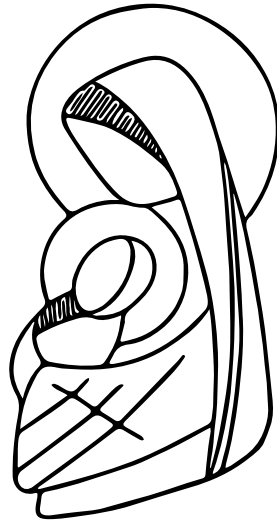


Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 4.1



OUR LADY'S

Nurturing, Building, Preparing

Approved by: The Board of Trustees

Last amended on: 1 September 2026

Last reviewed/approved by Trustees on:
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This document will be amended as and when relevant updates are released

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Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) (EYFS - Reception Class) (School)	David Boynes	01344 773394 DSL@olps.co.uk
Deputy DSLs	Natalie John Isabel Barker (after school and holiday club manager) Lydia Piper (after school and holiday club manager)	01344 773394 nataliej@olps.co.uk isabelb@olps.co.uk lydiap@olps.co.uk
Deputy DSL (EYFS - Owlets to Pre-School Class - Nursery)	Claire Taylor	01344 773394 nurserymanager@olps.co.uk
SENDCo	Natalie John	01344 773394 nataliej@olps.co.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Michelle Pinnock-Ouma	07801664588 (Wokingham)
Referral and Assessment Team		0118 908 8002 (Wokingham) 01344 352 005 (Bracknell) 01344 786543 (out of hours) 01329 225379 (Hampshire)
Chair of Trustees	Amy Empson	01344 773394 amye@olps.co.uk
Trustee (Safeguarding)	Gemma Nash	01344 773394 gemman@olps.co.uk
Channel helpline		020 7340 7264
Thames Valley Police		0845 8505 505
NSPCC		0808 800 5000
Ofsted		0300 123 4666

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

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

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (for introduction Sept 2026)

-
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The 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 and as such covers children in the EYFS.

We will continue to work with children's social care, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners to help keep children safe. We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from DfE and other relevant bodies.

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, inside or outside the home, including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes – the School and Nursery always considers the best interests of the child.

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 or children witnessing (see, hear or experience) the ill treatment of others. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

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

Making and Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams including those generated using AI.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (Wokingham LA) – we will follow their guidance and procedures
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

4. Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

KCSIE 2026 para 214-282 identifies these 10 categories:

1. need a social worker
2. absent from education,
3. in elective home education,
4. mental health support,
5. looked after children
6. care leavers,
7. young carers,
8. children with SEND or health issues,
9. lesbian, gay or bisexual,
10. questioning their gender

See Appendix 8 for a summary of how we support such pupils.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing from education
- Whose parent/carers has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

4.1 Prejudice-Based Harm and Discriminatory Behaviour

The school recognises that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, antisemitism, Islamophobia and other forms of discriminatory behaviour. Such experiences may have a significant impact on a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, sense of safety and willingness to seek help.

All staff should be alert to the signs and impact of prejudice-based harm and ensure that concerns are considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.

The school promotes an inclusive and anti-discriminatory culture in which prejudice-based behaviour is recognised, challenged and addressed. Incidents involving prejudice-based harm will be recorded, monitored and reviewed by the DSL to determine whether they raise safeguarding concerns or indicate wider risks to a child.

Reports of discriminatory behaviour will not be dismissed as banter, difference of opinion or isolated incidents without appropriate consideration of their impact on the child concerned.

5. Roles and responsibilities

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

KCSIE 2026 para 171 requires that a review of the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring is carried out at least once every academic year, carried out by the SLT member responsible for filtering and monitoring, with the support of the school's DSL and IT support. This includes checks that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations, and a record is kept of these checks.

Our practice is that the DSL checks the filtering and monitoring capacity of the school in tandem with our IT supplier, TSI World. We receive a weekly update of all blocked sites using a robust filtering service. These are checked by the DSL and any further information required is sought from the IT supplier. We receive a weekly log summary and daily alerts if there is a need. There are blocks placed upon all internet connected devices within the school site. This is reviewed by the Trustees at the Annual Review, as part of the Safeguarding report.

5.1 All staff

All staff, including staff who do not work directly with children, are required to read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full. The school will ensure that staff understand and can discharge the safeguarding responsibilities outlined within Part One.

All staff sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance. Understanding amongst staff is then checked using questionnaires and individual feedback from the DSL follows where necessary.

All staff will be aware of:

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

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

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

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

The signs of different types of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, and those listed in Part 1 of KCSiE, including child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation

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

Section 15 (Training) and appendix 4 (Specific Safeguarding Issues from Part 1 of KCSiE) of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is David Boynes, Acting Head. 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. Robust cover arrangements for periods when the DSL is unavailable include a confidential shared mailbox and multiple DDSLs on the staff team.

Mr Boynes can be contacted on DSL@olps.co.uk out of school hours.

When the DSL is absent during school time, the deputies – Natalie John (SEND/CO) and Claire Taylor (Nursery Manager) – will act as cover.

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

Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters

Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so

Contribute to the assessment of children

Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly

The DSL will also keep the headteacher informed of any issues, and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job description in [Annex B of KCSiE \(2026\)](#).

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

5.3 The governing board (The Trustees)

The Trustees will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development

- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. The Trustees will hold an annual review and the review will be updated when needed.
- Appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full Trustee board. This is always a different person from the DSL. At Our Lady's, this is Mrs Gemma Nash.

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

All Trustees will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

Section 15 (Training) of this policy has information on how trustees are supported to fulfil their role.

5.4 The headteacher

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

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
 - Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
 - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect and exploitation
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, and updating the content of the training regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see Appendix 3)
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person

6. Confidentiality

6.1 Maintaining records The DSL will be responsible to maintaining accurate records of any safeguarding information. This information will be stored and shared as detailed in [sections 6.2 and 6.3](#).

6.2 Confidentiality of records

All records in relation to safeguarding are kept in a secure, locked cabinet. These records are stored separately to other student or staff records. Access is restricted to specific staff i.e. the DSL, Deputy DSLs

Staff should keep a written record of the rationale for any decision made.

All staff will understand that child protection warrants a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved, but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL in the first instance or with designated alternatives i.e. Deputy DSL. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will only disseminate any concerns on a 'need-to-know' basis.

6.3 Data protection and right of access to records

Child protection information, like all other personal information held by the school will be stored and handled in line with Data Protection Act 2018 principles.

Information retained for these purposes will be:

- Handled in a fair, lawful and transparent manner.
- Information will only be collected when there is a legitimate reason to do so i.e. the protection of pupils from harm.
- Only be used for the reason that it is collected.
- Accurate, adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- Kept for as long as there is a justifiable reason to do so.
- Processed in accordance with the data subject's rights. Data should generally only be processed with the consent of the individual that it concerns. However, it may be lawful to do so without consent when it is necessary to protect an individual from coming to harm. This should be done in a timely manner, essential for effective safeguarding.
- "Record of Concern" forms and other documentation in any form will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.
- Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen.
- Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the Acting Head.

The DPA does not prevent staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

KCSIE 2026 para 145-146 emphasises that the **data protection laws do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe** and that **fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.**

6.4 Transfer of records

Where children leave school (including for in-year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school within five working days of the transfer. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit. If the School receives a CP file the DSL must be informed and key staff such as the SENDCo made aware. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Staff should not give guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to disclose something serious.

However, measures should be taken to ensure that this information is only passed on to the relevant people to ensure proper action is taken. Staff should not pass any information on to people who do not need to know, as this could cause undue stress and anxiety to all involved.

If an allegation towards an employee is made, this should not be discussed in a public forum, and media requests that may happen as a result, should be passed to the Acting Head.

If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests

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 (Record keeping), and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3.

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

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

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

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. Use the contacts list at the start of this policy to help. **Anyone can make a referral** and there is no requirement to seek parental permission to do so.

Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

Once a disclosure has been reported to the DSL they will ensure that action is taken as soon as possible, whilst considering the following:

- The procedures of the Local Safeguarding Partnership - dependent on the area that is applicable i.e. related to the child's home address.
- The views of the pupil, so long as they have sufficient understanding and maturity, as well as being properly informed. There may be times that an incident is so serious that the decisions made will override the wishes of the pupil.
- Parental wishes, if there is no conflict with the pupil's best interests and they are properly informed. The DSL may choose (after gaining advice from the relevant agency) that it is inappropriate to inform the parents if the pupil's welfare will be put at further risk. The parental wishes may be overridden if circumstances mean this is necessary.
- Confidentiality.

The member of staff or volunteer that has raised the concern, and the pupil will be kept informed of the actions being taken, so long as this is appropriate.

Where there are doubts about the need for action to be taken, the DSL will consult with the relevant agency at the local authority to gain advice, on a confidential 'no name' basis. If the outcome is that a referral should be made, this will be done without delay.

Written confirmation of referrals will be made to the relevant social services (where a referral has been made by telephone) within 24 hours. If no acknowledgment has been received within a day, the DSL will contact social services again to ensure suitable action has been taken to protect the pupil.

If the outcome is not satisfactory, or the pupil's situation appears to be getting worse, the DSL will ask for re-consideration of the case until the pupil's situation improves.

All details of the referral will be recorded in writing in the pupil's child protection record.

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

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

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

Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset

Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner

Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret

Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it

Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process

7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4 of this policy.

Any teacher who either:

- Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

...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 must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

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

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

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

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

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

7.5 Family Help (including targeted early help and statutory services)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 combines “Early Help” and “Section 17” support with a unified “Family Help” approach, intending that families experience a single, coherent pathway with a named lead practitioner, either a social worker or practitioner from partner agencies. Family Help is designed to be delivered through multi-disciplinary teams, enabling professionals to collaborate earlier and more effectively.

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.

Professionals should be alert to the need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have an EHCP)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves
- has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, gangs, organised crime or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, had suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of permanent exclusion or in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of honour or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.

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

Wokingham Borough Council offer an Integrated Early Help service to provide whole family and group-based support to children, young people and their parents/carers who have been assessed as being in need of more support than universal services provide. Referrals are received through the Assessment Team and Children’s Service Social Work teams.

7.6 If you have concerns about extremism

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

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children’s social care. Make a referral to local authority children’s social care directly, if appropriate (see [Referral](#) below). 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

7.7 If you have a mental health concern

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

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

If a child is struggling with their mental health, is self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which staff in school are well placed to recognise. These could include:

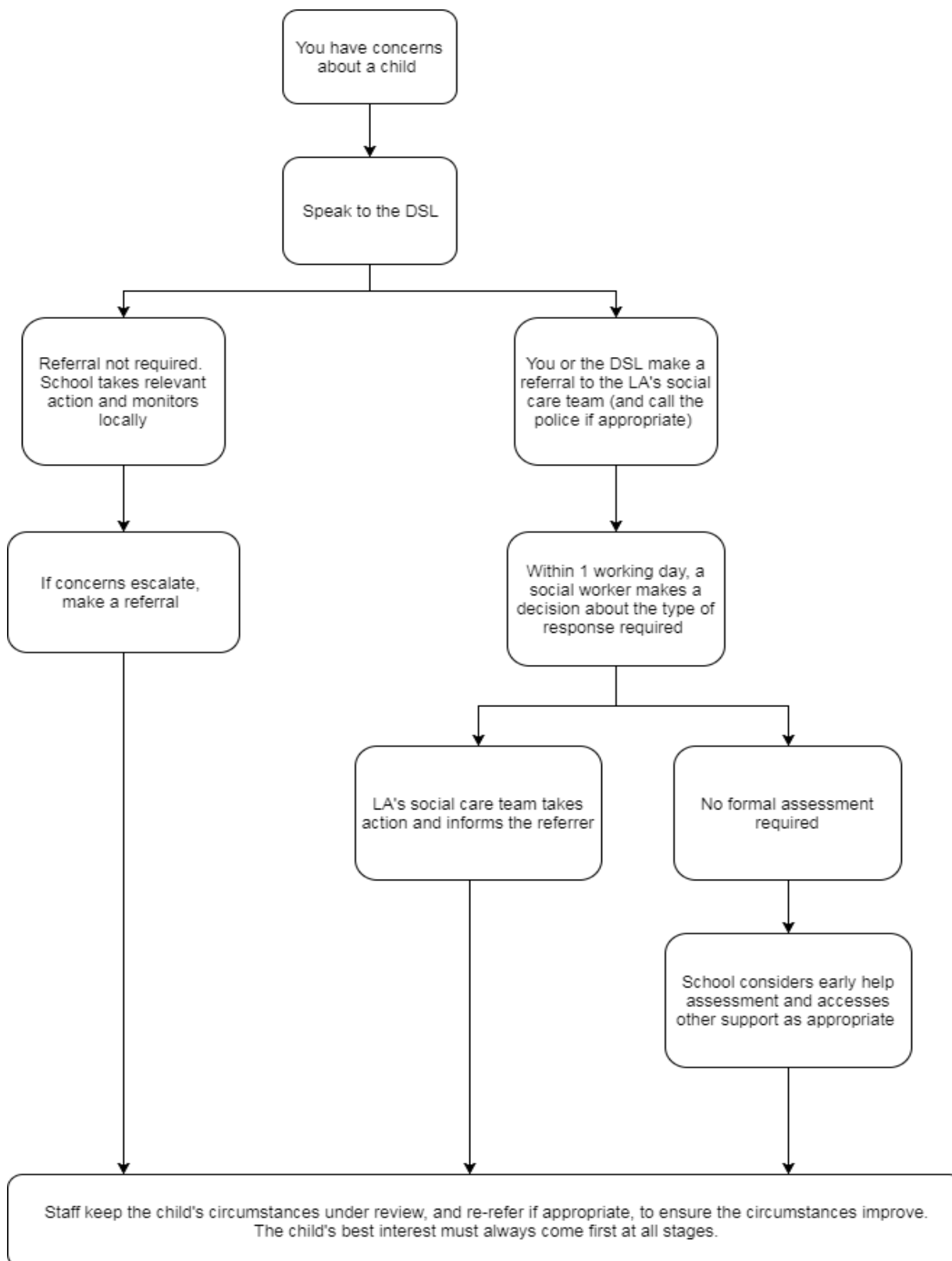
- significant changes in behaviour,
- ongoing difficulty sleeping,
- withdrawing from social situations,
- not wanting to do things they usually like, and
- physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Not every child who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, staff can identify children who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention. The school arranges training for staff in mental health first aid (explain detail or other arrangements that make it clear how the school knows how to respond appropriately)

If staff have a concern about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern, they must speak to the DSL or a deputy. If staff feel that a child is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

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

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



7.8 Allegations about a staff member, supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor

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

The Acting Head/chair of Trustees will then follow the procedures set out in Appendix 3, if appropriate.

If there is any conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, it should be referred directly to the LADO (see Important contacts at the start of this policy).

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

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

Advice relating to 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 and colleges should follow their safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

7.9 Child-on-child allegations of abuse made against other pupils

All staff are aware that children are capable of abusing their peers i.e., child-on-child abuse. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously by the school. The school has a zero tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse, recognising it as a preventable safeguarding issue for both the victim and alleged perpetrator. Timely, evidence-based support can prevent children from going on to commit abuse or violence. We minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse through an ethos of care and respect, through modelling respectful behaviour, through PSHEE, and through establishing trusted relationships that give children confidence to speak out.

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. There is a zero tolerance policy at Our Lady’s.

Child-on-child abuse can manifest itself in many ways, this is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm
- physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon,
- harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment – which may include misogyny/misandry. Part five of this guidance sets out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of this nature,
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including those generated using AI.
- 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,
- upskirting (which is a criminal offence),
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

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

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol

- Refers to abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Involves bullying (including cyber, prejudice-based and discriminatory)
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

7.9 Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, can occur online and offline, both physically and verbally, and are never acceptable.

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

Sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 are defined as follows:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

KCSiE 2026 para 540 emphasises that schools and colleges should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs.

Sexual harassment means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. Within this Policy, sexual harassment is referred to in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include but is not limited to:

- sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- sexual "jokes" or taunting
- physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - non-consensual & consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
 - sexualised online bullying
 - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
 - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats
 - upskirting

It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. The victim should never be made to feel that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment or be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

If a pupil makes a disclosure directly to a member of staff he/she must follow the process as set out under If a child makes a disclosure to you in this Policy. Staff are reminded not to view or forward illegal images of a child.

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL or DDSL should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Victims may not disclose the whole picture immediately and may be more comfortable providing information on a piecemeal basis. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged and the school will ask the victim if they would find it helpful to have a designated trusted adult to talk to about their needs. The choice of any such adult should be the victim's and the school will respect and support this choice.

Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

See appendix 4 for more information about specific safeguarding issues including child-on-child abuse.

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

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

You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it

The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence

The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed

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

Our Lady's Preparatory School recognises that abuse is devastating for a child and can result in significant distress and anxiety. As part of our continued awareness of the Human Rights and Equality Act (2014) we will endeavour to support pupils by:

- Ensuring that all concerns, suspicions and disclosures are taken seriously.
- Following the School's own policies and procedures accordingly.
- Ensuring regular communication between School and home to keep all parties informed.
- Cooperating fully with the relevant statutory agencies.
- Offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of support as necessary.
- Responding sympathetically to any request for time-out to deal with distress or anxiety.
- Maintaining confidentiality, and sharing information on a need-to-know basis, only with relevant individuals / agencies.
- Storing records securely.

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

KCSiE reminds schools of the importance of well-promoted, and accessible systems that enable children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be taken seriously.

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent. We use lessons and assemblies to teach children about healthy, positive relationships, how to report concerns, and to help them understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is. We aim to provide children with the language to report abuse, so they know how to tell a trusted adult if anyone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 7.10 below)
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
 - How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
 - That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
 - That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
 - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
 - A friend may make a report
 - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
 - A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
 - That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
 - That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
 - The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
 - That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

7.10 Making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

This section covers the consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including those generated using AI.

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as ‘sexting’ or ‘youth produced sexual imagery’), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

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

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

Initial review meeting

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

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

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

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

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

Further review by the DSL

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

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

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

Informing parents/carers

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

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through contacting Thames Valley Police/phoning 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 education and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- 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 is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident. This is dealt with in an age-appropriate context and manner and is taught by the DSL.

7.11 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
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

If a child discloses that they have been harmed, are being harmed, or are at risk of significant harm, you should:

- Allow them to speak freely. Children have the opportunity to be listened to in PSHCEE, Mental Health and Wellbeing timetabled time and via ELSA support.
- Remain calm and do not over-react – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- Give reassuring nods and convey words of comfort, such as “I want to help”, “this isn't your fault” and “you are doing the right thing in talking to me”.
- Do not be afraid of silences or attempt to end them through speaking yourself – remember how hard this must be for the pupil.
- Under no circumstances should you ask investigative, closed or leading questions, such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too or what does the pupil's mother think about all this.

- At an appropriate point, inform the pupil that to help them you must pass the information on to senior members of staff. **Do not promise confidentiality**, as the seriousness of such matters does not permit this given the procedures that must be followed for safeguarding and protection.
- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort, as this may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused. Please take your lead from the child.
- Never admonish the pupil for not disclosing earlier, as saying “I do wish you had told me about this when it started” or “I can’t believe what I’m hearing” may be a means of trying to be supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go with you to see the DSL. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- Report verbally to the DSL under the terms of this policy as a matter of urgency **as soon as possible**.
- Write up a transcript of your conversation as soon as possible and provide this to the DSL.
- Ensure that you seek support if you feel distressed as a result of the conversation.

Posters are visible around the site indicating the persons that form part of the Safeguarding Team.

7.12 Referral

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

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

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

If the child’s situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child’s situation improves. Any escalation processes are to be directed to the Duty/Lead Manager at the relevant Local Authority.

8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology – See Online Safety Policy and Mobile Phone Policy

8.1 Photography

Although photographs taken of children are usually done so for innocent reasons, there are sadly, some people who abuse children by taking and distributing images. As such, we have to ensure that safeguards are in place to protect the children of Our Lady’s Preparatory School.

We will always ensure that we take the following steps:

- Ensure that the relevant permissions from parents/carers have been obtained before images are displayed on the website or elsewhere.
- Ensure that the children are appropriately dressed.
- Encourage children to tell if they feel any concerns about photographs taken of them.

Staff members and volunteers must ensure that the relevant permission has been received before taking photos, and they must only be taken on school equipment. Under no circumstances should photographs be taken on personal devices.

Further information about photography can be found in the Mobile Phone and Use of Camera Policy.

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

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI, and online bullying.
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If staff feel pupils, students or staff are at risk, this is to be reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (apwg.org).

8.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy. Staff should not use personal email addresses, only those associated with their place of work. Staff should also be appropriately dressed and in a suitable room.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to school and signpost them to other sources of support too.

8.3 Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, where relevant, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

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

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
 - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
 - Keeping personal information private
 - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online

- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety, for example via 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 are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
 - 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. We back up our data, have a firewall and filtering in place, appropriate licensing and have risk assessed our IT. Any data breaches are reported as appropriate to ICO. Staff will be trained in filtering and monitoring. Teachers are required to discuss any prospective use of generative AI with DSL prior to its use.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community in order to meet cyber security standards of reporting and review.

8.4 Mobile Phones, Smart Technology and Personal Devices

The school recognises that mobile phones, smart watches, tablets and other internet-enabled devices can present safeguarding risks where their use is not appropriately managed. Such risks may include inappropriate photography or recording, online abuse, cyberbullying, sharing of images, the creation or distribution of AI-generated content, including deepfakes, and inappropriate communication with children.

The use of personal devices by staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors must not compromise the safety, welfare or privacy of children.

8.5 Staff Use of Personal Devices

Staff must ensure that personal mobile phones and other personal devices are used responsibly and in accordance with this policy.

Staff must:

- Keep personal devices secure at all times.
- Use personal devices only during designated break times and in staff areas, except in emergencies.

- Ensure personal devices are not used in any area where children are receiving intimate care or where confidentiality may be compromised.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times when using social media or electronic communication.

Staff must not:

- Use personal devices to photograph, film or audio-record children.
- Store images, videos or personal information relating to children on personal devices.
- Communicate directly with pupils through personal telephone numbers, email accounts, social media platforms or messaging applications.
- Use personal devices in a manner that could distract from effective supervision of children.
- Access, create, share or store inappropriate, offensive, harmful or illegal content whilst on school premises or engaged in school activities.

All photographs, video recordings and other digital media involving children must be taken using authorised school equipment and stored securely in accordance with the school's data protection and record-keeping procedures.

8.6 EYFS Requirements

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, safeguarding arrangements relating to mobile phones and personal devices are particularly stringent.

Staff, students and volunteers must ensure that personal mobile phones are stored securely and out of sight whilst working directly with children. Personal devices must not be used in areas where children are present except in exceptional circumstances authorised by the Headteacher, Nursery Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

8.7 Visitors and Contractors

Visitors, contractors and other adults on site may be required to switch mobile phones to silent mode and comply with school procedures relating to photography, recording and device use. Any unauthorised photography, filming or recording of children is prohibited.

8.8 Pupils' Mobile Phones and Smart Devices

Where pupils are permitted to bring mobile phones or smart devices onto the premises, the school will clearly communicate expectations regarding their use, storage and security.

The school reserves the right to confiscate devices where their use gives rise to safeguarding concerns, breaches school rules, or may compromise the safety or wellbeing of others. Searches and examinations of devices will be undertaken only in accordance with statutory guidance and the school's behaviour, searching and screening procedures.

8.9 Online Safety, Artificial Intelligence and Deepfakes

The school recognises the growing safeguarding risks associated with artificial intelligence, including the creation, sharing and manipulation of images, audio and video through AI technologies.

Concerns relating to:

- AI-generated intimate images,
- manipulated or synthetic media (deepfakes),
- image-based abuse,
- online harassment,
- cyberbullying, or
- the sharing of harmful content

will be treated as safeguarding concerns and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

8.10 Safeguarding Concerns Involving Devices

Where a mobile phone, smart device or other digital technology is relevant to a safeguarding concern, staff must immediately inform the DSL.

The school may require relevant information, images, messages or records to be preserved to support safeguarding enquiries, risk assessments or investigations. Staff must not delete, alter or share information that may be relevant to a safeguarding concern without the advice of the DSL, police or other appropriate agencies.

Failure to comply with this section of the policy may result in disciplinary action and, where appropriate, referral to external agencies.

9. Notifying parents or carers

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

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

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

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved.

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

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils
- The potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
- their need for intimate care and likely dependency on adults for care
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND require close liaison with the DSL and SENCO. We offer extra pastoral support for these pupils. This includes dedicated ELSA Support, Canine Assisted Support and Wellbeing Meetings as part of the Pastoral Programme.

An incident relating to the management of a child's medical condition does not itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners, unless an incident highlighted concern that the child or might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their medical condition.

11. 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

12. 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

We have appointed an appropriately trained staff member, Michael Stone, to take the lead on promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

As part of their role, they 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

13. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

13.1 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).

For other complaints, please refer to our Complaints Policy which refers to EYFS duties.

13.2 Whistleblowing

Please refer to our Whistleblowing Policy

14. 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. 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 for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be retained for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

Our records are kept electronically. Any paper notes are kept securely, locked away in the DSLs office. Information is normally retained until school transfer. We will share information with other agencies as appropriate, in line with the information contained within point 6.3.

In addition:

Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-appointment checks

Appendix 3 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

The school recognises that effective information sharing is essential to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information where this is necessary to protect children from harm. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

When sharing safeguarding information with another educational setting, agency or professional, the school will ensure that information is:

- relevant and necessary;
- clearly presented;
- appropriately contextualised;
- sufficient to support effective safeguarding decision-making; and
- accurate at the time it is shared.

Care will be taken not to omit information that may be relevant to understanding, assessing or managing safeguarding risk.

Where safeguarding information is received from another organisation, the DSL will review that information promptly, assess any potential risk to the individual child or others, and ensure that appropriate safety and support arrangements are in place where required.

At transition points, safeguarding records will include a structured summary outlining:

- current concerns;
- relevant safeguarding history;
- current levels of risk;
- support arrangements in place; and
- recommended actions for receiving staff.

14.1 Enhanced Information Sharing

The school recognises that effective information sharing is essential to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information where this is necessary to protect children from harm. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

When sharing safeguarding information with another educational setting, agency or professional, the school will ensure that information is:

- relevant and necessary;
- clearly presented;
- appropriately contextualised;
- sufficient to support effective safeguarding decision-making; and
- accurate at the time it is shared.

Care will be taken not to omit information that may be relevant to understanding, assessing or managing safeguarding risk.

Where safeguarding information is received from another organisation, the DSL will review that information promptly, assess any potential risk to the individual child or others, and ensure that appropriate safety and support arrangements are in place where required.

At transition points, safeguarding records will include a structured summary outlining:

- current concerns;
- relevant safeguarding history;
- current levels of risk;

- support arrangements in place; and
- recommended actions for receiving staff.

15. Training

All training is carried out in accordance with the Local Authority requirements and national legislation. Whenever such training takes place, the school will discuss and take account of any specific local requirements and the context of the school which needs to be taken account of in the training.

The school undertakes to make all supply staff, part-time staff and volunteers aware of the training to ensure their attendance. The DSLs run safeguarding and child protection training sessions throughout the academic year to ensure all staff receive the requisite training.

Staff also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email and staff briefings, as required, but at least annually to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Safeguarding training also includes Prevent training and guidance relating to online safety.

Induction training is provided for all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers. They are provided with the following documents in their induction training:

- this Policy (which includes our procedure for Children Missing in Education)
- the Code of Conduct for Staff (including anti-bullying, incl cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- the Whistleblowing procedure
- the Behaviour Policy and anti-bullying policy
- Guidance regarding online safety
- the role, identity and contact details of the DSL and DDSs
- Part One of KCSiE (Sept 2026) for school leaders and those who work directly with children

Induction training is provided to ensure that staff understand the school's safeguarding policies and have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues. This will include, amongst other content, training to enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse (including child-on-child abuse, whether inside or outside school or online) and neglect at the earliest opportunity and to respond in a timely and appropriate way.

15.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures and online safety, the school's safeguarding policy, staff behaviour policy, pupil behaviour policy and anti-bullying, mental health policy, a copy of Part 1 for all staff if working directly with children, safe/acceptable use of technology policy to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible peer on peer abuse or neglect. They will also be trained in the school's safeguarding response to those children who go missing from education.

Staff are required to complete an annual declaration confirming they have received, read and understood Part 1.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning

Be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners

Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:

- Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings). They are trained to manage a report of child-on-child sexual violence and/or sexual harassment.

Staff will be provided with a copy of the School's Safeguarding Policy.

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

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

15.2 The DSL and deputies (DDSLs)

The DSL and DDSLs attend child protection training courses and training on inter-agency working at least every two years in keeping with Annex B in KCSiE 2026. The D/DSLs also undertakes Prevent awareness training.

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

In line with Part Five of KCSiE 2026, para 534, the D/DSLs are trained to have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) to support preventative education in the school, help implement effective safeguarding policies and embed a whole school approach to safeguarding. Advice on stages of typical sexual development and behaviour for different age groups can be found in Sexual development and behaviour in children from the NSPCC.

At least every two years, the DSL will ensure that the Head, all staff members and the Board of Trustees, including the nominated Trustee, undertakes child protection training appropriate to their roles which will be updated regularly in accordance with the Local Authority requirements and national legislation. This training ensures that staff understand the school's safeguarding policies, and in particular the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and that they have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues.

15.3 Trustees

All trustees receive training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities.

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

15.4 Recruitment – interview panels

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

Please refer directly to our Safer Recruitment Policy for further information.

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

16. Monitoring arrangements

The Head and Senior Leadership Team monitor and evaluate with Trustees the effectiveness of the safeguarding training provided to staff. The safeguarding training is subject to review at least annually (or more frequently if changes to legislation, regulation or statutory guidance so require).

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the Acting Head. At every review, it will be approved by the full trustee board.

17. 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
- Relationships education
- First aid
- Curriculum
- Whistleblowing
- Promoting positive mental health
- Anti-bullying
- Safer Recruitment Policy

APPENDICES

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

Appendix 1: types of abuse

Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Modern Slavery

All staff should be aware firstly that; abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition and, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. Secondly, harmful behaviours such as substance abuse and frequent absence from school can put children in danger, and thirdly; that safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and can occur between children outside school.

All staff, but especially the DSL and deputies should consider whether children are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (including physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and stalking), criminal exploitation (including financial exploitation), serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

KCSiE 2026 defines abuse and neglect as follows:

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill-treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill-treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which 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: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the

exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or penetration with an object) or non- penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

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

Exploitation and Modern Slavery: Modern slavery encompasses exploitation, including sexual exploitation, criminal financial exploitation, human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. These are explained further in Annex A of KCSiE 2026)

Exploitation, Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

The school recognises that children may be victims of child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, financial exploitation, trafficking or modern slavery.

Children cannot consent to their own exploitation and should be regarded as victims even where they appear willing participants or do not recognise that exploitation is occurring.

Where there are concerns that a child may be a victim of exploitation or modern slavery, the DSL will consider:

- an immediate safeguarding response;
- referral to children's social care;
- referral to the police where appropriate; and
- referral through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

The school recognises that children referred through the NRM may be entitled to support from an Independent Child Trafficking Guardian (ICTG).

Appendix 2: Regulated Activity and Volunteer Checks

The school will ensure that all safer recruitment and vetting arrangements reflect the current statutory definition of regulated activity.

From 1 September 2026, certain supervised volunteer roles may constitute regulated activity where the activity:

- involves teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children;
- takes place frequently;
- occurs on more than three days within a thirty-day period; or
- includes overnight activity.

Where a role constitutes regulated activity, the school will obtain an Enhanced DBS Certificate with Children's Barred List Information prior to the commencement of duties.

The school will assess all volunteer roles individually and determine the appropriate level of vetting required based upon the nature, frequency and duration of contact with children.

The school will ensure that:

- trainee teachers receive all required safeguarding checks;
- adults supervising pupils on work experience placements are appropriately vetted;
- self-employed individuals engaged by the school have been subject to appropriate pre-engagement checks;
- professional visitors have the level of DBS clearance required for the activity they will undertake; and
- no barred individual is permitted to engage in regulated activity.

Where the school operates EYFS provision, no person may begin working within EYFS until the required enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information, has been received.

Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff

Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including the DSL, supply staff, volunteers and contractors, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school

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

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher (or in his absence the chair of trustees), or the chair of trustees (without informing the head) where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

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

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

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

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

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

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

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

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

False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

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

Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis 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:

Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. All allegations must be reported immediately and at the latest within one day. If in the most serious of cases and if a crime has been committed, the police must be informed. When speaking with the designated officer, this is done 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. No investigation will take place before this has taken place. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)

Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or 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 designated officer, 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

If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details

If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation

If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate

Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate. The School operates a Health Assured Programme where staff have access to BACP professionals free of charge and in confidence.

Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)

Consideration is given to making a referral the TRA (Teaching Regulation Agency) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had she or he not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate because of unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence.

Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any

action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

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

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

Additional considerations for supply teachers 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.

Timescales

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

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

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

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

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

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

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

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

Individuals returning to work after suspension

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

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

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate

Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate

Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing

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

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

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

Record-keeping

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

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

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

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with 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

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

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

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

Non-recent allegations

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

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

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

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

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

Concerns may arise through, for example:

Suspicion

Complaint

Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school

Pre-employment vetting checks

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

Definition of low-level concerns

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

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

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

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils
- 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 as per section 7.7 of this policy
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's code of conduct.

For more information, please see [Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: A guide for organisations which work with children](#)

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR

- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

Safeguarding Issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and making and sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. These can be signs that children are at risk. Below are some safeguarding issues all staff are trained to be aware of.

A safeguarding approach is required in response to all incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual, with a proportionate approach that considers the age, development, and circumstances of the children involved, as well as any elements of coercion, exploitation or vulnerability.

Specific Forms of Abuse and Safeguarding Issues (Annex A of KCSiE)

Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education: Further information contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. KCSiE requires school and college leaders and these staff who work directly with children to read Annex A.

A summary of KCSiE Annex A is provided below. The DSL reviews these issues annually to determine whether any are of heightened relevance for the school and its children in the coming year.

Child abduction and community safety incidents: Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members, by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances) and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence, for example, as they start walking to school on their own, it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers.

Where there are concerns about a specific incident, advice should be sought from the police and/or the Education Safeguarding Service when sharing information with the wider school/setting community. More general information is available at www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual or criminal activity. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or will be to the financial benefit or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of abuse, exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. Most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. Some children do not realise they are

being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media)
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults
- can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of Child Criminal Exploitation:

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

The above Child Criminal Exploitation indicators can also be indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant

Victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a significant concern, with children manipulated, groomed, and exploited without fully understanding the abuse they are experiencing.

CCE and CSE can affect both male and female, including children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the [Modern Slavery statutory guidance](#). In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

County lines: is a term used by the UK Government to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Children and the court system: Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children which explain each step of the process and the special measures that are available:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds>

Children who are absent/missing from education: a child who is absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods is a 'vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues'. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines or radicalisation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of Female Genital Mutilation so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

Staff should follow the school's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children that are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods, to help identify the risks of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. The school's procedures are set out in the Missing Pupil Policy. The DSL and the Senior Attendance Champion will monitor unauthorised absence particularly where children are absent on repeated occasions.

The school will fulfil its statutory duty in notifying the Local Authority (Wokingham) when adding or removing a pupil's name from the admission register outside of the usual transition points i.e., where a compulsory school-aged child leaves a school before completing the school's final year or joins a school after the beginning of the school's first year. The school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the Local Authority before deleting their name from the register and will also notify the Local Authority within five days of adding a pupil's name at a non-standard transition point.

"Children missing education" are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Children with family members in prison: These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) provides an information service for all professionals who come into contact with the children and families of offenders. Further information can be found here:

<https://www.nicco.org.uk/>

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

Staff should be aware of the appropriateness of the content pupils are accessing. The school has robust filtering and monitoring systems in place to ensure that the opportunity for cybercrime is minimised and cybercrime is part of the school's PSHE curriculum.

Domestic abuse and Operation Encompass: is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Operation Encompass is an information-sharing scheme between the police and relevant education settings operating in all police forces across England and Wales. In November 2025, a new statutory duty was placed on the police to notify a child's education setting if they have reasonable grounds to believe a child may be a victim of domestic abuse.

Homelessness: Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL, and any deputies, should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism: The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support.

Modern slavery is a complex crime and may involve multiple forms of exploitation. It encompasses:

- human trafficking
- slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour

An individual could have been a victim of human trafficking and/or slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

Victims may not be aware that they are being trafficked or exploited, and may have consented to elements of their exploitation, or accepted their situation. If you think that modern slavery has taken place, the case should be referred to the NRM so that the relevant competent authority can fully consider the case. You do not need to be certain that someone is a victim.

Preventing radicalisation: Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. It can happen in many different ways and settings. The school and its staff have a duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent duty). Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit.

The Government's Counter Extremism Strategy defines 'Extremism' as: "the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including, democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist."

The school seeks to promote an understanding of and commitment to fundamental British values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, tolerance and respect for other people. Pupils are able to discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas. The Prevent duty is not intended to limit discussion of these issues and the School and its staff should be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues.

As with other safeguarding risks, staff are alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. Staff are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Leads who can advise on assessing the level of risk to identify the most appropriate referral, which could include making a referral to the Channel programme or the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub.

Prevent Duty and Channel. The Prevent Duty is a duty on schools to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and is part of all schools' wider safeguarding obligations. The DSL is aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be susceptible to radicalisation. When referring an individual to Channel that person will need to give their consent before any support through the programme is provided. It is a voluntary process which allows the individual to withdraw from the programme at any time.

All staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the government's website <https://educateagainsthate.com/>. The website is designed to equip school leaders, teachers and parents with the information, tools and resources they need to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people.

Where a referral has been made to Channel, the school will continue to monitor concerns and maintain communication with relevant agencies.

Should any new or additional information come to light while a referral is being assessed, that information will be passed promptly to the police and other relevant agencies and recorded by the DSL.

Serious violence:

KCSiE 2026 highlights that serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, weapons, bullying, and criminal exploitation. Staff must report any concerns about weapons to the DSL or deputy.

The DSL will assess the risk and take appropriate action which might include a safety and support plan, and action to de-escalate peer conflict.

Schools play a key role, and staff must be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence.

Indicators which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved in committing serious violence include:

- increased absence from school or college,
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups,
- a significant decline in educational performance,
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries

Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

KCSiE 2026 identifies the likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male,
- having been suspended, spent time in Alternative Provision or permanently excluded from school,
- having experienced child maltreatment,
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery,
- having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence, and
- having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence

Violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school and can concentrate in particular places. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence. The school considers where these places might be, with a view to working with partners to promote safety for children. Listening to children and consulting with staff can help establish when and where they feel unsafe.

Working with wider partners can also help build understanding of the local context and help co-ordinate a collective safeguarding response around the school day. Advice for schools is provided in the Home Office's Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance. The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) has produced practical guidance and an accompanying self-assessment tool to help introduce evidenced practice for preventing children becoming involved in violence.

Home Office funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) operate in the 20 police force areas across England and Wales that have the highest volumes of serious violence. A list of these locations can be found [here](#). Schools within these areas are encouraged to reach out to their local VRU, either directly or via their education Core Member, to better ingrain partnership working to tackle serious violence across local areas and ensure a joined-up approach to young people across the risk spectrum.

Honour or faith-based abuse: this encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) mandatory reporting duty for teachers: Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL, or a deputy DSL, with regard to any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty upon teachers to personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM is suspected or appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. The report should be made orally by calling 101, the single non-emergency number. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils. Staff failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

It is also School Policy that any member of staff, other than a teacher, should follow the above procedure where they discover an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, as this represents best practice.

Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve Children's Social Services as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases i.e., where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Forced marriage: A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. It is also a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages. There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage, but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement still remains with the prospective spouses.

Additional Safeguarding considerations at OLPS

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 electronically 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, 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
- The organisation sending the professional, such as the educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

Non-collection of children

Please refer to our Uncollected Child Policy.

Missing Child

Please refer to our Missing Child Policy.

Alternative Provision

Where pupils attend alternative provision, the school retains overall responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those pupils.

Prior to placement, the school will undertake appropriate due diligence to satisfy itself that:

- the provision is suitable;
- safeguarding arrangements are effective;
- staff are appropriately trained and vetted;
- attendance systems are robust; and
- pupils' welfare needs can be met.

The school will maintain regular oversight of pupils placed in alternative provision and will continue to monitor attendance, welfare, safeguarding concerns and educational progress throughout the placement.

Any safeguarding concerns arising within alternative provision will be managed in accordance with this policy.

Children Living in Temporary Accommodation

The school recognises that children and families living in temporary accommodation may face additional safeguarding, welfare and educational challenges.

Where the school becomes aware that a child is living in temporary accommodation, the DSL will consider whether additional support or intervention is required.

The school may:

- review attendance and punctuality;
- assess barriers to learning;
- provide pastoral support;
- liaise with relevant agencies;
- consider transport, uniform, food or financial hardship concerns; and
- monitor any safeguarding risks associated with the child's circumstances.

Information relating to temporary accommodation will be handled sensitively and shared only on a need-to-know basis.

Appendix 5: KCSiE Annex B: Role of the designated safeguarding lead

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate **senior member** of staff, from the school or college **leadership team**, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take

lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description.

The designated safeguarding lead should have the appropriate status and authority within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. The role of the designated safeguarding lead carries a significant level of responsibility, and they should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively. Their additional responsibilities include providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so, and contributing to the assessment of children.

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy designated safeguarding leads. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

Availability

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Microsoft Teams or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out-of-hour/out of term activities.

To ensure continuity of safeguarding responsibilities, schools should implement robust cover arrangements for periods when the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave, or other circumstances. Schools and colleges have the flexibility and discretion in how these arrangements operate, provided safeguarding responsibilities remain appropriately covered. It would be good practice that, whenever the DSL is unavailable, there is a clear, reliable, and known arrangement in place so that concerns can be raised. This could, for example, include a confidential shared mailbox or equivalent system to ensure that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored, and acted upon without delay.

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care,
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme,
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC - When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.

Working with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff,
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners,
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019,
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member,

- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically,
- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health,
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances, and
- work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.¹⁵⁹ This includes:
 - ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and
 - supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

Information sharing and managing the child protection file

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Safeguarding records should be clear, factual, and distinguish between observed concerns, professional opinion, and historic information.

Records should include:

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

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice set out in Parts one and two of this guidance.

Appropriate arrangements should be in place to ensure that safeguarding information is transferred, reviewed and actioned promptly at all transition points, including in-year moves.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term.

This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Where child protection files are transferred, the exporting school or college should include a clear, structured summary identifying current safeguarding concerns, relevant context, and any ongoing support needs.

Particular care should be taken to distinguish between current safeguarding concerns and historic information, ensuring that past issues are presented with appropriate context. For example, where a file contains extensive historical information, a concise summary of current risk and relevant context is likely to support more effective safeguarding than the transfer of unstructured records alone.

Receiving schools and colleges should ensure that safeguarding information is reviewed by an appropriately trained member of staff so that key risks and needs are clearly understood. Safeguarding information should be used to support, not disadvantage, the child.

Where the receiving school or college considers that safeguarding information is unclear or incomplete, it should seek clarification where necessary to support effective safeguarding.

They should also ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) or the named person with oversight for SEND in colleges, are aware as required. It will then be for the DSL to consider what other information should be shared with other relevant staff and when this should be shared.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to

share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving particularly where the information would support an assessment of risk to others in the school as well as the individual pupil to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse, incidents that may indicate concerns about serious violence or harmful behaviours and/or details of those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives. It would be good practice for a conversation to take place at the appropriate and relevant points between the designated safeguarding leads at both settings, where there are issues or concerns to ensure information is being actively considered and acted upon.

Raising awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff,
- ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this,
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this,
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements, and
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

Training, knowledge and skills

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should also undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated safeguarding leads (and any deputies) with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly local authority children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing family help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements,
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so,
- understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children,
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes,
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers,
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners,
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation,
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college,

- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online,
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses,¹⁶⁰ Full details in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

and

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Providing support to staff

Training should support the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes, and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children

It is important that all children feel heard and understood. Therefore, designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them, and
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and sharing information

The critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts one, two and five of this document, and therefore the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should be equipped to:

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners,
- understand relevant data protection laws, and
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc.

Appendix 6: Mental Health

All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. The school has a separate policy for mental health and wellbeing, which can be found on the website. This summary helps highlight the potential overlap between mental health and safeguarding concerns.

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

If a child is struggling with their mental health, is self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which staff in school are well placed to recognise. These could include:

- significant changes in behaviour,
- ongoing difficulty sleeping,
- withdrawing from social situations,
- not wanting to do things they usually like, and
- physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Not every child who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, education staff can identify children who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention. The school arranged training for staff in mental health first aid (explain detail of other arrangements that make it clear how the school knows how to respond appropriately)

If staff have a concern about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern, they must speak to the DSL or deputy. If staff feel that a child is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

Appendix 7: Restrictive Interventions

KCSiE 2026 para 203 confirms that there are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use force to safeguard children and this applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Head has temporarily put in charge of pupils, such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying pupils on a school organised visit. The use of physical intervention should be avoided if possible. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

All forms of corporal punishment are unlawful and the School does not use or threaten corporal punishment.

DfE Guidance Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026) states that all members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force to prevent or stop a pupil from:

1. causing injury to themselves or others
2. committing a criminal offence
3. damaging property
4. causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

There is no legal definition of "reasonable force" and it will always depend on the circumstances. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

Note that:

- any use of force should be proportionate to the behaviour of the pupil involved and the seriousness of the harm prevented
- staff should recognise the additional vulnerability of children with SEN, disabilities and certain medical conditions before using reasonable force (see next para)
- physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour
- any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result
- whether it is reasonable to use force and the degree of force that could be reasonably employed might also depend on the age, understanding and sex of the pupil

KCSiE 2026 para 205 highlights the importance of recognising the additional vulnerability of children with SEND, mental health problems or with medical conditions when using 'reasonable force' in response to risks presented by incidents involving such children. By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, for instance through drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children, and agreeing them with parents, schools can reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use 'reasonable force'.

Action taken in self-defence or in an emergency: The law allows anyone to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use more force than is necessary. Similarly, where a pupil is at risk of immediate injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff (whether authorised or not) would be entitled to intervene.

The school's separate policy on restrictive interventions and the use of reasonable force provides further details and outlines staff training.

Appendix 8: Children at greater risk of harm

Whilst all children should be protected, the school recognises that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm than others, both online and offline. KCSiE 2026 para 214-282 contains comprehensive guidance, briefly summarised below.

Children may **need a social worker** due to safeguarding or welfare needs (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans). Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL will hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

Children being **absent from education** for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning

sign to a wide range of safeguarding issues. Our attendance policy outlines the care we take to respond to any pupil absence and thereby support their overall wellbeing.

Many **home educated children** have a positive learning experience and the school would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all and where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will follow KCSiE guidance to liaise with the local authority to ensure decisions are in the best interests of each child.

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the **mental health** and wellbeing of pupils. For further information see the section on [Mental Health](#).

For proper care of **looked after children and previously looked after children**, appropriate staff must have access to the information they need in relation to a child's legal status and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. The DSL should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the Virtual School Head (see KCSiE 2026 para 239-244) in the authority that looks after the child. A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all agencies must work together, taking prompt action when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

Maintained schools must appoint a designated teacher to work with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after. As an independent school we follow this process when relevant.

Local authorities have on-going responsibilities to the children who cease to be looked after and become care leavers. The school will work with the local authority when this is relevant to one of its pupils.

The school is alert to the needs of **young carers**, recognising that early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive support at the right time and by the appropriate services.

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children. These can include assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration; these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than others; the potential for them being disproportionately impacted but without outwardly showing any signs; communication difficulties in managing or reporting that what is happening to them is abuse; their need for intimate care and likely dependency on adults for care, and issues over cognitive understanding to differentiate between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviour in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND require close liaison with the DSL and SENCO.

An incident relating to the management of a child's medical condition does not itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners, unless an incident highlighted concern that the child or might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their medical condition.

A child or young person being **lesbian, gay, or bisexual** is not in itself a risk factor for harm, but they can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying, as can a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not).

Guidance to schools regarding **children who are questioning the way they feel about being their gender** is clear that it is not for schools to initiate any action in this area. Guidance focuses on circumstances where a child or their parent has raised a request relating to social transition to which a school is responding. KCSiE 2026 para 252-282 provides detailed guidance, including the interaction of gender-questioning considerations with other policies, and how to support children living in stealth and those who wish to detransition.

Appendix 9: Secure and safe premises

The school will take all practical steps to ensure that School premises are as secure as circumstances permit.

All staff are issued with identity badges displaying their name and photograph. The badges must be clearly displayed and worn at all times whilst on School premises.

Visitors

School visitors include professionals such as educational psychologists, social workers, and other education-related practitioners, as well as educational visitors like guest speakers or performers. They may also include contractors working on the building or grounds, children's family members, or others attending school events. When inviting guest speakers or performers, the school will assess the educational value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and the level of checks required.

All visitors are required to sign in on arrival at Reception and sign out on departure. All visitors will be given a name

badge with the title “Visitor” which must be clearly displayed and worn at all times whilst on School premises. Visitors who are not required to undergo DBS checks will be supervised whilst on School premises by a member of staff or appropriately vetted volunteer. Visitors who have undergone requisite DBS checks are not required to be supervised whilst on School premises.

Contractors who are not required to undergo DBS checks will be issued with a visitor’s badge and will be supervised at all times whilst on School premises. Contractors who have undergone requisite DBS checks will be issued with a contractor’s ID and are not required to be supervised whilst on School premises.

Premises

KCSIE 2026 added a new section, para 105-116, relating to school premises, specifically relating to toilets, changing rooms and showers. Schools must not allow children into toilets designated for the opposite biological sex and must provide separate toilets for boys and girls aged 8 and over, apart from where individual toilets are in a room that can be locked from the inside, intended for use by one pupil at a time. For mixed-sex toilets, schools should assess safeguarding risks and plan accordingly - for example, mixed-sex toilets should be in individual, lockable rooms and open directly onto public areas such as a corridor.

If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the toilet designated for their biological sex, schools should consider whether they can provide an alternative toilet facility, without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities that do not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child, or of any other children. Schools must keep a clear record of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly.

Schools must not allow a child, aged 11 years or older at the start of the school year, to undress in front of a child of the opposite biological sex. When responding to a request to support any degree of social transition, a school must not allow a child access to changing rooms designated for the opposite sex.

If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the changing rooms and showers designated for their sex, schools should consider whether they can provide an alternative changing or washing facility without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. Schools must keep a clear record of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly.

Boarding and Residential Accommodation (including on school trips)

KCSIE 2026 added a new section, para 197-202, relating to Boarding and Residential Accommodation. Schools must not allow a child to share overnight accommodation with a child of the opposite biological sex. Responding to a request to support any degree of social transition must not include allowing access to boarding or residential accommodation designated for the opposite sex. If, however, a child does not want to share a room with another child of the same biological sex, alternative arrangements should be sought where possible. Alternative arrangements should not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of any child. They might include, for instance, finding a suitable separate room for the child. Where a child’s concern reflects a request for support with social transition, the school or college should consider the KCSiE 2026 section on “Considering requests for support with social transition” before making any decisions.

In allocating sleeping arrangements such as dormitories, tents or shared rooms for school trips, schools must have regard to their duties under the Equality Act, their safeguarding obligations, and other relevant regulations and standards, including those relating to boarding and residential accommodation.

Appendix 10: Relationships, Sex and Health Education

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Regulations (England) Regulations 2021 states that pupils receiving primary education must be taught Relationships Education, and pupils receiving secondary education must be taught Relationships and Sex Education. The regulations were updated on 15 July 2025, adding revised guidance on RSHE which is in force from 1 September 2026.

KCSiE 2026 para 156-161 reinforces the importance of opportunities to teach children about safeguarding. We have a whole-school approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence/harassment, derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE Education) is compulsory in independent schools; the school provides PSHE lessons throughout the school.

DfE guidance gives schools freedom to deliver the content set out in the guidance in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. The school delivers RSE as set out in its RSE curriculum plan.

The school seeks to work in partnership with parents to enable parents to feel confident about the Relationships and Sex Education programme, and that it will be delivered sensitively and inclusively respecting backgrounds and beliefs. The school's RSE Policy, including the curriculum plan and draft PSHE programme, is circulated to parents each year, with parents being invited to make suggestions for development as part of the school's consultation process. The RSE

policy and schemes of work are published to parents via the school website.