharing, record keeping and confidentiality

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tacking all forms of abuse. As part of meeting a child's needs, the Trust understands that it is critical to recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies and will contribute to multi-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. Schools should consider the relevancy and necessity of sharing information with another setting. Professional judgement should be used but care should be taken not to omit information where it may be relevant to understanding or managing safeguarding risk. Information shared should be clearly presented and appropriately contextualised.

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing where there are substantiated safeguarding concerns.

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded on CPOMS. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.

We recognise that confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all matters relating to child protection. Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the DSL or alternate DSL with other relevant members of Trust or school staff. This will be on a 'need to know' basis and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or pupils) or promise a child to keep a secret which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

Our School(s) will always undertake to share its intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3.

9. Recognising abuse and taking action

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

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

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is **at risk** of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

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

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

Children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, but this shouldn't stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

In all cases ensure that your concern is immediately recorded and dated on the CPOMS system.

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

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

Family Help

Family Help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. There are two strands of Family Help:

- **Community Based Family Help** - the collective support offered by schools, colleges, health visitors, early years settings and community groups
- **Targeted Family Help** - more focused approach partnership-based support developed in local areas.

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

9.5 If you have concerns about extremism

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

- Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedom of others; or
- Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
- Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).

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

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

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

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

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

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

9.6 If you have a mental health concern

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. The four key roles for education staff are:

- Promoting good mental wellbeing and preventing the onset of mental illness
- Observing pupils and identifying early those who may be experiencing mental health problems or being at risk of developing one
- Ensuring early targeted help is provided
- Liaison with/ referral to specialist services where needed

Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Staff should be aware of the links between mental health and self-harm, eating disorder, suicidal ideation and children making plans to end their

Sex-separated facilities: Schools are required to provide separate toilets and changing facilities for boys and girls aged 8 and over. Schools are also required to allocate and provide separate bedrooms, dormitories, tents, or other overnight sleeping accommodation according to biological sex. **Alternative arrangements:** If a child does not feel comfortable using the facilities designated for their biological sex, the policy should detail how to provide individual, gender-neutral alternative facilities without compromising the availability of single-sex spaces.

Uniforms: Gender-questioning children are generally expected to adhere to the same uniform rules as other children of their biological sex, though schools can make allowances if needed.

5.Prioritising Overall Wellbeing
Avoiding stereotypes: teachers in school must ensure they do not rush to label a child as transgender just because they do not fit into traditional gender stereotypes (e.g., a girl who likes sports or a boy who likes dancing).
Vulnerability assessment: Schools should recognise that children questioning their gender are often highly vulnerable. and further checks may be required for other underlying factors, such as neurodivergence (e.g. autism), mental health struggles, or past trauma.

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

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, contact the Chief Executive of the Trust ceo@lsp.org.uk .

The Headteacher/Chief Executive will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher or Chief Executive, report it directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

In Early Years settings, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale (see appendix 3 for more detail).

9.9 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

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

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school's behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent (i.e. forceful with the intention of hurting - other physical contact will be regulated by schools' positive handling policies)
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol

- That if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
  - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
  - A friend may make a report
  - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
  - A child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
- That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

The NSPCC operate a bespoke helpline for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance. If our staff are concerned about something, they can contact the NSPCC Helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

9.10 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

Our approach is based on guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety for all staff and for DSLs and senior leaders.

Staff and volunteer responsibilities when responding to an incident

If staff or volunteers are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos which might also include deep fakes, this must be reported to the DSL immediately.

Staff/Volunteers must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

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

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

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

Referring to the police
If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through contact with a safer schools officer, a police community support officer, local neighbourhood police or by dialing 101.

Recording incidents
All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage
Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our relationships and sex education curriculum. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation
- Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:
- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images

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

9.11 Reporting systems for our pupils

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils

- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year
- In accordance with RSHE 2025, online harms include exposure to illegal or manipulative content such as gambling, online hate, and extremist forums. Staff must be trained to understand how such issues are introduced via social platforms and gaming channels and report concerns in line with this policy.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety.
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems
- Carry out a review of filtering and monitoring system checks at least once per academic year. Supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by the school community that might be specific to your area.

11. Filtering and monitoring and AI tools

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors will do all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system.

As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors will ensure:

- The school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and annually review their effectiveness
- That they consider the number of and age range of their children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks
- That the School's senior leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively,
- That the School's senior leadership team and relevant staff know how to escalate concerns when identified.

To meet the requirements of the Department for Education's filtering and monitoring standards, the school will:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.

14. Pupils with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

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

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

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

15. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads
- We have appointed a designated teacher, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.
- The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

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

16. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

16.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

- failure to comply with a statutory or legal obligation;
- abuse of authority;
- sexual, physical or emotional abuse of pupils or vulnerable adults;
- unfair discrimination or favouritism;
- racist incidents or acts, or racial harassment; and
- any attempt to prevent disclosure of any of the issues listed.

Where the alleged activity or behaviour cannot be dealt with under the scope of other procedures then consideration should be given to using this whistleblowing policy or the Business Ethics Policy, e.g.

- any criminal activity;
- dangerous practices;
- abuse of position;
- sexual or physical abuse of pupils or others;
- other unethical conduct.

Untrue and Malicious/Vexatious Allegations

If a member of staff makes an allegation in good faith but it is not confirmed by further inquiry the matter will be closed and no further action taken.

If, however, the inquiry shows that untrue allegations were malicious and/or vexatious or made for personal gain then the Trust will consider taking disciplinary action against the member of staff.
All allegations should be capable of being dealt with through the disciplinary procedure and will be considered appropriately.

Anonymous allegations

Anonymous allegations will only be considered if the issues raised are:

- Very serious;
- The credibility of the allegation is considered to be high;
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation is high.

Safeguard Against Reprisal, Harassment and victimisation

The Trust will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of members of staff when matters are raised in accordance with the PIDA provisions. Any member of staff who victimises or harasses a member of staff as a result of their having raised a concern in accordance with the whistleblowing policy will be dealt with under the Trust disciplinary procedures.

The PIDA sets out the full statutory rights and obligations of members of staff wishing to whistle-blow.

Confidentiality

The Trust recognises that members of staff may want to raise concerns in confidence and will do its utmost to protect the identity of members of staff who raise a concern and do not want their name disclosed. However, investigation into the concern could reveal the source of the information; and statements may be required from the member of staff as part of the evidence, which would be seen by all parties involved. If the investigation leads to prosecution and the whistle-blower is likely to be called in to give evidence in court.

handled appropriately, the concerns may be raised with the Chair of the Board of Trustees via email chairoftrustees@lsp.org.uk.

If an employee or other potential whistleblower is concerned about malpractice, wrongdoing or a possible safeguarding risk and is unsure whether to raise this with the school or Trust, he or she may find it helpful to contact the independent whistleblowing charity Protect (formerly known as Public Concern at Work) for advice. Protect can advise how best to raise a concern, while minimising any risk to the whistleblower. They can be contacted on tel. 0207 404 6609, email whistle@protect-advice.org.uk , website https://protect-advice.org.uk/ .

Taking the matter further

If no action is to be taken and/or you are not satisfied with the way the matter has been dealt with, you can make a complaint under the Trust Complaints Procedure or raise your concerns with other organisations as listed below:

- the Trust Chief Executive Officer;
- the Department for Education;
- the Office of the Regional Director for the South West;
- a relevant professional body or regulatory organisation;
- the Children's Commissioner for England;
- the Public Services Ombudsman for England;
- OFSTED;
- a solicitor;
- the Police - for concerns of criminal behaviour;
- a trade union or professional association;
- Protect (an independent charity that provides free advice for persons who wish to express concern about fraud and other serious malpractice. Protect - Speak up stop harm (protect-advice.org.uk).

17. Record-keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing on the CPOMS system. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained after they have left the school for the time periods set out in LSP Records Management Policy Appendix B Retention Schedule.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable. This should happen if the volunteer is regularly in school or is working unsupervised with children. The volunteer vetting process will require some volunteers to have additional safeguarding checks.

18.2 The DSL and deputy/deputies

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

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

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

18.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities. This must contain all additions to KCSIE as schools have a duty to remain compliant at all times throughout a year. This should be at Basic Awareness level and may be provided by face to face or online resource.

18.4 Recruitment - interview panels

At least one person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training.

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

18.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families

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

19. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the LSP Board of Trustees and key members of the Central Team including the Trust's Chief Executive. At every review, it will then be approved by the Local Governing Body.

20. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Health and Safety
- Attendance
- Online Safety
- Mobile phone use
- Equality
- Restrictive Interventions and Safe Touch Policy
- Relationships , Health and Sex Education (RHSE)

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

Appendix 1: Types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

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

Emotional abuse may involve:

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

Sexual abuse involves forcing, causing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of 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
- 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.

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

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

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

Recruitment and selection process

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Amend or add to this as applicable to reflect your own approach.

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

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

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

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

Application forms

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders
- A CV will never be accepted as an alternative to a full application

Shortlisting

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

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns
- Identify if and when a digital screening/web search should be conducted (this is recommended for shortlisted candidates for pupil facing posts - guidance on how this should be conducted is available from LSP HR)

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

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share

Pre-appointment vetting checks

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

New staff

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

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. Where available, these will include:
    - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
    - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked
- Check that candidates taking up a management position* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

  * Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers, principals and deputy/assistant headteachers.

For schools with pupils aged 8 years and younger: *we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.*

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school while children are on site has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

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

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors. If the individual has had their own DBS check schools will ask to see the individual's certificate and check it is at the level required.

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

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

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

For schools with pupils aged 8 years and younger: For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Where concerns are raised about contractors schools should share these with agencies or businesses and it is expected that the school will take the lead in handling allegations.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks including enhanced DBS with barred list checks are carried out.

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

If there are concerns about a trainee teacher, these concerns should be raised with the training providers but also raised with the LADO. It is expected that the school will take the lead in handling allegations.

For schools with pupils aged 8 years and younger: In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

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

Pupils staying with host families

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

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

Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

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

False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)

Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

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

- Conduct basic enquiries to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below. This should be done quickly so as not to delay liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO).
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority (LADO). This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. The LADO will determine if the school is to investigate further or if they wish to make alternative arrangements to investigate the allegation. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the LADO - for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police.)

The following steps will need to be agreed with the LADO.

- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the LADO (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the LADO, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

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

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

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Organisations or Individuals using school premises

Schools may receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities). As with any safeguarding allegation, schools will follow their safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

Timescales

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

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

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

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

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

Record-keeping

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

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

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

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

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

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

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

Learning lessons

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

(The section is based on 'Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.)

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold for referral to the LADO as set out in section 1 above. If in doubt, a head teacher should seek advice from the LADO about whether in their view a threshold is met.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

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

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

KCSIE 2026 gives examples of such behaviour:

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

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

This appendix is mostly based on the advice in Keeping Children Safe in Education, in particular annex B.

Children missing from education

The 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (2024) guidance is now statutory. Daily attendance must be shared with DfE, and absence concerns escalated to children's services

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Domestic abuse

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

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Older children may also experience domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is the procedure where police forces are part of Operation Encompass - if your local force is not, check your local procedures and adapt if necessary.

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

Homelessness

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

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

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
    - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
    - Having limited level of integration within UK society
    - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
    - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
    - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
    - Talking about FGM in conversation - for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
    - Being unexpectedly absent from school
    - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

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

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 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.

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

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

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place

- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

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

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

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

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school and online.

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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse and other prejudice-based incidents
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- 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 nudes and semi nudes images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

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

Serious violence

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

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

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

- Being male
- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- Having experienced child maltreatment
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or

LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
Statutory

Each Headteacher and Local Governing Body holds responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection in their school. This template policy must therefore be adopted (and amended) in each Trust school.

Policy Template Approved by Board of Trustees and CEO	
Signed: M Blackman Name: Mr M Blackman **Chair of Trustees**	Date:2 September 2026
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Document History

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3.1	Gary Lewis	16.07.19	Changes to bring policy in line with KCSIE 2019.
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SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Statutory

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- 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 the 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, and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

All LSP staff (including support and non-teaching staff) must read Part One: Safeguarding Information for all staff in full of the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Guidance

2. Introduction

Lighthouse School Partnership Board of Trustees and Local Governing Bodies (LGB) recognise the need to ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation and this policy has regard to statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2026 and locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership /Bath & NE Somerset Safeguarding Children Board/ Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (LA safeguarding bodies). This policy will be reviewed annually, as a minimum, and be made available publicly on the school website and on request.

The term safeguarding covers a wide area and numerous policies and guidance which all staff should be aware of. These policies and procedures are detailed below and can be found on the school website, LSP Website, or are available on request.

- LSP Attendance Policy
- LSP Health and Safety Policy
- LSP Complaints Policy
- LSP Staff Anti-Bullying Policy
- LSP Staff Code of Conduct
- The school's Internet/e-safety Policy
- LSP Restrictive Interventions and Safe Touch Policy
- LSP Recruitment Policy
- LSP Preventing Extremism & Radicalisation Policy
- The school's Mental Health Policy
- The school's RHSE policy

School staff play a critical role in Safeguarding and Child Protection as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children and young people, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children and young adults in education. This system is described in statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026). Schools should work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Where the term 'staff' is used in this policy it embraces teachers, support staff, members of the Trust's Central Team, agency and third-party staff and volunteers. Where the term 'Governors' is used it will also include Members and Trustees. Where records are referred to, these may be written or digital. Schools in Lighthouse Schools Partnership use the CPOMS system

- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- Crime and Policing Act 2026, tightens schools safeguarding and corporate accountability.
- *The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children*
- *This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

5. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is where children share nude or semi-nude images consensual and non-consensual, videos or live streams. The risk includes AI-generated content e.g. deepfakes.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

- The local authority (LA)
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

- The early help process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation
- All staff should recognise that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination. Such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health and willingness to seek help. Staff should be alert to this and ensure concerns are considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe

Section 16 and Appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

7.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

A member of the LSP Central Senior Leadership Team provides oversite for safeguarding across the Trust. They can be contacted via 01275 841396 or enquiries@lsp.org.uk for help, advice or support if required. Each School within Lighthouse Schools Partnership must have a DSL who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Out of hours advice can also be sought by email or telephone (staff will have contact details).

When the DSL is absent, the deputy DSL will act as cover. There should be robust cover arrangements in place when the DSL is absent (e.g. illness or leave). There should be a confidential hard mailbox for the DSL and, arrangements to ensure there is no breakdown in safeguarding cover should be in place.

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

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children

8. Information sharing, record keeping and confidentiality

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tacking all forms of abuse. As part of meeting a child's needs, the Trust understands that it is critical to recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies and will contribute to multi-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. Schools should consider the relevancy and necessity of sharing information with another setting. Professional judgement should be used but care should be taken not to omit information where it may be relevant to understanding or managing safeguarding risk. Information shared should be clearly presented and appropriately contextualised.

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing where there are substantiated safeguarding concerns.

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded on CPOMS. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.

We recognise that confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all matters relating to child protection. Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the DSL or alternate DSL with other relevant members of Trust or school staff. This will be on a 'need to know' basis and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or pupils) or promise a child to keep a secret which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

Our School(s) will always undertake to share its intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3.

9. Recognising abuse and taking action

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

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

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is **at risk** of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

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

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

Children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, but this shouldn't stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

In all cases ensure that your concern is immediately recorded and dated on the CPOMS system.

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

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

Family Help

Family Help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. There are two strands of Family Help:

- **Community Based Family Help** - the collective support offered by schools, colleges, health visitors, early years settings and community groups
- **Targeted Family Help** - more focused approach partnership-based support developed in local areas.

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

9.5 If you have concerns about extremism

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

- Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedom of others; or
- Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
- Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).

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

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

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

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

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

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

9.6 If you have a mental health concern

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. The four key roles for education staff are:

- Promoting good mental wellbeing and preventing the onset of mental illness
- Observing pupils and identifying early those who may be experiencing mental health problems or being at risk of developing one
- Ensuring early targeted help is provided
- Liaison with/ referral to specialist services where needed

Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Staff should be aware of the links between mental health and self-harm, eating disorder, suicidal ideation and children making plans to end their

Sex-separated facilities: Schools are required to provide separate toilets and changing facilities for boys and girls aged 8 and over. Schools are also required to allocate and provide separate bedrooms, dormitories, tents, or other overnight sleeping accommodation according to biological sex. **Alternative arrangements:** If a child does not feel comfortable using the facilities designated for their biological sex, the policy should detail how to provide individual, gender-neutral alternative facilities without compromising the availability of single-sex spaces.

Uniforms: Gender-questioning children are generally expected to adhere to the same uniform rules as other children of their biological sex, though schools can make allowances if needed.

5.Prioritising Overall Wellbeing
Avoiding stereotypes: teachers in school must ensure they do not rush to label a child as transgender just because they do not fit into traditional gender stereotypes (e.g., a girl who likes sports or a boy who likes dancing).
Vulnerability assessment: Schools should recognise that children questioning their gender are often highly vulnerable. and further checks may be required for other underlying factors, such as neurodivergence (e.g. autism), mental health struggles, or past trauma.

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

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, contact the Chief Executive of the Trust ceo@lsp.org.uk .

The Headteacher/Chief Executive will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher or Chief Executive, report it directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

In Early Years settings, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale (see appendix 3 for more detail).

9.9 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

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

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school's behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent (i.e. forceful with the intention of hurting - other physical contact will be regulated by schools' positive handling policies)
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol

- That if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
  - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
  - A friend may make a report
  - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
  - A child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
- That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

The NSPCC operate a bespoke helpline for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance. If our staff are concerned about something, they can contact the NSPCC Helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

9.10 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

Our approach is based on guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety for all staff and for DSLs and senior leaders.

Staff and volunteer responsibilities when responding to an incident

If staff or volunteers are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos which might also include deep fakes, this must be reported to the DSL immediately.

Staff/Volunteers must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

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

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

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

Referring to the police
If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through contact with a safer schools officer, a police community support officer, local neighbourhood police or by dialing 101.

Recording incidents
All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage
Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our relationships and sex education curriculum. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation
- Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:
- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images

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

9.11 Reporting systems for our pupils

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils

- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year
- In accordance with RSHE 2025, online harms include exposure to illegal or manipulative content such as gambling, online hate, and extremist forums. Staff must be trained to understand how such issues are introduced via social platforms and gaming channels and report concerns in line with this policy.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety.
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems
- Carry out a review of filtering and monitoring system checks at least once per academic year. Supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by the school community that might be specific to your area.

11. Filtering and monitoring and AI tools

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors will do all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system.

As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors will ensure:

- The school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and annually review their effectiveness
- That they consider the number of and age range of their children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks
- That the School's senior leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively,
- That the School's senior leadership team and relevant staff know how to escalate concerns when identified.

To meet the requirements of the Department for Education's filtering and monitoring standards, the school will:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.

14. Pupils with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

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

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

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

15. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads
- We have appointed a designated teacher, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.
- The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

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

16. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

16.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

- failure to comply with a statutory or legal obligation;
- abuse of authority;
- sexual, physical or emotional abuse of pupils or vulnerable adults;
- unfair discrimination or favouritism;
- racist incidents or acts, or racial harassment; and
- any attempt to prevent disclosure of any of the issues listed.

Where the alleged activity or behaviour cannot be dealt with under the scope of other procedures then consideration should be given to using this whistleblowing policy or the Business Ethics Policy, e.g.

- any criminal activity;
- dangerous practices;
- abuse of position;
- sexual or physical abuse of pupils or others;
- other unethical conduct.

Untrue and Malicious/Vexatious Allegations

If a member of staff makes an allegation in good faith but it is not confirmed by further inquiry the matter will be closed and no further action taken.

If, however, the inquiry shows that untrue allegations were malicious and/or vexatious or made for personal gain then the Trust will consider taking disciplinary action against the member of staff.
All allegations should be capable of being dealt with through the disciplinary procedure and will be considered appropriately.

Anonymous allegations

Anonymous allegations will only be considered if the issues raised are:

- Very serious;
- The credibility of the allegation is considered to be high;
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation is high.

Safeguard Against Reprisal, Harassment and victimisation

The Trust will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of members of staff when matters are raised in accordance with the PIDA provisions. Any member of staff who victimises or harasses a member of staff as a result of their having raised a concern in accordance with the whistleblowing policy will be dealt with under the Trust disciplinary procedures.

The PIDA sets out the full statutory rights and obligations of members of staff wishing to whistle-blow.

Confidentiality

The Trust recognises that members of staff may want to raise concerns in confidence and will do its utmost to protect the identity of members of staff who raise a concern and do not want their name disclosed. However, investigation into the concern could reveal the source of the information; and statements may be required from the member of staff as part of the evidence, which would be seen by all parties involved. If the investigation leads to prosecution and the whistle-blower is likely to be called in to give evidence in court.

handled appropriately, the concerns may be raised with the Chair of the Board of Trustees via email chairoftrustees@lsp.org.uk.

If an employee or other potential whistleblower is concerned about malpractice, wrongdoing or a possible safeguarding risk and is unsure whether to raise this with the school or Trust, he or she may find it helpful to contact the independent whistleblowing charity Protect (formerly known as Public Concern at Work) for advice. Protect can advise how best to raise a concern, while minimising any risk to the whistleblower. They can be contacted on tel. 0207 404 6609, email whistle@protect-advice.org.uk , website https://protect-advice.org.uk/ .

Taking the matter further

If no action is to be taken and/or you are not satisfied with the way the matter has been dealt with, you can make a complaint under the Trust Complaints Procedure or raise your concerns with other organisations as listed below:

- the Trust Chief Executive Officer;
- the Department for Education;
- the Office of the Regional Director for the South West;
- a relevant professional body or regulatory organisation;
- the Children's Commissioner for England;
- the Public Services Ombudsman for England;
- OFSTED;
- a solicitor;
- the Police - for concerns of criminal behaviour;
- a trade union or professional association;
- Protect (an independent charity that provides free advice for persons who wish to express concern about fraud and other serious malpractice. Protect - Speak up stop harm (protect-advice.org.uk).

17. Record-keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing on the CPOMS system. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained after they have left the school for the time periods set out in LSP Records Management Policy Appendix B Retention Schedule.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable. This should happen if the volunteer is regularly in school or is working unsupervised with children. The volunteer vetting process will require some volunteers to have additional safeguarding checks.

18.2 The DSL and deputy/deputies

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

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

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

18.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities. This must contain all additions to KCSIE as schools have a duty to remain compliant at all times throughout a year. This should be at Basic Awareness level and may be provided by face to face or online resource.

18.4 Recruitment - interview panels

At least one person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training.

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

18.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families

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

19. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the LSP Board of Trustees and key members of the Central Team including the Trust's Chief Executive. At every review, it will then be approved by the Local Governing Body.

20. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Health and Safety
- Attendance
- Online Safety
- Mobile phone use
- Equality
- Restrictive Interventions and Safe Touch Policy
- Relationships , Health and Sex Education (RHSE)

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

Appendix 1: Types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

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

Emotional abuse may involve:

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

Sexual abuse involves forcing, causing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of 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
- 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.

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

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

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

Recruitment and selection process

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Amend or add to this as applicable to reflect your own approach.

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

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

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

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

Application forms

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders
- A CV will never be accepted as an alternative to a full application

Shortlisting

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

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns
- Identify if and when a digital screening/web search should be conducted (this is recommended for shortlisted candidates for pupil facing posts - guidance on how this should be conducted is available from LSP HR)

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

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share

Pre-appointment vetting checks

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

New staff

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

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. Where available, these will include:
    - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
    - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked
- Check that candidates taking up a management position* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

  * Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers, principals and deputy/assistant headteachers.

For schools with pupils aged 8 years and younger: *we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.*

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school while children are on site has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

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

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors. If the individual has had their own DBS check schools will ask to see the individual's certificate and check it is at the level required.

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

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

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

For schools with pupils aged 8 years and younger: For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Where concerns are raised about contractors schools should share these with agencies or businesses and it is expected that the school will take the lead in handling allegations.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks including enhanced DBS with barred list checks are carried out.

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

If there are concerns about a trainee teacher, these concerns should be raised with the training providers but also raised with the LADO. It is expected that the school will take the lead in handling allegations.

For schools with pupils aged 8 years and younger: In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

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

Pupils staying with host families

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

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

Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

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

False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)

Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

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

- Conduct basic enquiries to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below. This should be done quickly so as not to delay liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO).
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority (LADO). This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. The LADO will determine if the school is to investigate further or if they wish to make alternative arrangements to investigate the allegation. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police before consulting the LADO - for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police.)

The following steps will need to be agreed with the LADO.

- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the LADO (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the LADO, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

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

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

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Organisations or Individuals using school premises

Schools may receive an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities). As with any safeguarding allegation, schools will follow their safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

Timescales

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

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

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

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

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

Record-keeping

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

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

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

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

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

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

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

Learning lessons

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

(The section is based on 'Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.)

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold for referral to the LADO as set out in section 1 above. If in doubt, a head teacher should seek advice from the LADO about whether in their view a threshold is met.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

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

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern - no matter how small - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

KCSIE 2026 gives examples of such behaviour:

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

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

This appendix is mostly based on the advice in Keeping Children Safe in Education, in particular annex B.

Children missing from education

The 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (2024) guidance is now statutory. Daily attendance must be shared with DfE, and absence concerns escalated to children's services

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Domestic abuse

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

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Older children may also experience domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is the procedure where police forces are part of Operation Encompass - if your local force is not, check your local procedures and adapt if necessary.

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

Homelessness

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

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

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
    - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
    - Having limited level of integration within UK society
    - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
    - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
    - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
    - Talking about FGM in conversation - for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
    - Being unexpectedly absent from school
    - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

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

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 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.

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

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

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place

- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

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

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

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

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school and online.

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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse and other prejudice-based incidents
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- 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 nudes and semi nudes images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

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

Serious violence

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

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

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

- Being male
- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- Having experienced child maltreatment
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or