

The Maynard School

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Independent Day School for Girls

SEP 2026

This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- DfE Keeping children safe in education, statutory guidance for schools and colleges (Sep 26)
- DfE Working together to safeguard children (March 26)
- DfE Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (Jul 25 update)
- Ofsted review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges (June 2021)
- DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards for schools and colleges (2026)
- DfE Working together to improve school attendance (2023 and now statutory practice)
- DfE Plan Technology for your school (Nov 25 advice)
- Staff code of conduct;
- Online Safety (E safety) policy;
- Whistleblowing policy;
- Safer recruitment policy;
- Behaviour and discipline policy
- Anti-bullying policy;
- Attendance policy;
- Visitors and visiting speakers policy;
- Security, access control & workplace safety policy;
- Health & safety policy;
- Missing pupil policy;
- Special educational needs and learning difficulties policy;
- Disability policy;

- First aid policy; (inc Allergy Policy)
- Equal opportunities policy;
- Peer-on-peer Abuse Policy

Contents

KEY SCHOOL CONTACTS.....	
KEY EXTERNAL CONTACTS – External:	
1	Aims
2	Scope and application.....
3	Regulatory framework
4	Publication and availability
5	Definitions.....
6	Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks
7	Safeguarding principles.....
8	Responsibilities of staff in relation to safeguarding
9	What to do if staff have a concern about a pupil
10	Managing support for pupils internally
11	Early help
12	Making a referral
13	Allegations against pupils - Child on Child abuse.....
14	What to do if staff have a concern about someone else's welfare
15	Allegations against staff.....
16	Informing parents
17	Additional reporting.....
18	Safer recruitment and supervision of staff
19	Use of mobile technology
20	Training
21	Risk assessment
22	Monitoring and review
23	Record keeping
24	Version control.....

Appendix

Appendix 1	Indicators of abuse.....
Appendix 2	Concerns about a child - guidance for staff
Appendix 3	Dealing with allegations against staff
Appendix 4	Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).....
Appendix 5	Mobile and Technology policy (EYFS).....

KEY

SCHOOL

CONTACTS

Designated Safeguarding Lead Eleanor Bucci	Eleanorbucci@maynard.co.uk Telephone number 01392 273417 Mobile number 07538274631
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and Specified DSL for EYFS Liz Gregory (DDSL) Tom Hibberd (DDSL) Leah Hardy (DDSL) Katie Greenwood (DSL for EYFS)	lizgregory@maynard.co.uk tomhibberd@maynard.co.uk Leahhardy@maynard.co.uk katiegreenwood@maynard.co.uk Main Telephone: 01392 273417
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Chair of Governors Christopher Gatherer	Email: chrisgatherer@maynard.co.uk Telephone number: 07432518181
Nominated Safeguarding Governor Sarah Witheridge	Email: sarahgatherer@maynard.co.uk Telephone number: 0 7 9 7 4 0 1 1 7 9 5

KEY EXTERNAL CONTACTS

Service	Number / Email	Notes
MASH / Front Door (urgent)	0345 155 1071	Primary safeguarding contact
Front Door Consultation Line	01392 388 428	For professional consultations
MASH Email	mashsecure@devon.gov.uk	Professional contact
Out-of-Hours Emergency Duty Service	0345 6000 388	Crisis response outside standard hours
Children's Social Care (daytime)	0345 155 1078	Daytime general enquiries
LADO (Devon)	01392 384 964 / childsc.localauthority...@devon.gov.uk	For staff allegations
Devon SCP Business Team	01392 386 067	Non-referral, non-front-door discussion / advice

1 Aims

- 1.1 This is the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures of The Maynard School.
- 1.2 The aims of this policy are as follows:
 - 1.2.1 to actively promote and safeguard the welfare of children, staff and others who come into contact with the school;
 - 1.2.2 to have clear procedures in place for dealing with and referring concerns about the welfare of any individual and/or allegations of abuse;
 - 1.2.3 to raise the awareness of all staff of their safeguarding responsibilities and how to report concerns;
 - 1.2.4 to ensure staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and others and feel supported in this role;
 - 1.2.5 to ensure consistent good safeguarding practice throughout the school.

2 Scope and application

- 2.1 This policy applies to the whole School, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- 2.2 This policy always applies including where pupils or staff are away from the school.
- 2.3 This policy applies to core School activities and to out-of-hour activities.
- 2.4 This policy is designed to address:
 - 2.4.1 the specific obligations on the school to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as defined below.

3 Regulatory framework

- 3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the school's responsibilities under:
 - 3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
 - 3.1.2 EYFS Statutory Framework – July 26 (effective Sept 26)
 - 3.1.3 Education and Skills Act 2008;
 - 3.1.4 Children Act 1989; (alongside Children Act as amended 2004)
 - 3.1.5 Childcare Act 2006;
 - 3.1.6 Children and Social Work Act 2017;
 - 3.1.7 Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data (use and access) Act (June 25).
 - 3.1.8 Equality Act 2010 (updated guidance May 26)
 - 3.1.9 DfE Keeping children safe in education, statutory guidance for schools and colleges (Sep 26)

3.1.10 DfE Working together to safeguard children (Jun 25 update)

3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- 3.2.1 Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2026) (**KCSIE**);
- 3.2.2 Working together to safeguard children (HM Government, March 26) (**WTSC**);
- 3.2.3 Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (DfE, 31 August 2018);
- 3.2.4 Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales (HM Government, sept 23);
- 3.2.5 Channel duty guidance: protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (HM Government, Oct 25);
- 3.2.6 Educate Against Hate (HM Government website/resource May 26);
- 3.2.7 Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (HM Government, Jan 2020);
- 3.2.8 What to do if you're worried about a child being abused: advice for practitioners (HM Government, March 2015);
- 3.2.9 Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government, May 24);
- 3.2.10 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting,) in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS), March 24);
- 3.2.11 Children missing education (DfE, September 2025);
- 3.2.12 Child sexual exploitation (CSE)-definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation (DfE, September 2025);
- 3.2.13 Child criminal exploitation (CCE)– Crime and policing act (April 2026)
- 3.2.14 Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, Sep 26 KCSIE);
- 3.2.15 Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (DfE, July 22);
- 3.2.16 Listening to and involving children and young people (DfE, January 2014, KCSIE 26);
- 3.2.17 DSCP (Devon Schools partnership) Levels of need Framework/Tool – (current local framework in line with KCSIE 26);
- 3.2.18 DfE Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (July 25);
- 3.2.19 DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards for schools and colleges (2026);
- 3.2.20 DfE Working together to improve school attendance (July 26);

3.3 The following separate School policies and procedures are relevant to this policy:

- 3.3.1 Staff code of conduct;
- 3.3.2 Staff acceptable use and social media policy;
- 3.3.3 Whistleblowing policy;
- 3.3.4 Safer recruitment policy;
- 3.3.5 E-safety policy;
- 3.3.6 Behaviour and discipline policy;
- 3.3.7 Anti-bullying policy;
- 3.3.8 ICT Acceptable use policy for pupils;
- 3.3.9 Visiting and visiting speakers policy;
- 3.3.10 Security, access control and workplace safety policy
- 3.3.11 Missing pupil policy;
- 3.3.12 Special educational needs and learning difficulties policy
- 3.3.13 Disability policy;
- 3.3.14 Health and safety policy;
- 3.3.15 First Aid policy;
- 3.3.16 Equal opportunities policy
- 3.3.17 Child on Child abuse and harassment policy

4 **Publication and availability**

- 4.1 This policy is published on the School website.
- 4.2 This policy is available in hard copy on request.
- 4.3 A copy of the policy is available for inspection during the School day.
- 4.4 This policy can be made available in large print or another accessible format if required.
- 4.5 This policy and all policies referred to in it are also available to staff on the School's intranet.

5 **Definitions**

- 5.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:
 - 5.1.1 References to **working days** mean Monday to Friday, when the School is open during term time. The dates of terms are published on the School's website. If referrals to an external agency are required outside term time, references to **working days** are to the days on which the relevant external agency is working;

5.1.2 **Safeguarding** is promoting well-being and welfare by safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (as defined below) and protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

5.1.3 **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined in KCSIE as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring 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.

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

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

6 **Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks**

- 6.1 The Governing Body has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy and has specific responsibilities as described in Part 2 of KCSIE.
- 6.2 The Governing Body has nominated one of its members to take leadership responsibility for the School's safeguarding arrangements. Contact details are set out in the School contacts list at the front of this policy.
- 6.3 To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Governing Body has allocated the following tasks which are discussed half termly in governance meetings and following termly safeguarding reports to the governance team:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Eleanor Bucci	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action	Eleanor Bucci (DSL) Kate Greenwood (EYFS DSL) Leah Hardy (DDSL) Tom Hibberd (DDSL)	As required, and at least termly

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
taken in response and evaluating effectiveness ¹	Liz Gregory (Head) Sarah Witheridge (Nominated Governor in charge of safeguarding)	
Maintaining up to date records of all information created in relation to the policy and its implementation as required by the GDPR and of KCSIE	Eleanor Bucci (DSL) Tom Hibberd (DDSL) Kate Greenwood (EYFS DSL) Leah Hardy (DDSL)	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, parents) to consider improvements to the school's processes under the policy	Eleanor Bucci Tom Hibberd	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Governing Body	At least annually

6.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead

- 6.4.1 The Governing Body has appointed a senior member of staff of the school's leadership team to the role of the DSL. The DSL has the necessary status and authority to take lead responsibility for all aspects of safeguarding and child protection (including online/esafety) throughout the school.
- 6.4.2 The DSL has the time, funding, training, resources and support to enable him to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings (and / or to support other staff to do so) and to contribute to the assessment of children. The name and contact details of the DSL are set out in the school contacts list at the front of this policy. The main responsibilities of the DSL are set out in Appendix 4.
- 6.4.4 If the DSL is unavailable the activities of the DSL will be carried out by the Deputy DSLs. The Deputy DSLs's details are also set out in the school contacts list at the front of this policy.
- 6.4.5 The school has a designated DSL for the EYFS.
- 6.4.6 The DSL and Deputy DSLs may be contacted on their mobile telephones in relation to any safeguarding concerns out of School hours.

¹ Please note that responsibilities for safeguarding across the school's operation should be clear and may be shared with others e.g. for trading activities or due diligence of hirers/contractors. This Policy should reflect the school's arrangements.

7 **Safeguarding principles**

- 7.1 The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that its pupils and others who come into contact with the school do not, as a result, come to harm or are exposed to abuse.
- 7.2 Abuse is a form of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. A mental health concern about a child is also a safeguarding concern and should be reported as such (processes in relation to mental health and wellbeing are outlined in our mental health and wellbeing policy).
- 7.3 Any safeguarding concern raised by any person will be taken seriously and action taken in accordance with the relevant School policies and procedures. This includes any disclosures or concerns involving any third party who uses the premises.
- 7.4 Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that policies and procedures are in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

7.5 **Specific duties in relation to children**

- 7.5.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility.
- 7.5.2 Every pupil should feel safe and protected from any form of abuse and neglect. The indicators of abuse and neglect and examples of specific safeguarding issues are set out in Appendix 1.
- 7.5.3 The school is committed to acting in the best interests of the child so as to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The school requires everyone who comes into contact with children and their families to share this commitment.
- 7.5.4 The school will:
 - (a) follow the local inter-agency procedures of the DSCP.
 - (b) be alert to signs of abuse both in the school and from outside and take steps to protect individuals from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another child;
 - (c) deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse and support children who have been abused in accordance with her agreed child protection plan;
 - (d) design and operate procedures which, so far as possible, ensure that staff and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by malicious, false, unsubstantiated or unfounded allegations;
 - (e) prepare staff to identify children who may benefit from early help;
 - (f) be alert to the needs of pupils with physical or mental health conditions, special educational needs or disabilities, where additional barriers can exist when detecting abuse or neglect;

(g) encourage a culture of listening to pupils and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measure put in place by the school to protect them;

- (h) operate robust and sensible health and safety procedures and operate clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol and substance misuse;
- (i) assess the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, based on an understanding of the potential risk in the local area;
- (j) identify pupils who may be vulnerable to radicalization, and know what to do when they are identified; and
- (k) consider and develop procedures to deal with any other safeguarding issues which may be specific to individual pupils in the school or in the local area.

7.5.5 Contextual safeguarding

- (a) Safeguarding incidents and / or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and / or can occur between children outside the school.
- (b) All staff, including the DSL, should consider the context within which such incidents and / or behaviours occur, for example where wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that may be a threat to their safety and / or welfare.
- (c) Children's social care should be informed of all such information to allow any assessment process to consider all available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

7.6 Staff may follow the school's whistleblowing policy to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practices at the school or potential failures by the school or its staff to properly fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities. Such concerns will be taken seriously. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns about child protection failures internally (see the front of this policy for the relevant contact details).

8 Responsibilities of staff in relation to safeguarding

8.1 Staff members should maintain an attitude of "**it is happening here**" where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a pupil, staff members should always act in the **best** interests of the pupil.

8.2 All staff have a duty to:

- 8.2.1 report any concerns they may have about the safety and/or wellbeing of pupils;
- 8.2.2 report any concerns they may have about the safety and/or wellbeing of other persons associated with the School;
- 8.2.3 report any safeguarding concerns about staff or anyone else associated with the School.

8.3 The procedures for doing so are set out below. If staff are unsure about the process, they should not hesitate to speak to the DSL, senior leadership team or directly to children's social care or police in their absence for guidance.

9 What to do if staff have concern about a pupil

9.1 If staff have **any concern** about a pupil's welfare, action should be taken **immediately**.

9.2 A concern about a child is not defined and should be interpreted broadly. It may relate to a recognition that a child would benefit from extra support, to an emerging problem or to a potentially unmet need or may reflect a concern that a child may be deemed to be "in need" or at "immediate risk of harm" as defined by the Children Act 1989.

9.2.1 – If a child is in need, action should be taken immediately– staff should report to the DSL who will consider pastoral support, early care and report to children's social care as appropriate.

9.2.2 If a child is at risk action should be taken immediately – within 24 hours – staff should report to the DSL or refer directly to children's social services and also to the police if a crime has been committed.

9.3 The member of staff must report the concern to the **DSL** or the **DDSLs** in the DSL's absence.

9.3.1 The contact details of the DSL and DDSLs are set out in the contacts list at the front of this policy.

9.3.2 See Appendix 2 for guidance about what to do when receiving a disclosure and recording a concern.

9.4 If the concern involves an allegation against staff, this must be reported in accordance with the procedures set out in Appendix 3.

9.5 Teachers must report known cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) to the police. See Appendix 1 for further information about FGM and this reporting duty. All other staff should refer to FGM concerns to the DSL.

9.6 What if the DSL is unavailable?

9.6.1 The DSL or the DDSLs should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns and may be contacted on their mobile phones in relation to any safeguarding concerns out of School hours. In times of covid / pandemics or illness the DSL role will be covered by the DDSLs.

9.6.2 Staff should also know that anybody can make a referral. The contact details are set out at the front of this policy.

9.6.3 Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, a referral to children's social care and /or police should be made immediately. Staff should be aware of the process of making referrals direct to children's social care and /or the police in these circumstances. See section 12 below for details on making a referral.

9.6.4 Referrals can be made directly, and any action should be shared with the DSL or DDSs, or a member of the senior.

leadership team, as soon as is practically possible.

9.7 Action by the DSL

9.7.1 On receipt of a report of a concern, the DSL will consider the appropriate course of action in accordance with the DSCP procedures and referral threshold document. Such action may include:

- (a) managing any support for the pupil internally via the School's own pastoral support processes, seeking advice from children's social care where required (see 10 below);
- (b) an early help assessment (see 11 below); or
- (c) a referral for statutory services (see 12 below).

9.7.2 The views of the child will be taken into account when considering the appropriate course of action but will not be determinative.

9.7.3 Where the concern relates to the welfare of a pupil who is aged 18 or over, the DSL will consider whether it is necessary to refer such concerns to the Safeguarding Adults Board rather than, or in addition to, children's social care.

9.7.4 If it is decided that a referral is not required, the DSL will keep the matter under review and give ongoing consideration to a referral if the pupil's situation does not appear to be improving.

10 Managing support for pupils internally

10.1 The School has a framework for the identification, assessment, management and review of risk to pupil welfare so that appropriate action can be taken to reduce the risks identified. See section 21 and the School's.

10.2 The school has a pastoral support programme for each year group; tutors, Heads of Year as well as a school nurse and pastoral mentor are line managed by the Head of Pastoral care and manage support for pupils internally.

11 Early help

11.1 Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. The School understands that providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.

11.2 The School's safeguarding training includes guidance about the early help process and prepares all staff to identify children who may benefit from early help. Staff are mindful of specific safeguarding issues and those pupils who may face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

11.2.1 is disabled and has specific additional needs;

11.2.2 has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan);

11.2.3 is a young carer;

11.2.4 is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;

11.2.5 is frequently missing / goes missing from care or from home;

11.2.6 is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;

11.2.7 is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;

11.2.8 is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;

11.2.9 is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;

11.2.10 is looked after or has returned home to their family from care;

11.2.11 is a privately fostered child.

11.3 A member of staff who considers that a pupil may benefit from early help should in the first instance discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will consider the appropriate action to take in accordance with the DSCP referral threshold document and will support staff in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

11.4 If early help is appropriate, staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment and will be supported by the DSL and carrying out this role. In some cases, staff may be required to or volunteer to take a lead role.

11.5 The matter will be kept under review and consideration given to work with Family Help services and local safeguarding partners in accordance with national and local safeguarding arrangements to ensure children and families receive support at the earliest opportunity.

11.6 a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the pupil's situation appears to be getting worse or does not appear to be improving.

12 Making a referral

12.1 **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) should be made immediately.** The contact details for children's social care are set out at the front of this policy.

12.2 Statutory assessments

12.2.1 Children's social care may undertake a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989 into the needs of the child. It is likely that the person making the referral will be asked to contribute to this process. Statutory assessments include:

- (a) **Children in need:** A child in need is a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

(b) **Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (at risk):** Local authorities have a duty to make enquiries under

section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

- 12.3 Any member of staff can make a referral. Staff do not need parental consent for referrals to statutory agencies. Staff required to make a direct referral may find helpful the flowchart set out on page 22 of KCSIE and the flowchart set out in Chapter 1 of WTSC for information about the likely actions and decisions required.
- 12.4 Staff will need to have access to certain information about the child and the safeguarding concern in order to make the referral. In general terms, this information will comprise:
- 12.4.1 personal details of the child including the child's developmental needs;
- 12.4.2 detailed information about the concern;
- 12.4.3 information about the child's family and siblings including the capacity of the child's parents or carers to meet the child's developmental needs and any external factors that may be undermining their capacity to parent.
- 12.5 If the referral is made by telephone, this should be followed up in writing.
- 12.6 If the referral is made by someone other than the DSL, the DSL should be informed of the referral as soon as possible.
- 12.7 Confirmation of the referral and details of the decision as to what course of action will be taken should be received from the local authority within one working day. If this is not received, the DSL (or the person that made the referral) should contact children's social care again.
- 12.8 Following a referral, if the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the local escalation procedures should be followed to ensure that the concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.
- 12.9 Further information about the local referral process and escalation procedures can be found at <https://www.devonscp.org.uk/>

13 Allegations against pupils - Child on Child abuse

- 13.1 All cases of Child-on-Child abuse and harassment will be taken seriously and in line with our 'Child on Child abuse policy in appendix 6.
- 13.2 Allegations against pupils should be reported in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy (see section 8 above). If harmful sexual behaviour is alleged to have occurred, the DSL will have regard to Part 5 KCSIE and take into account the local response of the police and children's social care to these issues. The views of the alleged victim will be taken into account but will not be determinative.
- 13.3 A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the School as a neutral measure during the investigation and the School's policy on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply. The School will take advice from children's social care and / or the police, as appropriate, on when and how to inform the pupil and his / her parents.

about the allegations and how investigation of such allegations will be conducted. The School will carry out risk assessments and take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare and continued education of all pupils including the pupil or pupils accused of abuse.

13.4 If it is necessary for a pupil to be interviewed by the police in relation to allegations of abuse, the School will ensure that, subject to the advice of relevant agencies, the pupil's parents are informed as soon as possible and that the pupil is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.

13.5 All those involved in such allegations will be treated as being at risk and in need of support and the safeguarding procedures in accordance with this policy will be followed. Appropriate support will be provided to all pupils involved, including support from external services as necessary.

14 What to do if staff have concern about someone else's welfare

14.1 Staff who have concerns about the welfare of others or any other safeguarding issue not expressly covered by this policy should report them.

14.2 In the absence of an express procedure for reporting, they should report such concerns to their line manager in the first instance.

15 Allegations against staff

15.1 The School has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff:

15.1.1 The procedures in this policy apply to staff who pose a risk of harm to children and aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff from malicious, false, unsubstantiated or unfounded allegations. These procedures are set out in Appendix 3 and follow Part 4 of KCSIE.

15.1.2 The School will follow its employment procedures for dealing with any other concern raised about staff, involving external agencies as appropriate.

15.2 Detailed guidance is provided to staff to ensure that all staff are clear on the rules of conduct and the expectations of the School in relation to contact with pupils, parents, colleagues and any other person who comes into contact with the School. This guidance is a part of the school's safeguarding induction and includes details of additional safeguarding arrangements where staff engage in one-to-one teaching and meetings with pupils.

16 Informing parents

16.1 Parents will normally be kept informed as appropriate of any action to be taken under these procedures. However, there may be circumstances when the DSL will need to consult the Head, the LADO(s), children's social care, the police and / or the pupil before discussing details with parents.

16.2 In all cases, the DSL will be guided by the DSCP referral threshold document.

16.3 See also Appendix 3 for details about the disclosure of information where an allegation has been made against a member of staff.

17 Additional reporting

- 17.1 In addition to the reporting requirements explained above, the School will consider whether it is required to report safeguarding incidents to any other regulatory body or organization, including but not limited to:

17.1.1 Health and Safety Executive

- (a) The School is legally required under RIDDOR to report certain incidents to the Health and Safety Executive. Please see the School's Health and Safety Policy.

17.1.2 Charity Commission

- (a) The School is a registered charity and is required to report all serious incidents to the Charity Commission in accordance with the guidance How to report a serious incident in your charity (Charity Commission, September 2017).
- (b) Serious incidents that will be reported to the Charity Commission include suspicions, allegations or incidents of abuse involving pupils. This is likely to involve the following:
- (i) Pupils have been, or are alleged to have been, abused or mistreated while under the care of the School or by someone connected with the School, for example a Governor, staff member or volunteer;
 - (ii) there has been an incident involving the abuse or mistreatment (alleged or actual) of someone and this is connected with the activities of the School;
 - (iii) there has been a breach of the School's procedures or policies which has put pupils at risk, including failure to carry out checks which would have identified that a person is disqualified in law, under safeguarding legislation, from working with children.
- (c) The School will notify the Charity Commission of other agencies to which the incident has been reported in accordance with this policy.

17.1.3 Insurers

- (a) The School will consider whether it is necessary to report safeguarding incidents to the relevant insurers and / or brokers. It may be necessary to report to a number of insurers as there any concurrent cover under existing and historic policies.
- (b) Care should be taken to ensure this is done before renewal to ensure that the school complies with its duties under the Insurance Act 2015. If the School is in any doubt with regard to the correct insurer and / or policy and / or if it is unable to locate the relevant insurer, professional advice should be sought.

18 Safer recruitment and supervision of staff

- 18.1 The School is committed to practicing safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff (including staff employed by another organization). See the School's separate safer recruitment policy.
- 18.2 The School will ensure that recruitment practices, DBS checks and determinations of regulated activity are compliant with current legislation, including changes introduced through the Crime and Policing Act 2026.
- 18.3 The School maintains a single central register of appointments for all staff and volunteers.
- 18.4 Staff connected to the School's early years, and later years' provisions are under an ongoing duty to inform the School if their circumstances change which would mean they meet any of the criteria for disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006. Staff should refer to the School's safer recruitment policy for further information about this duty and to their contract of employment in respect of their ongoing duty to update the School.
- 18.5 The School's protocol for ensuring that visiting speakers are suitable and appropriately supervised is set out in the School's separate 'visitors and visiting speakers' policy'.

19 Use of mobile technology and Online Safety

- 19.1 The School recognizes that online safety is a core part of safeguarding and child protection. Children are at risk of harm online from a range of threats, which fall into four main categories:
- Content – being exposed to harmful or inappropriate content, including pornography, self-harm, suicide, violence, extremism, hate speech, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news), and conspiracy theories.
 - Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with others, including grooming, exploitation, coercion, online abuse, sexual harassment, and unwanted contact from strangers or peers.
 - Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of harm, including cyberbullying, sending or receiving nudes or semi-nudes, illegal downloading, hacking, and creating or sharing harmful content.
 - Commerce – risks such as online gambling, financial scams, exploitation through microtransactions, and inappropriate or illegal advertising.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies;

The School recognises that artificial intelligence (AI) presents both educational opportunities and safeguarding risks. Staff should be aware that children may be exposed to, create, or share AI-generated content including manipulated images, deepfakes, sexually explicit content, misinformation and disinformation.

Any AI-generated image or content involving a child that is harmful, abusive, exploitative or sexualised will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with this policy and local safeguarding procedures. (See school AI policy)

Staff will receive training on emerging technologies and their safeguarding implications.

The School will:

- Ensure that filtering and monitoring systems meet the Department for Education's

Filtering and Monitoring Standards (2026) and use the Plan Technology for Your School tool to review effectiveness.

- Educate pupils, through the curriculum and wider pastoral work, on how to recognise and respond safely to online harms, including misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories.
- Provide staff training to identify online risks and respond appropriately, including awareness of emerging risks such as generative AI technologies.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to promote safe, responsible, and informed use of technology at home and in school.

- Respond swiftly to any online safety incidents in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour

Policy, and statutory guidance.

- 19.2 The School's policy on the use of mobile technology, including phones and cameras, in the School, is as follows:

the School's Acceptable Use Policy for pupils which sets out the expectations on pupils from Year 3 to Year 13. In short, phones (if students have them) should be switched off and in bags. They should not have access to networks during the school day without permission. Our discipline procedures for students in relation to mobile phone use are outlined in the behaviour and discipline policy and in our mobile phone policy.

- 19.2.1 The EYFS policy on mobile technology is clearly outlined in appendix 5.

- 19.2.2 all staff (including staff in the EYFS setting) should use mobile devices and cameras in accordance with the guidance set out in the staff code of conduct and separate.

- 19.2.3 parents of all pupils (including parents of pupils in the EYFS setting) may bring mobile devices onto the premises but may only take photographs during events such as plays, concerts or sporting events for personal use. Parents should be reminded that the publication of such images (including on personal social networking sites even where access to the image may be limited) may be unlawful.

- 19.3 The School's approach to online safety is further set out in the School's E-Safety Policy and follows the guidelines and advice of Southwest Grid for Learning including the 360 safe Audit. Internet usage goes through a safety filter which produces filtering and monitoring reports. This 'Securely' system will be reviewed half-termly in ICT steering group meetings to ensure the level of safeguarding is appropriate, and the monitoring reports will be reviewed at weekly safeguarding meetings. This will ensure the school has continued responsibility for filtering and monitoring the material accessed by students and ensure we can limit access to certain content as appropriate to protect risk.

20 **Training**

- 20.1 The School ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.

- 20.2 The level and frequency of training depend on role of the individual member of staff.

- 20.3 The School maintains written records of all staff training.

- 20.4 All training will be carried out in accordance with DSCP procedures where possible.

20.5 **Induction**

- 20.5.1 All staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, will be provided with induction training and key policies and training in relation to safeguarding. This includes:

- (a) Safeguarding and CP
- (b) Online Safety

- (c) Information on role and identity of DSL and deputies
- (d) KCSIE part one (Mandatory for all staff)
- (e) Behaviour and discipline policy
- (f) Safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- (g) Staff code of conduct including whistleblowing
- (h) Staff ICT Acceptable use policy.

20.6 **Safeguarding training**

- 20.6.1 All staff including the Head, will receive a copy of this policy and will be required to confirm they have read and understood Part 1 of the latest KCSIE guidance.
- 20.6.2 The Head and all staff members will undertake appropriate safeguarding training which will be updated every two years and as recommended by the DSCP. In addition, all staff members will receive safeguarding and child protection updates via emails and staff meetings on a regular basis and at least termly.
- 20.6.3 Staff development training will also include training on online safety, searching pupils for prohibited and banned items, managing reports of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment and Prevent Duty training assessed as appropriate for them by the School. Staff will know how to handle reports from students, what to do if they are told of abuse and their own role in referring to social care and early help processes.
- 20.6.4 Additionally, the School will make an assessment of the appropriate level and focus for staff training and responsiveness to specific safeguarding concerns such as radicalisation, harmful sexual behaviour, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, cyberbullying and mental health and to ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep children looked after safe.
- 20.6.5 All Governors receive safeguarding training on induction. The Nominated Safeguarding Governor and the Chair of Governors will receive additional appropriate training to enable them to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.
- 20.6.6 The School has mechanisms in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities and to ensure that they have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to safeguard children effectively, including questionnaires and staff meetings. This includes information on how staff can report concerns occurring out of hours/out-of-term time.
- 20.6.7 The school also subscribes to 'The Key' training on Child Protection and the 'Prevent Duty'.

20.7 **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

20.7.1 The DSL and Deputy DSL will undertake training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training includes Prevent awareness training and will be updated at least every two years.

20.7.2 In addition, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role. For further details about the training of the DSL, see Appendix 4.

20.7.3 Prevent duty training will be consistent with Home Office Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (**WRAP**) training if available.

20.8 Teaching pupils about safeguarding

20.8.1 The School teaches pupils safeguarding through the curriculum and PSHE. This includes guidance on adjusting behaviour to reduce risks, particularly online, building resilience to protect themselves and their peers, fostering healthy and respectful relationships with others and providing information about who they should turn to for help. Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education is taught in line with the subjects specific to different age groups as per mandatory guidance.

20.8.2 Pupils are taught about harmful sexual behaviours, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, through PSHE education appropriate to their age and stage of development.

20.8.3 Pupils are given the opportunity to talk about safeguarding issues within the classroom environment and are regularly made aware of the processes by which any concerns they have can be raised, including the processes for reporting a concern about a friend or peer, and how any report will be handled. The School's concerns and complaints procedure for pupils sets out in writing what pupils should do if they have a worry or complaint. We do all we can to create a safe culture and understand that sometimes children may not feel ready or may not know how to tell someone they are being abused.

20.8.4 The safe use of technology is a focus in all areas of the curriculum and key ICT safety messages are reinforced as part of assemblies and tutorial / pastoral activities. The School has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place (see the E-Safety policy) and is mindful that this should not lead to unnecessary restrictions on learning.

20.8.5 Pupils are made aware of key safeguarding staff and who they can go to with any safeguarding issues in assemblies and via posters around the school.

20.8.6 The School is aware of updated DfE guidance for Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE), including guidance relating to gender-questioning children (KCSIE 26). The School will integrate all requirements into this policy and related curriculum policies. The School will ensure its approach to RSHE reflects safeguarding best practice and prepares pupils for safe, respectful, and healthy relationships.

21 Risk assessment

- 21.1 Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified.
- 21.2 The format of risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the School's overall response to a welfare issue, including the use of individual pupil welfare plans (such as behaviour, healthcare and education plans, as appropriate).
- 21.3 The Head has overall responsibility for ensuring that matters which affect pupil welfare are adequately risk assessed and for ensuring that the relevant findings are implemented, monitored and evaluated.
- 21.4 Day to day responsibility to carry out risk assessments under this policy will be delegated to the DSL who has been properly trained in, and tasked with, carrying out the particular assessment.

22 Monitoring and review

- 22.1 The DSL will ensure that the procedures set out in this policy and the implementation of these procedures are updated and reviewed regularly, working with the Governing Body as necessary and seeking contributions from staff. The DSL will update the Senior Management Team regularly on the operation of the School's safeguarding arrangements.
- 22.2 Any safeguarding incidents at the School will be followed by a review of these procedures by the DSL and a report made to the Governing Body. Where an incident involves a member of staff, the LADO(s) will be asked to assist in this review to determine whether any improvements can be made to the School's procedures. Any deficiencies or weaknesses in regard to safeguarding arrangements at any time will be remedied without delay.
- 22.3 The Governing Body will undertake an annual review of this policy and the School's safeguarding procedures, including an update and review of the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation and the effectiveness of inter-agency working.
- 22.4 The DSL will work with the Nominated Safeguarding Governor, preparing a written report commissioned by the Governing Body. The written report should address how the School ensures that this policy is kept up to date; staff training on safeguarding; referral information; issues and themes which may have emerged in the School and how these have been handled; and the contribution the School is making to multi-agency working in individual cases or local discussions on safeguarding matters. The Governing Body should also consider independent corroboration, such as:
 - 22.4.1 inspection of records or feedback from external agencies including the LADO(s);
 - 22.4.2 reports of ISI inspections;
 - 22.4.3 the outcome of any relevant parental complaints; and
 - 22.4.4 press reports.
 - 22.4.5 Records or feedback from external agencies such as Devon Education Services

22.5 The Governing Body will review the report, this policy and the implementation of its procedures and consider the proposed amendments to the policy before giving the revised policy its final approval. Detailed minutes recording the review by the Governing Body will be made.

23 Record keeping

23.1 All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing.

23.2 The records created in accordance with this policy may contain personal data. The School has a number of privacy notices which explain how the School will use personal data for the benefit of pupils and parents. The privacy notices are published on the School's website. In addition, staff must ensure that they follow the School's data protection policies and procedures when handling personal data created in connection with this policy. This includes the School's data protection policy.

23.3 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

23.4 Insofar as pupil records are concerned:

23.4.1 Staff must record all concerns about a pupil on the School's pro forma record which is available in the staff room, on the intranet and through the DSL and deputies. Guidance on record keeping is set out in Appendix 2.

23.4.2 The DSL will open a child protection file following a report to him / her of a child protection concern about a pupil. The DSL will record all discussions with both colleagues and external agencies, decisions made and the reasons for them and details of the action taken.

23.5 Information sharing and multi-agency working.

23.5.1 The School will treat all safeguarding information with an appropriate level of confidentiality, only involving others where appropriate. The School will always act in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of others. A proportionate and risk-based approach will be taken in regard to information shared to temporary staff, volunteers and contractors.

23.5.2 The School understands that information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Fears about sharing information will not stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of pupils, which is always the School's paramount concern. The School understands that the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 provides a framework to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately.

23.5.3 The School will co-operate with children's social care, and where appropriate the police, to ensure that all relevant information is shared for the purposes of early help assessments, assessments and child protection investigations under the Children Act 1989.

23.5.4 Where allegations have been made against staff, the School will consult with the LADO(s) and, where appropriate, the police and children's social care to agree the information that should be disclosed and to whom.

23.5.5 While the School will share information with those involved where and when it is appropriate to do so, they may be unable to for reasons of data protection and confidentiality, for example because to do so may pose a risk of harm to others or because it has been prohibited by external agencies.

24 Version control

Date of adoption of this policy	SEP 2023
Date of last review of this policy	SEP 2026
Date for next review of this policy	June 2027
Policy owner (SLT)	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Policy owner (Governing Body)	Sarah Witheridge

Appendix 1 Indicators of abuse

1 Types of abuse

- 1.1 Part 1 of KCSIE defines the following indicators of abuse and neglect, however, staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label and in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical and witnessing the ill treatment of others. Any kind of abuse or harassment may breach children's rights as set out in the Human Rights Act.
- 1.2 **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. 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.
- 1.3 **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.
- 1.4 **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child 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.
- 1.5 **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, upskirting, 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.

- 1.6 **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in 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.

2 **Signs of abuse**

- 2.1 Possible signs of abuse include, but are not limited to:
- 2.1.1 the pupil says she has been abused or asks a question or makes a comment which gives rise to that inference;
 - 2.1.2 there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury, the injury is unusual in kind or location or there have been a number of injuries and there is a pattern to the injuries;
 - 2.1.3 the pupil's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour, or there is a sudden or significant change in the pupil's behaviour;
 - 2.1.4 the pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons;
 - 2.1.5 the pupil's development is delayed; the pupil loses or gains weight or there is deterioration in the pupil's general well-being;
 - 2.1.6 the pupil appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed;
 - 2.1.7 the pupil is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by her parents or carers; and
 - 2.1.8 Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff or any other person working with children, for example inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role or responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.
 - 2.1.9 Mental health issues can be an indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 2.2 The DSCP can provide advice on the signs of abuse and the DfE advice What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused (March 2015) provides advice in identifying child abuse. The NSPCC website is also a good source of information and advice.

3 **Specific safeguarding issues**

- 3.1 Statutory guidance acknowledges the following as specific safeguarding issues:
- 3.1.1 children and the court system;
 - 3.1.2 children missing from education (see section 3.4 below);

- 3.1.3 children with family members in prison;
- 3.1.4 child sexual exploitation (see section 3.5 below);
- 3.1.5 child criminal exploitation: county lines;
- 3.1.6 domestic abuse (which can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional and can affect children directly or indirectly through what they see and hear or experience);
- 3.1.7 homelessness;
- 3.1.8 so-called 'honour-based' violence (see section 3.5.2 below);
- 3.1.9 preventing radicalisation (see section 3.7 below);
- 3.1.10 serious violence
- 3.1.11 Child on Child abuse (see section 3.8 below);
- 3.1.12 sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (see section 0 below).
- 3.1.13 Female Genital Mutilation
- 3.1.14 Forced marriage.
- 3.1.15 Gangs and youth violence
- 3.1.16 Gender based violence / VAWG.
- 3.1.17 Hate
- 3.1.18 Mental Health
- 3.1.19 Private fostering
- 3.1.20 Relationship abuse
- 3.1.21 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting)
- 3.1.22 Trafficking
- 3.1.23 Upskirting
- 3.1.24 Child abduction and community safety incidents
- 3.1.25 The prevent duty.
- 3.1.26 Channel
- 3.1.27 Modern slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- 3.1.28 Cybercrime
- 3.1.29 Additional Support

- 3.2 Further advice and links to guidance on these specific safeguarding issues can be found in Part one of KCSIE 2026. Staff should be particularly aware of the safeguarding issues set out below.

3.3 **Serious Violence**

3.3.1 All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, 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. All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these.

3.4 **Children missing (or absent from) education and/or having unexplained / persistent absence.**

- 3.4.1 The School recognises that attendance is now a statutory safeguarding requirement in line with Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026). The School will:

- Submit daily attendance data to the Department for Education in compliance with statutory guidance.
- Treat patterns of absence, unexplained absences, and persistent lateness as potential safeguarding indicators.
- Ensure that safeguarding staff and leaders work closely with attendance leads to monitoring and respond promptly to attendance concerns.

- 3.4.2 Children going missing (or being absent from education or having unexplained patterns of absence) particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. School attendance registers are carefully monitored to identify any trends. Action should be taken in accordance with this policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about her welfare.

- 3.4.3 The school recognises the wellbeing and safeguarding risk that being missing from or absent from education can create /suggest and will work with families to ensure consistent attendance (see attendance policy for full details).

- 3.4.4 The School will hold more than one emergency contact for each pupil.

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

3.4.6 This will assist the local authority to:

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

3.4.7 The School shall inform the local authority of any pupil who:

- (a) fails to attend School regularly; or
- (b) has been absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of ten school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the School and the local authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

3.4.8 Alternative Provision (AP)

- (a) Where pupils are placed in Alternative Provision, the School will seek written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed for all staff. The School will maintain accurate records of the pupil's attendance and location during school hours and will review placements regularly to ensure that safeguarding and welfare needs are met.

3.5 **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

3.5.1 Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce,

manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity:

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants; and / or
- (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

3.5.2 The victim may have been sexually exploited even if sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual abuse, including children who:

- (a) appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- (b) associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- (c) have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- (d) suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;

- (e) suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- (f) misuse drugs and alcohol;
- (g) go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- (h) regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

3.6 Honour-based violence

3.6.1 All forms of so-called honour-based violence are abuse (regardless of motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves additional risk factors such as a wider network of family or community pressure and the possibility of multiple perpetrators which should be taken into account when deciding what safeguarding action to take. Honour based abuse can include FGM and forced marriage. Staff should speak to the DSL if they have any doubts.

3.6.2 If appropriate, the DSL will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multiagency liaison with police and children's social care.

3.6.3 Female genital mutilation (FGM)

- (a) 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.
- (b) There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 38-41 of the Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM (HM Government, April 2020) (pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools).
- (c) All staff must be aware of the requirement for teachers to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. The report should be made orally by calling 101, the single non-emergency number. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.
- (d) If the teacher is unsure whether this reporting duty applies, they must refer the matter to the DSL in accordance with this policy. See the Home Office guidance Mandatory reporting of female genital

mutilation - procedural information (December 2016) for further details about the duty.

- (e) Guidance published by the Department for Health also provides useful information and support for health professionals which will be taken into account by the School's medical staff.

3.6.4 **Forced marriage.**

- (a) Forcing a person into marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. A forced marriage can be any marriage for those under 18 who may be judged as unable to consent. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. Honour-based abuse can be a trigger for a forced marriage. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage.
- (b) Guidance on the warning signs that forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 13-14 of the Multi-agency guidelines: handling case of forced marriage (HM Government, April 2023).
- (c) Staff should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns. Pages 32-36 of the Multi-agency guidelines: handling case of forced marriage focus on the role of schools in detecting and reporting forced marriage and the Forced Marriage Unit can be contacted on 020 7008 0151 or fm@fco.gov.uk for advice and information.

3.7 **Radicalisation and Prevent duty.**

- 3.7.1 The School has a legal duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
- 3.7.2 The School aims to build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. 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 School is committed to providing a safe space in which children, young people and staff can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, understand the risks associated with terrorism and develop the knowledge and skills to be able to challenge extremist arguments.
- 3.7.3 The School has adopted the government's definitions for the purposes of compliance with the Prevent duty:

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

Radicalisation: *"the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups."*

- 3.7.4 Radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).
- 3.7.5 It is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alerted to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the DSL making a referral to the Channel programme, having consulted Channel duty guidance: protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (HM Government, Oct 2025).
- 3.7.6 The DfE and Home Office's briefing note The use of social media for online radicalisation (July 2015) includes information on how social media is used to radicalise young people and guidance on protecting pupils at risk.
- 3.7.7 **Channel duty guidance: protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (2025)** notes the following:
- 3.7.8 "There is no single way of identifying who is likely to be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Factors that may have a bearing on someone becoming vulnerable may include peer pressure, influence from other people or via the internet, bullying, crime against them or their involvement in crime, anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race / hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity and personal or political grievances.
- 3.7.9 Example indicators that an individual is engaged with an extremist group, cause or ideology include:
- 3.7.10 spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists.
- 3.7.11 changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group
- 3.7.12 day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centered around an extremist ideology, group or cause
- 3.7.13 loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- 3.7.14 possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far-right groups)

3.7.15 attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ideology; or

- 3.7.16 communications with others that suggest identification with a group / cause / ideology.
- 3.7.17 52. Example indicators that an individual has an intention to cause harm, use violence or other illegal means include:
- 3.7.18 clearly identifying another group as threatening what they stand for and blaming that group for all social or political ills
- 3.7.19 using insulting or derogatory names or labels for another group
- 3.7.20 speaking about the imminence of harm from the other group and the importance of action now
- 3.7.21 expressing attitudes that justify offending on behalf of the group, cause or ideology
- 3.7.22 condoning or supporting violence or harm towards others; or
- 3.7.23 plotting or conspiring with others."
- 3.7.24 Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the School's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect, sexual exploitation), whether these come from within their family or are the product of outside influences.

3.8 Child on Child abuse

- 3.8.1 The conduct of pupils towards each other will, in most instances, be covered by the School's behaviour and discipline policies. However, some behaviour by a pupil towards another may be of such a nature that safeguarding concerns are raised.
- 3.8.2 Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via Child-on-Child abuse. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - (a) bullying (including cyber-bullying);
 - (b) physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
 - (c) harmful sexual behaviour (see 3.8.3 below);
 - (d) Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting) (also known as youth produced sexual imagery);
 - (e) Upskirting (see 3.8.4 below);
 - (f) initiation / hazing type violence and rituals.

3.8.3 Harmful sexual behaviour is an umbrella term that includes sexual violence and sexual harassment. The School recognises that problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours are inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. Harmful sexual behaviour can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and the School recognises the gendered nature such behaviour can take. See also 3.9 below. Harmful sexual behaviour, like all Child-on-Child abuse, is never acceptable and will be taken seriously.

- 3.8.4 Upskirting typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. The Voyeurism Act outlaws 'upskirting' where the purpose is to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm and this behaviour is never acceptable.
- 3.8.5 The School takes steps to minimize the risk of all types of peer-on-peer abuse. The School has robust anti-bullying procedures in place (see the School's anti-bullying policy), and pupils are taught at all stages of the School about acceptable behaviour and how to keep themselves safe. Risk assessments are carried out and kept under review. Appropriate action is taken to protect pupils identified as being at risk, including the particular vulnerabilities of those with a special educational need or disability.
- 3.8.6 Both victim and perpetrator will be offered support. The perpetrator will be offered education and guidance about their behaviour.
- 3.8.7 Abusive behaviour by pupils must be taken seriously. Behaviour should not be dismissed as being normal among young people, as "banter" or simply "part of growing up". Behaviour such as initiation violence or any form of sexual violence or sexual harassment is not acceptable.

3.9 Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

3.9.1

- 3.9.2 Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age or sex. They can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

- 3.9.3 Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. The School will respond to allegations seriously and all victims will be offered appropriate support.

3.9.4 The school is aware of the importance of:

- (a) making it clear to pupils that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- (b) not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and
- (c) challenging behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

3.9.5 References to **sexual violence** are references to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, specifically rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.

3.9.6 References to **sexual harassment** mean "unwanted conduct of a sexual nature" that can occur online and offline. In the context of child-on-child sexual harassment, it is likely to: violate a child's dignity; and / or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated; and / or create a hostile, offensive or sexualized environment.

3.9.7 The DfE guidance Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges provides further detailed advice.

3.10 **Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting)**

3.10.1 "Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting)" means the taking and sending or posting of images or videos of a sexual or indecent nature, usually through mobile picture messages or webcams over the internet.

3.10.2 The School treats all incidences of Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting) as safeguarding matters to be actioned in accordance with this policy.

3.10.3 Members of staff should not view sexual imagery which is reported to them, or copy, print or share the images under any circumstances. In referring any incident of Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting), members of staff should describe the content of the images as reported to them.

3.10.4 The DSL may, in exceptional circumstances view images with the prior approval of the Head and only where:

- (a) it is the only way to make a decision whether to involve other agencies, as there is insufficient information available as to its contents;
- (b) it is necessary to report the image to a website or agency to have it taken down; or

(c) a pupil has reported the image directly to a member of staff in circumstances where viewing the image is unavoidable.

3.10.5 Where viewing an image is unavoidable:

- (a) viewing should take place on School premises wherever possible;
- (b) the image should be viewed by a person of the same sex as the person alleged to be shown in the image (where this is known);
- (c) a senior member of staff should be present to monitor and support the person viewing the image. This member of staff should not view the image;
- (d) full details of the viewing must be recorded in the School's safeguarding records, including who was present, the date and time, the nature of the image and the reasons for viewing it;
- (e) any member of staff who views an indecent image should be given appropriate support.

3.10.6 If any devices need to be confiscated (whether in order to view the image(s) or to pass evidence to the appropriate authority), they should be turned off and locked away securely until they are required.

3.10.7 If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, or that it contains a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, the device will be given to the police.

3.10.8 If external agencies do not need to be involved, the School must consider the deletion of any images. Pupils should be asked to delete images themselves and to confirm that this is done. Members of staff should not search devices to delete images.

3.10.9 If images have been shared online and cannot now be deleted by the person who shared them, the School should consider reporting the images to the

relevant web host or service provider (if an option is provided) or contacting the Internet Watch Foundation or ChildLine (if the website does not provide this option).

3.10.10 Where a pupil receives unwanted images, the School should advise the pupil and her parents of options that may be available to block the sender or to change the pupil's mobile phone number or email address.

3.10.11 The UK Council for Child Internet Safety's advice note Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting) in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (August 2016) contains details of support agencies and provides further information for schools on how to responding to incidents of Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting).

3.10.12 The College of Policing has also produced a briefing note Police action in response to youth produced sexual imagery ("Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting)") (November 2016) which provides information on how police forces treat instances of Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting) by young persons.

4 Special educational needs and disabilities

- 4.1 The School welcomes pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone. See the School's policy on special educational needs and learning difficulties and disability policy.
- 4.2 Additional barriers can exist when detecting the abuse or neglect of pupils with a special educational need or disability creating additional safeguarding challenges for those involved in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of this group of children. The School is mindful in particular that:
 - 4.2.1 assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the pupil's special educational need or disability without further exploration;
 - 4.2.2 pupils with a special education need or disability can be disproportionately impacted by bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
 - 4.2.3 there may be communication barriers which are difficult to overcome to identify whether action under this policy is required.

5 Children looked after and previously children looked after

- 5.1 The Governing Body ensures that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep children looked after safe and the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status, for example:
 - 5.1.1 whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order;
 - 5.1.2 contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility;
 - 5.1.3 information about a child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.
- 5.2 The DSL maintains these details, including contact details of the child's social worker.

6 Care leavers

6.1 The DSL maintains details of the local authority personal advisor appointed to guide and support care leavers and liaises with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern.

Appendix 2 Concerns about a child - guidance for staff

1 Receiving a disclosure

- 1.1 Listen carefully and keep an open mind. Do not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place.
- 1.2 Do not ask leading questions, i.e. a question which suggests its own answer.
- 1.3 Reassure the pupil but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. Explain the need to pass on the information in accordance with this policy so that the correct action can be taken.
- 1.4 Keep a sufficient written record of the conversation (see 2 below). All other evidence, for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, computers, must be kept securely with the written record.
- 1.5 Pass on the record when reporting the concern in accordance with this policy.

2 Recording a concern

- 2.1 Staff must record all concerns on our CPOMS reporting system, or in writing to the DSL.
- 2.2 Records should be factual, dated and signed if handwritten. Records should include:
 - 2.2.1 the pupil's details: name; date of birth; address and family details;
 - 2.2.2 date and time of the event / concern / conversation;
 - 2.2.3 the action taken and by whom;
 - 2.2.4 the name and position of the person making the record.
- 2.3 The School has an online system, CPOMS, which has a set proforma of how these concerns are reported in line with guidance. The record can be completed after an initial discussion with the DSL and completed with the DSL where appropriate.

3 Receiving a report of harmful sexual behaviour

- 3.1 Additional guidance about how to manage a report of harmful sexual behaviour is provided in Part 5 KCSIE. This includes the following advice:
 - 3.1.1 Only record the facts as the child presents them.
 - 3.1.2 Where the report includes an online element, do not view or forward illegal images of a child. See paragraph **Error! Reference source not found.** of Appendix 1 above and the UK Council for Child Internet Safety's advice note Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (Sexting) in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (August 2016) for advice about what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable.
 - 3.1.3 Manage reports with another member of staff present (preferably the DSL or DDSL), if possible.

- 3.1.4 Inform the DSL as soon as practically possible if the DSL is not involved in the initial report.

4 **Use of reasonable force**

- 4.1 There are circumstances when it would be appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard pupils. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means using no more force than is needed.
- 4.2 Staff should refer to the school's restraint of pupils policy for more detailed guidance about the use of reasonable force.

Appendix 3 Dealing with allegations against teachers, the Head, governors, volunteers and the staff.

1 The School's procedures

- 1.1 The School's procedures for dealing with allegations made against staff will be used where the member of staff has:
 - 1.1.1 behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - 1.1.2 possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
 - 1.1.3 behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if he or she works regularly or closely with children.
- 1.2 Any allegations not meeting these criteria will be dealt with in accordance with DSCP procedures. Advice from the LADO will be sought in borderline cases.
- 1.3 All such allegations must be dealt with as a priority without delay.
- 1.4 The local authority has designated a particular officer, or team of officers, to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children (Local Authority LADO(s) - LADO. The LADO(s) will be informed immediately and in any event within one working day of all allegations that come to the School's attention and appear to meet the criteria in paragraph 1.1 above.
- 1.5 Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching, and historical allegations will be referred to the police.

2 Reporting an allegation

- 2.1 Where an allegation or complaint is made against any member of staff (other than the Head), including the DSL and supply staff / volunteers, the matter should be reported immediately to the Head. The allegation will be discussed immediately with the LADO(s) before further action is taken. Where appropriate, the Head will consult with the DSL.
- 2.2 Where an allegation or complaint is made against the Head, the matter should be reported immediately to the Nominated Safeguarding Chair of Governors and be discussed immediately with the LADO(s) before further action is taken. The Chair of Governors will consult the Nominated Safeguarding Governor, and vice versa. Equally, if there is a conflict of interest in reporting to the Head the case will likewise go to the LADO direct via the Chair of Governors.
- 2.3 Where an allegation is made against any Governor, the matter should be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors or the Nominated Safeguarding Governor. If either the Chair of Governors or the Nominated Safeguarding Governor are the subject of an allegation, the matter should be reported to the other. The allegation will be discussed immediately with the LADO(s) before further action is taken. Where appropriate, the Chair of Governors will consult the Nominated Safeguarding Governor, and vice versa.
- 2.4 If it is not possible to report to the Head or Chair of Governors or Nominated Safeguarding Governor in the circumstances set out above, a report should be made immediately to the DSL. The DSL will take action in accordance with these

procedures and will inform the Head or, where appropriate, the Chair of Governors and the Nominated Safeguarding Governor.

- 2.5 The person taking action in accordance with the procedures in this Appendix is known as the **Case Manager**.

3 **Disclosure of information**

- 3.1 The Case Manager will inform the accused person of the allegation as soon as possible after the LADO(s) has been consulted.
- 3.2 The parents or carers of the child / children involved will be informed of the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. They may also be kept informed of the progress of the case, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The timing and extent of disclosures, and the terms on which they are made, will be dependent upon and subject to the laws on confidence and data protection and the advice of external agencies.
- 3.3 Where the LADO(s) advises that a strategy discussion is needed, or the police or children's social care need to be involved, the Case Manager will not inform the accused or the parents or carers until these agencies have been consulted and it has been agreed what information can be disclosed.
- 3.4 Reporting restrictions preventing the identification of a teacher who is the subject of such an allegation in certain circumstances will be observed.

4 **Further action to be taken by the School**

- 4.1 A school has a duty of care towards its employees and as such, it must ensure that effective support is provided for anyone facing an allegation. The School will take action in accordance with Part 4 of KCSIE and the School's employment procedures.
- 4.2 • **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**
- 4.2.1 The School will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children on the premises of the EYFS provision (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and will provide details of the action taken in respect of those allegations.
- 4.2.2 These notifications will be made as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any event within 14 days of the allegations being made.^{2]}

5 **Ceasing to use staff**

- 5.1 If the School ceases to use the services of a member of staff because they are unsuitable to work with children, a settlement agreement will not be used and a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (**DBS**) will be made promptly if the criteria for a referral are met. This will ordinarily be on conclusion of an

² This section is for EYFS registered provision only.

investigation. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the School, with a report being presented to the Governing Body

- 5.2 without delay. The School may also need to consider a referral to the DBS if a member of staff is suspended or deployed to another area of work that is not regulated activity. Any allegation of staff working in an EYFS setting will be passed onto Ofsted within 14 days.
- 5.3 If a member of staff tenders his or her resignation or ceases to provide his or her services at a time when child protection concerns exist in relation to that person, those concerns will still be followed up by the School in accordance with this policy and a referral to the DBS will be made promptly if the criteria for referral are met.
- 5.4 Separate consideration will be given as to whether a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) should be made where a teacher has been dismissed, or would have been dismissed had he / she not resigned, because of unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence. An interim referral to the TRA may also be considered and made if appropriate. Any allegations against supply staff will also be reported to the relevant agency.

6 Malicious allegations

- 6.1 Where an allegation by a pupil is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the Head will consider whether to take disciplinary action in accordance with the School's behaviour and discipline policy.
- 6.2 Where a parent has made a deliberately invented or malicious allegation the Head will consider whether to require that parent to withdraw their child or children from the School on the basis that they have treated the School or a member of staff unreasonably.
- 6.3 Whether or not the person making the allegation is a pupil or a parent (or other member of the public), the School reserves the right to contact the police to determine whether any action might be appropriate.

7 Record keeping

- 7.1 Details of allegations found to be malicious will be removed from personnel records.
- 7.2 For all other allegations, full details will be recorded on the confidential personnel file of the person accused.
- 7.3 An allegation proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be referred to in employer references. In accordance with KCSIE, a history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will also not be included in any reference.
- 7.4 The School will retain all safeguarding records up to the age of 25 and relevant personnel records so long as reasonably required.

8 Low Level Concerns

8.1 A low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the School may have acted in a way that: is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and / or does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the local authority. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being overfriendly with children;
- having clear favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone in a manner which is not in accordance with School procedures;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis or in a secluded area or behind a closed door without a window, or
- humiliating pupils.

8.2 Staff should report any low-level concerns to either the DSL or the Head in writing. The School monitors all reports of low-level concerns; should a pattern of behaviour be identified that subsequently meets the harms threshold as determined by the Head and DSL, the case will be dealt with according to the School's safeguarding procedures. The School's values and expectations for behaviour are detailed in the Staff Code of Conduct and should be demonstrated and reinforced by all staff at all times. Should staff find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others and / or, on reflection, in which they believe they have behaved in a way that may have fallen below the expected professional standards, they should proactively speak with the DSL directly. Any concern about supply staff or contractors will be reported to their employers so that further patterns or signs of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

8.3 The written report of any concern should include the name of the person reporting (respecting wishes to remain anonymous as far as possible. The report should include detailing the concern and context and the action taken thus far.

8.4 When a concern has been raised the head will collect as much evidence as possible - which may include speaking to the person who raised a concern, the individual(s) involved and any witnesses.

8.5 Once a concern has been raised, the School will:

- provide the whistleblower updates on the nature and progress of any enquiries;
- take action to protect the whistleblower from harassment or victimization;
- provide mediation or dispute resolution, if appropriate;
- protect the whistleblower's identity if requested, however, this may not always be possible, e.g. if a signed statement is required for a disciplinary proceeding; and
- take no action against the whistleblower if the concern was raised in good faith and later confirmed to be unfounded. The School will make initial enquiries to decide whether an investigation is required and what form it should take. Possible outcomes are:

- the matter may be resolved simply with no further investigation required;
- be investigated internally by an appropriate manager;
- If a pattern of behaviour is identified, then it may be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer for advice;
- If a pattern of behaviour is identified, then it may be referred to the police;
- form the subject of an independent inquiry.

8.6 Concerns or allegations that raise issues covered by other School policies or procedures will normally be addressed under those procedures e.g. disciplinary, safeguarding procedures. Response Staff will receive a response within 10 working days. The response will:

- acknowledge a concern has been raised;
- indicate a proposal on how to deal with the matter;
- give an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response; and / or
- indicate whether any initial enquiries have been made and whether any further investigations will take place; or
- explain the reasons for not investigating further; or
- if the situation is not yet resolved, indicated when the whistleblower is likely to receive further details. If the concern is deemed to be unfounded, the School will consider the matter concluded and will not expect the concern to be raised again unless new evidence becomes available.

8.7 A member of staff who is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with has a right to raise it in confidence with an external agency (see below).

8.8 External Advice Should a member of staff not feel comfortable raising a concern internally, they may contact an external agency directly. As per the Public Disclosure Act 1988, there are certain circumstances where this may be preferable. These may include where the employee reasonably believes:

- that exceptionally serious circumstances justify it;
- that the School would conceal or destroy the relevant evidence;
- where they believe they would be victimized by the School;
- where the Secretary of State has ordered it. A member of staff may raise a concern directly with Public Concern at Work – a confidential whistleblowing advice line (<https://protect-advice.org.uk>).

8.9 The school will review all reports of inappropriate behaviour and keep meticulous records. As such any pattern of behaviour that is inappropriate or problematic can be identified and acted upon promptly. The school will always reflect upon how wider culture can reduce the risk of occurrence / recurrence of such behaviours.

Appendix 4 Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

1 The name and contact details of the DSL and Deputy DSLs are set out in the contacts list at the front of this policy.

2 In accordance with Annex B of KCSIE, the main responsibilities of the DSL are:

2.1 Managing referrals

2.1.1 The DSL is expected to:

- (a) refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- (b) support staff who make referrals to the local authority children's social care;
- (c) refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- (d) support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- (e) refer cases where a person is dismissed or has left due to risk / harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service (**DBS**) as required; and
- (f) refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the police as required.

2.2 Work with others

2.2.1 The DSL is expected to:

- (a) Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners;
- (b) liaise with the Head to inform her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;
- (c) as required, liaise with the Case Manager (see Appendix 3 of this policy) and the LADO(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member;
- (d) liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians and SENCOs/named person with oversight for SEN) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies;
- (e) act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

2.3 **Raise awareness**

2.3.1 The DSL should:

- (a) ensure the School's child protection and safeguarding policies and processes are known, understood and used appropriately;
- (b) ensure this policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the Governing Body regarding this;
- (c) ensure this policy is available publicly and parents are aware that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the School in this;
- (d) link with the DSCP to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

2.4 **Child protection file**

- 2.4.1 Where children leave the School the DSL shall ensure their child protection file is transferred to any new school or college as soon as possible and within five days for an in-year transfer and five days from the start of term for any other transfer. This will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt will be obtained.
- 2.4.2 In addition, the DSL will consider if it is appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving.
- 2.4.3 On receiving a child protection file, the DSL will ensure that key staff are aware as required, including the SENCO / named person with oversight for SEN.

2.5 **Prevent**

- 2.5.1 In accordance with the *Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales* and *Channel duty guidance: protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism* (HM Government, July 2015) the DSL has, in addition, the following responsibilities:
 - (a) acting as the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters relating to the Prevent duty;
 - (b) coordinating Prevent duty procedures in the School;
 - (c) liaising with local prevent coordinators, the police and local authorities and through existing multi-agency forums, including referrals to the Channel Police Practitioner and / or the police where indicated;
 - (d) undergoing WRAP or other appropriate training;

- (e) maintaining ongoing training programme for all school employees including induction training for all new employees and keeping records of staff training; and
- (f) monitoring the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to the Prevent duty.

2.6 Training

2.6.1 The DSL and the Deputy DSL have undertaken training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training includes Prevent duty awareness training and will be updated at least every two years. In addition, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- (a) understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements;
- (b) 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;
- (c) ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the School's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff;
- (d) are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- (e) understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation;
- (f) understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with the [safeguarding partners / DSCP], other agencies, organisations and practitioners;
- (g) are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals;
- (h) understand and support the School with regard 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;
- (i) 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;

- (j) can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online;
- (k) obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses;
- (l) encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the School may put in place to protect them.

2.7 **Online Safety**

- 2.7.1 The DSL will also work with the school's ICT manager to support the online safety of students and to ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place.

Appendix 5

Guideline and Procedures – Use of Mobile Phones, Cameras and Tablets EYFS.

Statutory Guidance EYFS 2017

CHILD PROTECTION

3.4. Providers must be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children. These should be in line with the guidance and procedures of the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The safeguarding policy and procedures must include an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child and in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, and cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

Only school cameras and tablets are to be used to take appropriate photographs of the children. These are only to be used/stored on school equipment within the school for record keeping purposes and must never be appropriated by staff.

Tablets are used in the Reception class to record observations to add to the children's Tapestry Learning Journals.

Parents are asked to give/not give permission to publish children's photographs.

The Maynard School – Child Protection and Safeguarding – Use of Mobile phones, tablets and cameras.

The schools policy on the use of mobile phones can be found in more detail in the mobile phone / devices policy – however use of devices, cameras, and tablets in School, including EYFS setting is outlined as follows:

The school's acceptable use policy for pupils, which sets out the expectations on the pupils from Year 1 to Year 13. In the EYFS setting, pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones or any device with a camera facility onto the premises and Pre Prep has its own guidance sheet on the use of cameras, mobiles and tablets.

Staff and volunteers should use mobile phones and cameras in accordance with the guidance set out in the staff code of conduct;

Parents may bring mobile phones onto the premises but may only take photographs during events such as plays, concerts or sporting events for personal use, parents should be reminded that the publication of such images (including on social networking sites even where access to the image may be limited) may be unlawful.

56. Personal mobile telephone and electronic devices

It is understood that staff may need to check text messages and / or personal emails in the case of an emergency or during break times. Personal use must not interfere with your work commitments (or those of others). It is a privilege not a right. Staff shall set an example and shall never use their own mobile telephones or other electronic devices whilst they are on duty (whether in a classroom or otherwise) and any such devices should be switched off except in the case of an emergency and to be kept out of sight of parents and pupils.

Review procedure	Review Annually
Person Responsible	Liz Gregory
Date of last review	01.09.25

Appendix 6

The Maynard School

6.10.1 Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

Date policy last reviewed: SEP 25

Signed by:

Eleanor Bucci	DSL	Date: SEP 26
_____		_____
	Chair of governors	Date:
_____		_____

Last updated: Sep 23

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Definitions
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Types of Child-on-Child abuse
5. A whole-school approach to Child-on-Child abuse
6. Channels for reporting abuse
7. Protecting pupils with increased vulnerability to Child-on-Child abuse
8. Staff identifying and reporting concerns
9. Handling allegations of abuse against pupils
10. Monitoring and review

Statement of intent

The Maynard School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every pupil, both inside and outside of the school premises, and is aware that abuse against children can be inflicted by other children. We implement a whole-school preventative approach to managing Child-on-Child abuse, ensuring that the wellbeing of pupils is at the forefront of all action taken.

This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

It will be achieved by:

- Creating a culture of mutual respect amongst pupils, irrespective of protected characteristics.
- Teaching pupils about behaviour that is acceptable and unacceptable.
- Identifying and making provision for any pupil that has been subject to abuse.
- Ensuring that members of the governing board, the headteacher and staff members understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, are alert to the signs of Child-on-Child abuse and know to refer concerns to the DSL.

The DSL is: Eleanor Bucci. In the absence of the DSL, child protection matters will be dealt with by: Liz Gregory.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010(updated guidance May 2026)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- DfE (2023) Keeping children safe in education 2023'

The policy also has regard to the following non-statutory guidance:

- DfE (2015) What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2024) 'Information sharing'
- DfE (2026) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2024) Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Personal Electronic Devices Policy
- Data and Cyber-Security Breach Prevention and Management Plan

Definitions

"Child-on-Child abuse" is defined, for the purposes of this policy, as any form of abuse inflicted by one child or a group of children, i.e. individuals under the age of 18, against another child or group of children. This policy covers Child-on-Child abuse both in and outside of school and both in person and online.

"Harmful sexual behaviour" is defined as any sexual behaviour which:

- Does not observe and respect any individuals on the receiving end of the behaviour, e.g. touching someone without their consent.
- Is inappropriate for the age or stage of development of the pupil.
- Is problematic, abusive or violent.

The policy will use the following terms to describe pupils involved in Child-on-Child abuse:

- **Victim(s)** – the individual(s) against whom the abuse has, or has allegedly, been inflicted.
- **Perpetrator(s)** – the individual(s) exhibiting abusive behaviour against their peers.
- **Alleged perpetrator(s)** – individual(s) against whom a report of abusive behaviour has been made, where guilt has not yet been ascertained.

Note: The use of the word ‘alleged’ does not mean that the pupil in question is not guilty of Child-on-Child abuse, that the school does not believe the allegation, or that the allegation will not be taken seriously. Staff will remember that the school has a legal duty of care to all perpetrators and alleged perpetrators who are pupils at the school, including a requirement to ensure they can access their education. Staff will think very carefully about terminology when speaking in front of pupils. Victims will be reassured that use of the term ‘alleged perpetrator’ is not an attempt to discredit their allegation.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has a duty to:

- Ensure that the school complies with its duties under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation.
- Guarantee that the policies, procedures and training opportunities in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- Guarantee that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’.
- Confirm that the school’s arrangements for handling Child-on-Child abuse take into account the procedures and practices of the LA as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures.
- Appoint a member of staff from the SLT to the role of DSL as an explicit part of the role-holder’s job description.
- Appoint one or more deputy DSL(s) to provide support to the DSL and ensure that they are trained to the same standard as the DSL, and that the role is explicit in their job description(s).

- Make sure that pupils are taught about Child-on-Child abuse, including online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure that staff members are appropriately trained to support pupils to be themselves at school, e.g. if they are LGBTQ+ AND GENDER QUESTIONING.
- Ensure the school has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible risk of harm in pupils, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Guarantee that there are procedures in place to handle pupils' allegations against other pupils.
- Ensure that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as policies pertaining to the behaviour of pupils.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to Child-on-Child abuse.
- Make sure that pupils' wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual pupils.
- Guarantee that there are systems in place for pupils to express their views and give feedback.

The headteacher has a duty to:

- Safeguard pupils' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession.
- Ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing board, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by staff members.
- Provide staff, upon induction, with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, part one and, where appropriate, Annex A of the 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE) guidance, the Behavioural Policy, the Children Missing from Education Policy, online safety training, and the identity of the DSL and any deputies.
- Ensure staff receive training on recognising indicators of abuse and handling disclosures or concerns about a pupil.

The DSL has a duty to:

- Understand and keep up to date with local safeguarding arrangements.
- Act as the main point of contact with the three safeguarding partners and the child death review partner.
- Make the necessary child protection referrals to appropriate agencies.

- Understand when they should consider calling the police, in line with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) **guidance**.
- Liaise with the headteacher to inform them of safeguarding issues and ongoing enquiries.
- Liaise with the deputy DSL(s) to ensure effective safeguarding outcomes.
- Act as a source of support for pupils who have been abused by, or who have abused, other pupils.
- Leading the school in taking a preventative approach to Child-on-Child abuse.

Other staff members have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard pupils' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- Provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn.
- Act in accordance with school procedures with the aim of eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to Child-on-Child abuse.
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- Be aware of the signs of abuse.
- Be aware of the early help process and understand their role in it.
- Be aware of and understand the procedure to follow in the event that a child confides they are being abused by a peer.
- Support social workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the DSL.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases and always act in the best interest of the child.

Types of Child-on-Child abuse

Staff will familiarise themselves with the forms that Child-on-Child abuse can take, including:

Physical abuse

A form of abuse may involve actions such as hitting, throwing, burning, drowning and poisoning, or otherwise causing physical harm to another child.

Sexual abuse

A form of abuse involving sexual activity between children – sexual abuse, for the purposes of this policy, is divided into two categories: sexual violence and sexual harassment.

“Sexual violence” encompasses the definitions provided in the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, i.e. non-consensual sexual touching, and causing another child to engage in sexual activity without consent, e.g. forcing someone to touch themselves sexually.

“Sexual harassment” refers to any sexual behaviour that could violate another child’s dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment, including:

- Sexualised jokes, taunting or comments.
- Physical behaviour, e.g. deliberately brushing against someone.
- Online sexual harassment, including
 - Upskirting
 - Sexualised online bullying
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
 - Sexual threats or coercion.

The “sharing of sexualised imagery” can also constitute sexual harassment – this refers to the consensual and non-consensual sharing between pupils of sexually explicit content, including that which depicts:

- Another child posing nude or semi-nude
- Another child touching themselves in a sexual way
- Any sexual activity involving another child
- Someone hurting another child sexually

Staff will be aware that children creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of other children is a criminal offence, even where the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed with the permission of the child depicted, or by the child themselves. Incidents of sharing sexualised imagery will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (cyberbullying)

Bullying will generally be handled in line with the Anti-bullying Policy; however, particularly severe instances will be handled in line with this policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Online abuse

This involves the use of technology and the internet in order to harass, threaten or intimidate another child. Instances of online abuse will be managed in line with this policy, the Online Safety Policy and the Anti-bullying Policy.

Discriminatory behaviour

Discriminatory behaviour encompasses abuse inflicted on a pupil because of their protected characteristics, e.g. religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, culture, or SEND. Discriminatory behaviour is never acceptable, and all cases will be handled in line with this policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The school will always keep in mind the Equalities Act 2010 and will reflect on how it can support students with protected characteristics and will take positive action to deal with any disadvantages they may face.

Intimate partner abuse

This involves a romantic partnership between children in which one or both partners are emotionally, physically or sexually abusive to the other. This could include:

- Repetitive insults
- Controlling behaviour, e.g. preventing a child from socialising with others or deliberately isolating them from sources of support.
- Sexual harassment.
- Threats of physical or sexual abuse.

The school will manage intimate partner abuse in the same way as a case of abuse between any other children, i.e. via the processes outlined in **section 9** of this policy, and in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

A whole-school approach to Child-on-Child abuse

The school will continue to involve all members of the school community, including the governing board, staff, pupils, parents and other stakeholders, in creating a whole-school approach to Child-on-Child abuse. Our full approach is outlined in our Child-on-Child abuse policy in appendix 6.

The governing board will ensure that keeping children safe and protected from harm, including Child-on-Child abuse, is central to all policies and procedures implemented across the school. The school will ensure that procedures for handling Child-on-Child abuse are transparent, clear and

understandable, and are readily accessible to any member of the school community who wishes to access them.

The school will implement a contextual approach to safeguarding pupils against Child-on-Child abuse and will ensure that all procedures take into account incidents of Child-on-Child abuse that occur outside of school or online.

The headteacher will ensure that all staff receive adequate training on handling Child-on-Child abuse.

School culture

The school prioritizes cultivating a safe and respectful environment amongst pupils and ensures that all pupils are aware that the school adopts a **zero-tolerance stance** on Child-on-Child abuse of any kind.

The school promotes respectful interactions amongst pupils, and all staff model appropriate and respectful behaviour. Staff will take care to avoid normalising harmful behaviour, particularly harmful sexual behaviour, e.g. by refraining from the use of phrases such as 'kids will be kids' or describing such behaviour as 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

The school will ensure that wider societal factors that exacerbate the problem of Child-on-Child abuse are reflected in its approach to creating a preventative culture. This means that individuals who are more likely to be abused, e.g. girls or LGBTQ+ AND GENDER QUESTIONING pupils, or who are at increased risk of acting as a perpetrator in abusive situations, e.g. due to abusive home situations or anger management issues, are given additional support from an early stage.

The school manages all early help and intervention for pupils showing early signs of harmful behaviour, or early signs of being the victim of harmful behaviour, in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Curriculum

The school maintains the position that education surrounding respectful and healthy attitudes and behaviour towards others is the best way to combat Child-on-Child abuse in the school. All staff, not just teaching staff, are responsible for passing this knowledge on to pupils.

In order to prevent Child-on-Child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

The school will also ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Such content will be age and stage of development specific, and tackle issues such as the following:

- Healthy relationships
- Respectful behaviour
- Stereotyping and equality
- LGBTQ+ AND GENDER QUESTIONING identities and relationships
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- Prejudiced behaviour
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong
- Addressing cultures of sexual harassment

Pupils will be allowed an open forum to talk about concerns and sexual behaviour. They are taught how to raise concerns and make a report, including concerns about their friends or peers, and how a report will be handled.

The curriculum will ensure that pupils of all ages are taught about and understand the concept of consent and its importance in an age-appropriate way.

Channels for reporting abuse

Pupils will be able to report incidents of Child-on-Child abuse or concerns about the behaviour of their peers through the following channels:

- Disclosing to a member of staff they feel comfortable talking to.
- Disclosing to the wellbeing team and pastoral mentors.
- Disclosing to the DSL in person or via email.
- Disclosing via the school's 'whisper' online concerns system.
- Via wellbeing clubs and wellbeing hub hours.

All channels for reporting abuse will be promoted and publicised throughout the school, and all pupils will be made aware of how, and to whom, to report incidents of abuse. The school will also ensure pupils are aware of the type of behaviour that should be reported, ranging from criminal behaviour, e.g. rape or sexual assault, to everyday harassment, e.g. sexualised jokes or inappropriate comments, to ensure that victims do not view their experience as 'not serious enough' to report.

The school will maintain a culture that promotes reporting abuse, whether the individual reporting is the victim, a bystander, or a friend or relative of the victim. Staff will address any incidents of pupils equating reporting abuse to 'snitching' or being a 'tattle-tale' and will convey to these pupils how important it is to report abuse to help tackle the wider problem of Child-on-Child abuse in schools.

Protecting pupils with increased vulnerability to Child-on-Child abuse

The school is aware that, while Child-on-Child abuse can be perpetrated by, and against, anyone, there are certain groups of pupils who are at an increased risk of being on the receiving end of Child-on-Child abuse.

Staff will be careful to acknowledge the increased risk certain pupils face while refraining from making assumptions about the nature of any reported, witnessed or suspected abuse. Staff will be aware that pupils who are generally at increased risk of abuse can also be perpetrators of abuse.

The school will ensure that action is taken, where possible, before major concerns arise; therefore, incidents of low-level abuse related to the characteristics of the below groups will be handled in line with early help procedures, which are laid out within the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Reporting Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy.

Girls

Staff will be aware that girls are more likely to be on the receiving end of Child-on-Child sexual abuse than their male counterparts, and that sexual violence and harassment against girls is very common and accounts for the majority of cases. As a school for girls, we know that we need to take a 'it is happening' approach.

The School recognises the national concern regarding violence against women and girls (VAWG). We take a proactive approach to challenging misogyny, sexist language, gender-based harassment and harmful gender stereotypes.

The school will aim to promote and nurture healthy attitudes and relationships amongst pupils e.g. by challenging and working to deconstruct gender stereotypes in school.

The School promotes respectful relationships and seeks to create a culture where harmful behaviours are recognised, challenged and addressed at an early stage.

Staff will challenge any incidents of misogynistic language or gender-based abuse, whether of a sexualised nature or not, as holding misogynistic viewpoints can make a pupil more likely to commit sexualised violence in the future.

LGBTQ+ AND GENDER QUESTIONING pupils

Staff will be aware that pupils who are LGBTQ+ and/or Gender Questioning, or are perceived to be LGBTQ+, and/or Gender questioning whether they are or not, are more likely to be targeted by their peers, e.g. for discriminatory bullying.

The school holds a zero-tolerance policy towards pupils using homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language, regardless of whether or not the language is being directed at another individual. Every staff member is individually responsible for challenging such behaviour and making clear to all pupils that any abuse towards pupils who are LGBTQ+ and/or Gender Questioning, or who are perceived to be,

is unacceptable.

For those pupils who may be questioning their gender. Staff should respond sensitively and proportionately and ensure that any decisions are made in the child's best interests, involving parents and external agencies where appropriate, whilst maintaining safeguarding as the paramount consideration.

Pupils with SEND

Staff will be aware that pupils with SEND are at increased risk of Child-on-Child abuse. The school will ensure that there are mechanisms in place to support pupils with SEND in reporting abuse, with due regard paid to the fact that these pupils may face additional barriers to reporting abuse and that spotting signs of abuse in these pupils may be harder.

Staff will avoid assuming that changes in the behaviour of pupils with SEND are as a result of their needs or disability and will report any concerns to the DSL. The DSL and the SENCO will collaborate in the handling of instances of abuse towards pupils with SEND to ensure that barriers to communication can be effectively managed.

Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils

Staff will be aware that minority ethnic pupils, particularly black pupils, may be less likely to report abuse committed against them, and may be more likely to be misidentified as perpetrators of abuse.

The school holds a zero-tolerance policy towards pupils using racist language, regardless of whether the language is being directed at another individual. Every staff member is individually responsible for challenging such behaviour and making clear to all pupils that any abuse towards pupils from BAME backgrounds is unacceptable.

Staff will also be aware that BAME girls, BAME pupils with SEND, or BAME LGBTQ+ AND GENDER QUESTIONING, or perceived LGBTQ+ AND GENDER QUESTIONING pupils, are likely to face increased abuse due to the intersection of these identities. Staff will be vigilant with regard to these pupils and the ways in which other pupils behave towards them, in order to ensure any incidents or potential incidents can be handled as soon as they occur.

Staff identifying and reporting concerns

Staff will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction, and [annual](#) refresher training as well as continuous professional development and updates on safeguarding guidance and documentation. This training will include guidance on how to recognise indicators of Child-on-Child abuse of all kinds, and how to distinguish between behaviour, particularly sexual behaviour, that is developmentally appropriate and that which is harmful.

When identifying pupils at risk of potential harm or who have been harmed by their peers, staff members will look out for a number of indicators including, but not limited to, the following:

- Injuries in unusual places, such as bite marks on the neck, that are also inconsistent with their age
- Lack of concentration and acting withdrawn
- Knowledge ahead of their age, e.g. sexual knowledge
- Use of explicit language

Fear of abandonment

- Depression and low self-esteem
- Changes to their social group, e.g. spending time with older pupils, or social isolation
- Alcohol or substance misuse

Where a pupil is displaying signs of being impacted by Child-on-Child abuse, or perpetrating Child-on-Child abuse, staff will report this to the DSL as soon as is reasonably practical.

Staff will challenge all instances of abusive or harmful behaviour displayed by pupils that they witness or are reported to them. Staff will not wait for concerns or situations between pupils to escalate before intervening; minor or singular instances of abusive behaviour will still be brought to the attention of the DSL and the pupil will always be spoken to about their behaviour and disciplined, where appropriate, in line with the Behavioural Policy.

Staff will enforce the school's policy that no known and substantiated incident of abusive or harmful behaviour between pupils will occur without consequences for the perpetrator(s), although these consequences will be decided on a case-by-case basis and will take into account the views of any victims involved, the context of the behaviour and the severity of the incident.

Staff will be aware that just because a victim of abusive behaviour does not report the behaviour or react to the behaviour negatively, this does not mean that the behaviour is not still harmful; some pupils will be uncomfortable challenging their peers on inappropriate behaviour or may not be aware themselves that the behaviour is abusive. Staff have a responsibility to ensure that both the perpetrator(s), or alleged perpetrator(s), and the victim(s) understand that such behaviour inflicted by or against them was unacceptable; failing to challenge a pupil on unacceptable behaviour can normalise that behaviour not just for the pupil in question, but for all pupils who see the behaviour going unchallenged.

Staff will remain cognisant that downplaying abusive behaviour can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour throughout the school and, as such, will treat all displays or reports of abusive behaviour with the utmost severity and sensitivity in order to reinforce to all pupils that such behaviour will not be tolerated, and to prevent further instances of this behaviour in the future.

Handling allegations of abuse against pupils

Staff will always, when handling an incident of alleged abuse, take the report of the victim seriously, reassure them, support them and work to keep them safe. Victims will never be made to feel like they are causing a problem, be made to feel ashamed, or have their experience minimized by staff at the school. Staff will be aware of the importance of not downplaying any reports of abuse; however, will ensure that they remain sympathetic, and observant of the duty of care, to both the alleged perpetrator(s) and victim(s).

If a friend of a victim makes a report or a member of staff overhears a conversation, staff will take action – they will never assume that someone else will deal with it or wait for a disclosure. The basic principles remain the same as when a victim reports an incident; however, staff will consider why the victim has not chosen to make a report themselves and the discussion will be handled sensitively and with the help of children's social care where necessary. If staff are in any doubt, they will speak to the DSL.

Where an alleged incident took place away from the school or online but involved pupils from the school, the school's duty to safeguard pupils remains the same and the incident will be treated equally as seriously and investigated in the same way as an incident that took place in school.

All staff will be trained to handle disclosures. Effective safeguarding practice includes:

- Never promising confidentiality at the initial stage.
- Only sharing the report with those necessary for its progression.
- Explaining to the victim what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to.
- Recognising that the person the pupil chose to disclose the information to is in a position of trust.
- Being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed.
- Not asking leading questions and only prompting the pupil with open questions.
- Waiting until the end of the disclosure to immediately write a thorough summary. If notes must be taken during the disclosure, it is important to still remain engaged and not appear distracted.
- Only recording the facts as the pupil presents them – not the opinions of the note taker.
- Where the report includes an online element, being aware of searching, screening and confiscation advice.
- Wherever possible, managing disclosures with two staff members present (preferably with the DSL or a deputy).
- Informing the DSL or deputy as soon as possible after the disclosure if they could not be involved in the disclosure.

The DSL will be informed of any allegations of abuse against pupils with SEND. They will record the incident in writing and, working with the SENCO, decide what course of action is necessary, with the best interests of the pupil in mind at all times.

Confidentiality

The school will only engage staff and agencies required to support the victim and/or be involved in any investigation. If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the disclosure, the school cannot

make this promise. Even without the victim's consent, the information may still be lawfully shared if it is in the public interest and protects children from harm.

The DSL will consider the following when making confidentiality decisions:

- Parents will be informed unless it will place the victim at greater risk.
- If a pupil is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed, a referral will be made to children's social care.
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes – reports containing any such crimes will be passed to the police.

The DSL will weigh the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and others. If a referral is made against the victim's wishes, it will be done so extremely carefully and the reasons for referral will be explained to the victim. Appropriate specialist support will always be offered.

Anonymity

There are legal requirements for anonymity where a case is progressing through the criminal justice system. The school will do all it can to protect the anonymity of children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. It will carefully consider, based on the nature of the report, which staff will be informed and what support will be in place for the children involved. When deciding on the steps to take, the school will consider the role of social media in potentially exposing victims' identities and facilitating the spread of rumours.

Risk assessment

The DSL or a deputy will make an immediate risk and needs assessment any time there is a report of sexual violence. For reports of sexual harassment, a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Risk assessments are not intended to replace the detailed assessments of experts, and for incidents of sexual violence it is likely that a professional risk assessment by a social worker or sexual violence specialist will be required.

Risk assessments will consider:

- The victim.
- The alleged perpetrator.
- Other pupils at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.

Risk assessments will be recorded (either on paper or electronically) and kept under review in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Taking action following a disclosure

The DSL or a deputy will decide the school's initial response, taking into consideration:

- The victim's wishes.
- The nature of the incident.
- The ages and developmental stages of the pupils involved.
- Any power imbalance between the pupils.
- Whether the incident is a one-off or part of a pattern.
- Any ongoing risks.
- Any related issues and the wider context, such as whether there are wider environmental factors in a pupil's life that threaten their safety and/or welfare.
- The best interests of the pupil.
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment are always unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Immediate consideration will be given as to how to support the victim, alleged perpetrator and any other pupils involved.

For reports of rape and assault by penetration, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any classes shared with the victim whilst the school establishes the facts. The school will consider how to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator apart on school premises, and on transport where applicable. These actions will not be seen as a judgement of guilt on the alleged perpetrator.

For reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and the suitability of shared classes, premises and transport will be considered immediately. In all cases, the initial report will be carefully evaluated and the wishes of the victim, nature of the allegations and requirement to protect all children will be taken into consideration.

Where a pupil is found to have been involved in harmful sexual behaviour, e.g. non-consensually sharing indecent imagery of another pupil, the school will help the pupil to move forward from the incident by supporting them in adopting more positive behaviour patterns and attitudes.

Managing the report

The decision of when to inform the alleged perpetrator of a report will be made on a case-by-case basis. If a report is being referred to children's social care or the police, the school will speak to the relevant agency to discuss informing the alleged perpetrator.

There are four likely outcomes when managing reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- Managing internally.
- Providing early help.

- Referring to children's social care.
- Reporting to the police.

Whatever outcome is chosen, it will be underpinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons behind decisions will be recorded either on paper or electronically.

The following situations are statutorily clear and do not allow for contrary decisions:

- The age of consent is 16.
- A child under the age of 16 can **never** consent to sexual activity.
- Sexual intercourse without consent is **always** rape.
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are defined in law.
- Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of children under 18 is illegal – including children making and sending images and videos of themselves.

Managing internally

In some cases, e.g. one-off incidents, the school may decide to handle the incident internally through behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support.

Providing early help

The school may decide that statutory interventions are not required, but that pupils may benefit from early help – providing support as soon as a problem emerges. This approach can be particularly useful in addressing non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent the escalation of sexual violence.

Referral to children's social care

If a pupil has been harmed, is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger, the school will make a referral to children's social care. Parents will be informed unless there is a compelling reason not to do so (if referral will place the victim at risk). This decision will be made in consultation with children's social care.

The school will not wait for the outcome of an investigation before protecting the victim and other children.

The DSL will work closely with children's social care to ensure that the school's actions do not jeopardize any investigation. Any related risk assessment will be used to inform all decisions. If children's social care decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate, the school will consider referring the incident again if they believe the pupil to be in immediate danger or at risk of harm. If

the school agrees with the decision made by children's social care, they will consider the use of other support mechanisms such as early help, pastoral support and specialist support.

Reporting to the police

Reports of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault will be passed on to the police – even if the alleged perpetrator is under 10 years of age. Generally, this will be in parallel with referral to children's social care. The DSL and deputies will follow the local process for referral.

Parents will be informed unless there is a compelling reason not to do so. Where parents are not informed, it is essential for the school to support the pupil with any decision they take, in unison with children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.

The DSL and governing board will agree what information will be disclosed to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator and their parents. They will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity. The DSL will be aware of local arrangements and specialist units that investigate child abuse.

In some cases, it may become clear that the police will not take further action, for whatever reason. In these circumstances, the school will continue to engage with specialist support for the victim as required.

Bail conditions

Pupils against whom further action is taken by the police may be released under bail conditions or 'released under investigation (RUI) in circumstances that do not warrant the application of bail. Where this occurs and the perpetrator returns to school, the school's primary focus will be conducting an assessment of the risk the perpetrator poses to the victim or other pupils and staff at the school, both physically and in terms of trauma or emotional stress and implementing any mitigating measures necessary to reduce the harm caused.

The school will work with children's social care and the police to support the victim, alleged perpetrator and other pupils (especially witnesses) during criminal investigations. The school will seek advice from the police to ensure they meet their safeguarding responsibilities.

The school will liaise with police investigators to develop a balanced set of arrangements whereby both the alleged perpetrator and the victim can continue to receive a suitable education without compromising any ongoing investigations or the emotional state of the victim.

Managing delays in the criminal justice system

The school will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of criminal proceedings before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children. The associated risk assessment will be used to

inform any decisions made. The DSL will work closely with the police to ensure the school does not jeopardize any criminal proceedings, and to obtain help and support as necessary.

The end of the criminal process

Risk assessments will be updated if the alleged perpetrator receives a caution or is convicted. If the perpetrator remains in the same school as the victim, the school will set out clear expectations regarding the perpetrator, including their behaviour and any restrictions deemed reasonable and proportionate with regards to the perpetrator's timetable. The school will ensure that the victim and perpetrator remain protected from bullying and harassment (including online).

Where an alleged perpetrator is found not guilty or a case is classed as requiring "no further action", the school will offer support to the victim and alleged perpetrator for as long as is necessary. The victim is likely to be traumatised and the fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. The school will discuss decisions with the victim and offer support. The alleged perpetrator is also likely to require ongoing support, as they have also been through a difficult and upsetting experience.

The headteacher will carefully consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether allowing the victim and the alleged perpetrator to share classes or attend the same activities is conducive to either party's effective education, and will implement alternative arrangements, in consultation with the DSL (and SENCO where the victim or alleged perpetrator has SEND), where necessary.

Ongoing support for the victim

Any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the victim will be made with the following considerations in mind:

- The terminology the school uses to describe the victim
- The age and developmental stage of the victim
- The needs and wishes of the victim
- Whether the victim wishes to continue in their normal routine
- The victim will not be made to feel ashamed about making a report
- What a proportionate response looks like

Victims may not disclose the whole picture immediately and they may be more comfortable talking about the incident on a piecemeal basis; therefore, a dialogue will be kept open, and the victim can choose to appoint a designated trusted adult.

Victims may struggle in a normal classroom environment. Whilst it is important not to isolate the victim, the victim may wish to be withdrawn from lessons and activities at times. This will only happen

when the victim wants it to, not because it makes it easier to manage the situation. The school will provide a physical space for victims to withdraw to.

Victims may require support for a long period of time and the school will be prepared to offer long-term support in liaison with relevant agencies. Everything possible will be done to prevent the victim from bullying and harassment as a result of any report they have made. If the victim is unable to remain in the school, alternative provision or a move to another school will be considered – this will only be considered at the request of the victim and following discussion with their parents. If the victim does move to another school, the DSL will inform the school of any ongoing support needs and transfer the child protection file.

Ongoing support for the alleged perpetrator

Any decisions made regarding the support required for an alleged perpetrator will be made with the following considerations in mind:

- The terminology the school uses to describe the alleged perpetrator
- The balance of safeguarding the victim and providing the alleged perpetrator with education and support
- The reasons why the alleged perpetrator may have abused the victim – and the support necessary
- Their age and developmental stage
- What a proportionate response looks like
 - Whether the behaviour is a symptom of their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and/or materials
 - What the outcome of the investigation was

When making a decision, advice will be taken from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police as appropriate. If the alleged perpetrator moves to another school (for any reason), the DSL will inform the destination school of any ongoing support needs and transfer the child protection file.

If the reported abuse is found to have taken place, the school will work with professionals as required to understand why the abuse took place and provide a high level of support to help the pupil understand and overcome the reasons for their behaviour and reduce the likelihood of them abusing again.

Disciplining the alleged perpetrator

Disciplinary action can be taken whilst investigations are ongoing and the fact that investigations are ongoing does not prevent the school reaching its own conclusion and imposing an appropriate penalty.

The school will make such decisions on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL taking a leading role. The school will take into consideration whether any action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution. The police and children's social care will be consulted where necessary. The school will also consider whether circumstances make it unreasonable or irrational for the school to make a decision about what happened while an investigation is considering the same facts.

Disciplinary action and support can take place at the same time. The school will be clear whether action taken is disciplinary, supportive or both.

Shared classes

Once the DSL has decided to progress a report, they will again consider whether the victim and alleged perpetrator will be separated in classes, on school premises and on school transport – balancing the school's duty to educate against its duty to safeguard. The best interests of pupils will always come first.

Where there is a criminal investigation into rape or assault by penetration, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from classes with the victim and potential contact on school premises and transport will be prevented.

Where a criminal investigation into rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, this will constitute a serious breach of discipline and result in the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the school would harm the education or welfare of the victim and potentially other pupils.

Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school will consider suitable sanctions and permanent exclusion. If the perpetrator remains at the school, the school will keep the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and manage potential contact on school premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution, alongside the wishes of the victim, will inform any discussions made.

Where a report of sexual assault does not lead to a police investigation, this does not mean that the offence did not happen or that the victim has lied. Both the victim and alleged perpetrator will be affected, and appropriate support will be provided. Considerations regarding sharing classes and potential contact will be made on a case-by-case basis.

In all cases, the school will record its decisions and be able to justify them. The needs and wishes of the victim will always be at the heart of the process.

Working with parents

In most sexual violence cases, the school will work with the parents of both the victim and alleged perpetrator. For cases of sexual harassment, these decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

The school will meet the victim's parents with the victim present to discuss the arrangements being put in place to safeguard the victim, and to understand their wishes in terms of support arrangements and the progression of the report.

Schools will also meet with the parents of the alleged perpetrator to discuss arrangements that will impact their child, such as moving them out of classes with the victim. Reasons behind decisions will be explained and the support being made available will be discussed. The DSL or a deputy will attend such meetings, with agencies invited as necessary.

Clear policies regarding how the school will handle reports of sexual violence and how victims and alleged perpetrators will be supported will be made available to parents.

Safeguarding other children

Children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape and assault by penetration, will be provided with support. It is likely that children will "take sides" following a report, and the school will do everything in its power to protect the victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses from bullying and harassment.

The school will keep in mind that contact may be made between the victim and alleged perpetrator, and that harassment from friends of both parties could take place via social media and will do everything in its power to prevent such activity.

As part of the school's risk assessment following a report, transport arrangements will be considered, as it is a potentially vulnerable place for both the victim and alleged perpetrator. Schools will consider any additional support that can be put in place.

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the DSL and the headteacher. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff. All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme. The next scheduled review date for this policy is June 2027.