

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Last Update: July 2025

ME, YOU & US
Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Policy reviewed	July 2025
Next review date	July 2026

Key Personnel

Role	Name	Email	Telephone
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Deputy DSL(s) ^{*/**}	Katie HOLMAN	k.holman@alumnismat.org	01271 883226
Head teacher*	Dee SEDDON	d.seddon@alumnismat.org	01271 883226
Online safety Co-ordinator	Dee SEDDON	d.seddon@alumnismat.org	01271 883226
Chair of the Board*	Sian JENKINS	s.jenkins@alumnismat.org	01237 879382

**Out of hours contact details will be made available to staff*

***Any changes to key personnel/holiday/emergency contacts will be shared with the appropriate agencies and LA safeguarding boards/hubs*

Disclaimer: Devon Education Services (DES) makes every effort to ensure that the information in this document is accurate and up to date. If errors are brought to our attention, we will correct them as soon as practicable. Nevertheless, DES and its employees cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused as a result of reliance on any content in this publication. It is important that any setting adopting this policy personalise and amend according to need.

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Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

1. Safeguarding statement

Combe Martin Primary School recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils and expects all staff, governors, and volunteers to share this commitment. We recognise that all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or SEND have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection, and justice. We listen to our pupils and take seriously what they tell us, children are aware of the adults they can talk to if they have a concern. When there are concerns for a child's welfare, we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies. We will ensure concerns are discussed with parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that by doing so would be contrary to the child's welfare. This Child Protection and Safeguarding policy underpins and guides our safeguarding procedures and protocols.

2. Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.
- recognising and responding to risks and vulnerabilities that can arise from online activity, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, trafficking, and contextual safeguarding concerns.
- ensuring children's voices are heard and considered in decisions that affect them.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023)

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

It also includes identifying and responding to children who may be at risk of radicalisation, serious violence, or other forms of exploitation.

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

Child includes everyone under the age of 18, or under 25 if a care leaver, or up to 25 if a young person has special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) as per statutory guidance.

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

3. Safeguarding legislation and guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- [Education Act 2002 Section 175 \(maintained schools only\)](#)
- [Education Act 2002 Section 157 \(Independent schools incl Academies and CTC's\)](#)
- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#)
- [The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [Teachers' Standards \(Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguarding Children](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Information Sharing 2018](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)
- [Filtering and monitoring standards in schools and colleges \(DfE\)](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014 \(including SEND and young carers\)](#)
- [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 \(Prevent Duty\)](#)
- [Serious Violence Duty \(Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022\)](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR](#)

4. Policy principles, aims and values

The welfare of the child is paramount:

- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or SEND, have equal rights to protection, safeguarding and opportunities.
- We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff, volunteers and governors, have a duty to protect our pupils from harm and have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe, and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, emotional, mental wellbeing and moral development of the individual child.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support and supervision.
- We recognise that children may face additional barriers to accessing help and protection due to their individual circumstances, including being a looked-after child, having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or being at risk of exploitation, radicalisation, or serious violence.
- We are committed to ensuring that children's voices are heard, respected and taken into account in all safeguarding decisions that affect them.

This policy aims to:

- Raise the awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard children.
- Provide all staff with guidance on the procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of experiencing, harm. This includes (by DSL/DDSL) consideration of the use of appropriate assessments, resources and agency support.
- Provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, and know that they will be listened to should they make a disclosure.
- Raise awareness that abuse can be both familial and/or contextual, and that abusers can be adults or children (including child-on-child abuse).
- Demonstrate the school's commitment to safeguarding and child protection of pupils, parents and other partners.
- Provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- Emphasise the need for high levels of communication between staff and the designated safeguarding leads internally, and with external agencies and partners, including our contribution to assessments, referrals, and support plans.

- Develop and promote effective working relationships with other partnership agencies, particularly Children's Social Care, Police and Health.
- Support children's development in ways that will foster security, confidence, and independence.
- Ensure that all staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance), and that a single central record is kept for audit.
- Provide clarity and expectations on professional behaviours and code of conduct, including lone working requirements.
- Ensure staff are aware of and trained in safeguarding issues such as online safety, exploitation (including sexual, criminal and trafficking), radicalisation, serious violence, and the needs of looked-after children and those with SEND.
- Promote a culture of openness where safeguarding concerns can be raised by staff, children, and parents without fear of reprisal.
- Ensure safeguarding is embedded across the curriculum, empowering children to develop resilience, recognise unsafe situations, and know how to seek help.

Supporting and Protecting Children:

- We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated and could experience barriers to making a disclosure.
- We understand that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn, as well as exhibiting signs of mental health problems.
- We understand the impact on a child's mental health, behaviour, and education from familial and/or contextual abuse.
- School may not only provide stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm, but it plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children.
- We recognise that children may communicate distress or abuse in non-verbal ways, through changes in behaviour, attendance, or engagement in school.
- We are committed to providing children with trusted adults in school whom they can approach for help and support.
- We acknowledge the importance of early help and timely intervention, working with families and external agencies to reduce risk and prevent issues from escalating.
- We ensure staff are trained to be alert to indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and mental health difficulties, and to respond appropriately.

Our school will support all children by:

- Working to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to.
- Ensuring that all children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Including regular consultation with children, parents, and staff, gathering their voice.
- Including safeguarding across the curriculum to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help; this will, for example, include anti-bullying work, information about child-on-child abuse (sexual harassment and sexual violence, consent), online safety, radicalisation awareness, exploitation, serious violence, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training, and provide focussed activities to prepare key year groups for transition to new settings and/or key stages (e.g., more personal safety/independent travel).
- Ensuring all staff, pupils, and parents are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and that the safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies, including the use of social media and their associated risks, have been shared.
- Embedding a culture of vigilance where all members of the school community are alert to potential safeguarding concerns and report them promptly.
- Ensuring that children's voices are actively sought and taken into account in all safeguarding matters, including feedback on online safety, wellbeing, and exposure to risk.
- Supporting staff and pupils to recognise and respond appropriately to emerging risks, including online grooming, peer-on-peer abuse, and exploitation.

The school community will protect children by:

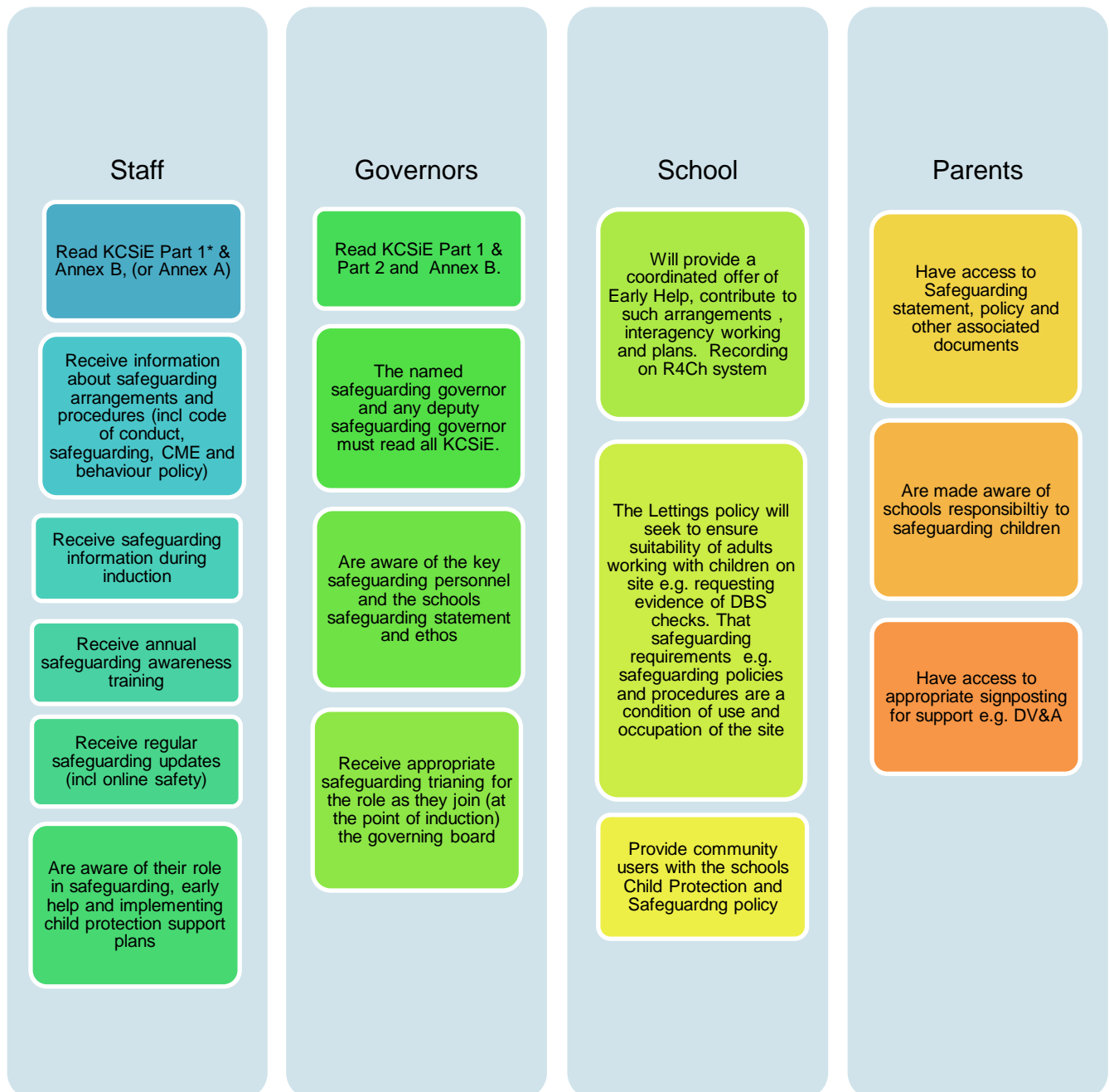
- Working to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to.
- Ensuring that all children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Including regular consultation with children, parents, and staff, gathering their voice.
- Including safeguarding across the curriculum to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help; this will, for example, include anti-bullying work, information about child-on-child abuse (sexual harassment and sexual violence, consent), online safety, radicalisation awareness, exploitation, serious violence, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training; provide focussed activities to prepare key year groups for transition to new settings and/or key stages (e.g., more personal safety/independent travel).
- Ensuring all staff, pupils, and parents are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and that the safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies, including the use of social media and their associated risks, have been shared.
- Promoting a culture of vigilance where all members of the school community are alert to safeguarding concerns and report them promptly.

- Supporting staff and pupils to recognise and respond appropriately to emerging risks, including online grooming, peer-on-peer abuse, and exploitation.
- Actively seeking and considering children's views on their safety and wellbeing, including feedback on online safety, harassment, and exposure to risk.

¹ DBS Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-checking-service-guidance--2>

5. Safe school, safe staff

We will ensure that staff, Governors, School and parents:



6. Roles and responsibilities

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

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

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

Governing bodies, proprietors and management committees:

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

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

Roles and responsibilities will include:

- Child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), are consistent with the Local Authority and statutory requirements, are reviewed annually, and the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is publicly available on the school website or by other means.
- Ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, are provided with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and staff Code of Conduct.
- All staff have read *Keeping Children Safe in Education* Part 1* and Annex B, and mechanisms are in place to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance. (*or Annex A if not working directly with children)
- The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff, disqualification by association regulations, and ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training.
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Head teacher), supply staff, volunteers, and against other children, and that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned.
- A member of the Governing Body/Board, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the Local Authority on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Head teacher.
- A member of the senior leadership team has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) by the Governing Body/Board, who will take lead responsibility.
- On appointment, the DSL and deputy(ies) undertake appropriate Level 3 identified training offered by the Local Authority or other provider every two years.
- All other staff have safeguarding training updated as appropriate, but at least annually.
- At least one member of the governing body has completed safer recruitment training to be refreshed at least every five years.
- Children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues to meet their needs, including children who are vulnerable to exploitation, radicalisation, serious violence, or other contextual safeguarding concerns.
- Appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who go missing from education.
- Appropriate online filtering and monitoring systems are in place.
- Enhanced DBS checks at the appropriate level are in place for all Governors.
- Any weaknesses in Child Protection are remedied immediately.
- The DSL ensures that safeguarding policies and practices are embedded across the school, including monitoring, quality assurance, and regular reporting to the Governing Body/Board.
- Staff are trained to recognise and respond to emerging safeguarding risks, including child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, peer-on-peer abuse, and online grooming.

- Safeguarding arrangements are regularly audited, and lessons learned are implemented to strengthen child protection systems.

The Headteacher:

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

Roles and responsibilities will include:

- Child protection, safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations policies and procedures, including the staff behaviour policy (code of conduct), are consistent with the Local Authority and statutory requirements, are reviewed annually, and the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is publicly available on the school website or by other means.
- Ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers, are provided with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and staff Code of Conduct.
- All staff have read *Keeping Children Safe in Education* Part 1* and Annex B, and mechanisms are in place to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance. (*or Annex A if not working directly with children)
- The school operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff, disqualification by association regulations, and ensuring that there is at least one person on every recruitment panel who has completed safer recruitment training.
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff (including the Headteacher), supply staff, volunteers, and against other children, and that a referral is made to the DBS if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been had they not resigned.
- A member of the Governing Body/Board, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the Local Authority on Child Protection issues and in the event of an allegation of abuse made against the Headteacher.
- A member of the senior leadership team has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) by the Governing Body/Board, who will take lead responsibility.
- On appointment, the DSL and deputy(ies) undertake appropriate Level 3 identified training offered by the Local Authority or other provider every two years.
- All other staff have safeguarding training updated as appropriate, but at least annually.
- At least one member of the governing body has completed safer recruitment training to be refreshed at least every five years.
- Children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues to meet their needs, including children who are vulnerable to exploitation, radicalisation, serious violence, or other contextual safeguarding concerns.
- Appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for children who go missing from education.
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- Enhanced DBS checks at the appropriate level are in place for all Governors.
- Any weaknesses in Child Protection are remedied immediately.
- The DSL ensures that safeguarding policies and practices are embedded across the school, including monitoring, quality assurance, and regular reporting to the Governing Body/Board.
- Staff are trained to recognise and respond to emerging safeguarding risks, including child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, peer-on-peer abuse, and online grooming.
- Safeguarding arrangements are regularly audited, and lessons learned are implemented to strengthen child protection systems.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

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

Roles and responsibilities will include:

- Availability – being available during school hours and ensuring appropriate cover arrangements when absent.
- Manage referrals – to e.g., Children's Social Care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the Police, and other relevant agencies.
- Working with others – e.g., a point of contact with safeguarding partners, a source of support and advice for staff, to promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers, and the SLT/Governing Body.
- Information sharing and managing the child protection files, ensuring accuracy, confidentiality, and timely

updates.

- Raising Safeguarding and Child Protection Awareness across the school community, including emerging issues such as online safety, exploitation, radicalisation, serious violence, and peer-on-peer abuse.
- Updating training, knowledge, and skills required to carry out the role of DSL, including refresher training at least every two years and ongoing CPD to remain informed of current guidance and legislation.
- Providing support to staff, including guidance on identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns and supporting their wellbeing when dealing with complex cases.
- Holding and sharing information, ensuring appropriate access by staff while maintaining confidentiality.
- Overseeing and acting upon filtering and monitoring reports and checks to these systems.
- Ensuring that early help assessments and interventions are coordinated effectively, and that children's voices are considered in all safeguarding decisions.
- Monitoring trends in safeguarding concerns across the school to inform training, policies, and preventative strategies.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (DDSL):

Is/are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the functions outlined for the DSL.

Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead and should not be delegated.

- Deputies are expected to maintain up-to-date knowledge of emerging safeguarding risks, including online safety, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, and serious violence.
- Deputies will support the DSL in monitoring safeguarding trends, maintaining accurate records, and providing guidance to staff.
- Deputies will ensure early help interventions are coordinated effectively in the absence of the DSL, and children's voices are considered in all safeguarding decisions.

Staff:

Roles and responsibilities will include:

- Our school recognises that in order to effectively meet a child's needs, safeguard their welfare, and protect them from harm, the school must contribute to inter-agency working in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- However, we also recognise that all matters relating to child protection are personal to children and families. Therefore, in this respect they are confidential and the Headteacher or DSLs will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a strict need-to-know basis.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub with their parents/carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will contact the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub consultation line.
- In line with KCSiE, all children's safeguarding files will be kept confidential and stored securely. Safeguarding files will be kept separate from pupils' school files.
- Staff are trained on lawful and appropriate information sharing, including early help referrals, multi-agency meetings, and when to seek advice if unsure.
- Electronic safeguarding records are password protected, regularly backed up, and only accessible to authorised staff.
- Information sharing will balance the need for confidentiality with the need to protect children from harm, and records will be accurate, factual, and up-to-date.

7. Confidentiality

- Our school recognises that in order to effectively meet a child's needs, safeguard their welfare, and protect them from harm, the school must contribute to inter-agency working in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and share information between professionals and agencies where there are concerns.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- However, we also recognise that all matters relating to child protection are personal to children and families. Therefore, in this respect they are confidential and the Head teacher or DSLs will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a strict need-to-know basis.
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- Staff will be trained on lawful and appropriate information sharing, including early help referrals, multi-agency meetings, and how to seek advice when unsure.
- Electronic safeguarding records are password protected, regularly backed up, and only accessible to authorised staff.
- Information sharing will balance the need for confidentiality with the need to protect children from harm, ensuring records are accurate, factual, and up-to-date.

8. Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Recognising:

Any child, in any family, in any school, could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of “It could happen here”. We also recognise that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are complex, often overlapping, and are rarely standalone events that can be fully captured by one definition or label. Staff understand that multiple issues may coexist in many cases.

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

Further information about the four categories of abuse – physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect (familial and contextual) – and indicators that a child may be being abused can be found in Appendices 1–17 and in *Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 / Annex A / Annex B*. There are also a number of specific safeguarding concerns that we recognise our pupils may experience, including but not limited to forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), honour-based abuse, and trafficking.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child missing or absent from education• Child missing from home or care• Child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE)• Bullying including cyberbullying• Domestic abuse• Drugs• Fabricated or induced illness• Faith abuse• Female genital mutilation (FGM)• Forced marriage• Gangs and youth violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)• Mental health difficulties• Private fostering• Radicalisation• Youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)• Teenage relationship abuse• Trafficking• Child on child abuse• Upskirting• Serious violence• Sexual harassment
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There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk but have no ‘real’ evidence. The pupil’s behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, and they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical or inconclusive signs may have been noticed.

We recognise that the signs may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill, or an accident has occurred. However, they may also indicate a child is being abused or is in need of safeguarding.

In these circumstances staff will try to give the child the opportunity to talk. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

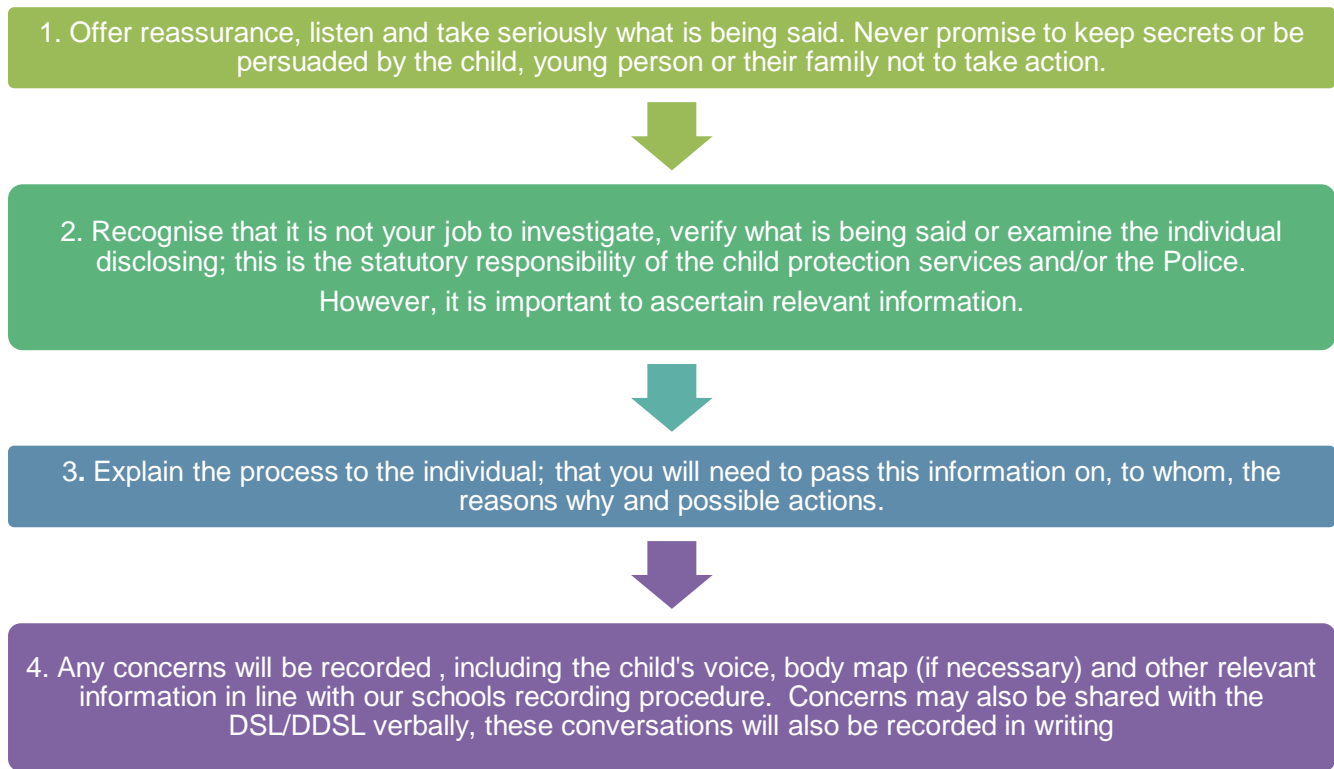
Further information on the different types of safeguarding concerns and schools' response can be found in the Appendices section –

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Responding:

- Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL and put them in writing, see FLOW CHART A. Records should include:
 - a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
 - details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
 - a note of any action taken, decisions reached, and the outcome.
- Records should be factual, objective, and include dates, times, and the names of those involved.
- If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice in FLOW CHART A and in the table below, 'Pupil Making a Disclosure', ensuring that the child is listened to carefully, reassured, and not pressured to give more information than they are comfortable sharing.
- Staff should avoid asking leading questions and should only seek clarification where necessary to understand the concern.
- All concerns, however small, must be recorded and shared with the DSL as this information could provide the 'missing' piece of the bigger picture of the child's lived experience.
- Staff should also be aware of patterns or repeated concerns across time or settings, and report these promptly to the DSL.
- Written records should be stored securely and only shared with appropriate staff and external agencies as necessary.

FLOW CHART A



If a pupil discloses to a member of staff

- We recognise that it takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, guilty, or scared; their abuser may have threatened that something will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults or believe that what has happened is their fault. Staff understand that disclosures may also be influenced by trauma, developmental stage, neurodiversity, or communication barriers. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.
- A child who makes a disclosure may have to tell their story on a number of subsequent occasions to the police, social workers, or other agencies. Therefore, it is vital that their first experience of talking to a trusted adult is a

positive one. Staff should listen carefully, remain calm, avoid judgment, and follow the school's safeguarding procedures, ensuring they record the disclosure accurately and promptly using factual language.

During their conversation with the pupil staff will;

- Listen to what the child has to say and allow them to speak freely. Ensure they give the child adequate time and space, including using age-appropriate or communication-supportive methods if needed.
- Remain calm and not overreact, act shocked, or show disgust – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting the listener.
- Reassure the child that it is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- Not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how difficult it is for the pupil and allow them time to talk.
- Take what the child is disclosing seriously.
- Ask open, non-leading, and neutral questions; avoid asking leading questions.
- Avoid jumping to conclusions, speculation, or making accusations.
- Not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. Staff should only offer physical contact if it is clearly appropriate, consented to, and likely to be comforting to the child.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing sooner. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about it when it started' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean they have done something wrong.
- Tell the child what will happen next, that they cannot keep secrets, and that information will be shared with the DSL or appropriate safeguarding staff to ensure the right level of support is given. Explain in age-appropriate terms how their information will be handled and with whom it will be shared.

Notifying Parents

- The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents/carers. This must be handled sensitively, and normally the DSL/DDSL will make contact with the parent at the earliest appropriate opportunity in the event of a concern, suspicion, or disclosure of abuse or if the child has been harmed in some way.
- However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub or other relevant safeguarding partners (e.g., in cases of familial sexual abuse).
- Where there are concerns about forced marriage, honour-based abuse, or female genital mutilation (FGM), parents should not be informed that a referral is being made, as doing so may place the child at significantly increased risk. In some circumstances, it may also be appropriate to contact the police immediately.

Making a referral

- Concerns about a child or a disclosure should be immediately raised with the DSL, who will help decide whether a referral to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub or other support (e.g., Early Help) is appropriate in accordance with the Local Authority Threshold Tool.
- If the school is uncertain about whether a concern raised should be referred to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub, a consultation will be sought with the Local Authority to obtain further support and guidance.
- If a referral is needed, the DSL should make this promptly and have the necessary systems in place to enable this to happen. However, any member of staff can make a referral, and if a staff member believes a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made, they should consider making it themselves.
- The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents/carers will be informed that a referral is being made, unless doing so would increase the risk to the child or impede a criminal investigation.
- If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the designated safeguarding lead (or the person who made the referral) should press for reconsideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly, that the child's situation improves.
- If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make this referral.
- Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible and kept updated on any outcomes.
- All referrals and follow-up actions should be documented in writing, stored securely, and include dates,

times, and names of the staff involved.

- Staff should act without delay if they believe a child is at risk, even if there is uncertainty about thresholds.

Supporting our Staff

- We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- Staff may also experience secondary trauma or emotional impact as a result of dealing with safeguarding concerns.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSLs and to seek further support as appropriate.
- Support may include formal supervision, access to counselling services, debriefing sessions, and guidance on handling difficult conversations or disclosures.
- Staff should be reminded of confidentiality requirements while being supported and reassured that seeking support is a professional responsibility.

9. Children who are particularly vulnerable

Bampton Church of England School recognises that some children are more vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and contextual safeguarding concerns, and that additional barriers exist when recognising abuse for some children. We understand that this increased risk is often due to societal attitudes, assumptions, or child protection procedures that fail to fully acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment, or circumstances.

In some cases, possible indicators of abuse such as a child's mood, behaviour, or injury might be assumed to relate to the child's impairment or disability rather than being treated as a potential cause for concern. Staff must take care to avoid making assumptions based on a child's disability, special educational needs, or situation, and should always consider the full context of any concern.

In other cases, such as bullying, the child may be disproportionately impacted by the behaviour without outwardly showing any signs that they are experiencing it. Staff should be alert to subtle indicators of distress and consider the cumulative impact of multiple incidents.

Some children may also find it harder to disclose abuse due to communication barriers, lack of access to a trusted adult, or not being aware that what they are experiencing constitutes abuse. Additional support and reasonable adjustments should be made to help these children communicate their concerns effectively.

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

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan).
- Is a young carer.
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or from home.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation.
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect and/or exploitation.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Is a privately fostered child.
- Has an imprisoned parent.
- Is experiencing mental health, wellbeing difficulties.
- Is persistently absent from education (including persistently absent for part of the school day).
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit.
- Is at risk of 'honour' based abuse such as FGM or forced marriage.
- Is experiencing the cumulative impact of multiple vulnerabilities or adversities, even if individual factors might not trigger concern alone.
 - Staff should consider early help when they identify emerging needs and provide timely support, in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies.

10. Whistleblowing

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

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice, or potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements. Concerns should be raised without fear of reprisal and in line with the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

If it becomes necessary to consult outside the school, staff should speak in the first instance to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) following the Whistleblowing Policy.

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 (available 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Whistleblowing regarding the Head teacher should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body, whose contact details are readily available to staff (as pertinent to the setting).

- Staff should keep a written record of their concerns and any actions taken, including dates and times.
- The school will ensure that whistle-blowers are supported and protected from any detrimental treatment or victimisation.

11. Allegations against staff

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child.

It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents/carers to be conducted in view of other adults.

Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including the safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers, will be given at induction.

In line with KCSiE part 4 guidelines,

1. All employees and volunteers must record in writing, any concerns they have about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff and share it with the Headteacher (or equivalent senior member of staff).



2. The Headteacher will make an assessment to determine if the matter is a 'low level concern' or an 'allegation' (this means that the concern may meet the harm threshold).



3. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted for all 'allegations' and the relevant guidance will be followed. If the Headteacher needs advice or guidance they should contact the LADO. If the allegation is against the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation will contact the LADO or Chair of Governors directly.



4. Where concerns are considered to be 'low level' by the Headteacher, they should be managed in-line with part 4 of KCSiE and the wider school policies and procedures. The Designated Safeguarding Lead may be involved in this process.



5. If the concern relates to the Headteacher, the person receiving the information will immediately inform the Chair of Governors/Chair of the management committee/proprietor of an independent school [delete as appropriate] who will consult the LADO as above, without notifying the Headteacher first. [NB where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school the concerns should be reported directly to the LADO].



6. In the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors with advice from the LADO.

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

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

The school will ensure that pupils are aware of how they can raise a concern should they be worried about a member of staff's conduct. This may include speaking to a trusted adult, using school safeguarding channels, or other confidential reporting mechanisms.

- Allegations will be handled in line with statutory guidance, including KCSiE Part Four, and procedures will be applied consistently, fairly, and promptly.
- Staff who are the subject of allegations will be offered support, including access to counselling or advice from HR and professional associations.
- Records of allegations, investigations, and outcomes will be kept securely and confidentially, in line with data protection requirements.

12. Physical intervention

- We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering themselves or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- Such events should be recorded promptly on CPOMS and clearly identify another member of staff who witnessed or was involved in the incident.
- Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained, and training will be refreshed regularly in line with current guidance.
- We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury, distress, or trauma to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.
- We recognise that touch is appropriate in certain educational contexts, and all staff have been given 'Safe Practice' guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundaries. Staff should always consider the child's individual needs, vulnerabilities, and any potential sensory or developmental sensitivities before initiating touch.

13. Confidentiality, sharing information and GDPR

- All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.
- Staff should be proactive in sharing concerns as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to Local Authority Children's Social Care.
- Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, Headteacher/Principal, or Chair of Governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.
- However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 emphasises that any member of staff can contact children's social care directly if they are concerned about a child.
- Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, the HM Government Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners (July 2018), and DfE Data Protection in Schools.
- The school will consider, where appropriate, information sharing prior to the child's formal transfer to their new setting, which could include inviting key staff from the new setting to meetings such as Child Protection, Core Group, or Team Around a Family, with consent from parents and professionals.
- At the point a child formally transfers to their new setting, their safeguarding file will be transferred securely in line with GDPR expectations as soon as possible, but within 5 working days.

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Information sharing is guided by the following principles:

- Necessary and proportionate
- Relevant
- Adequate
- Accurate
- Timely
- Secure

Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Bampton Church of England School will ensure that images of children used in publications, publicity, and on the website are only used where written parental consent has been obtained prior to any images being taken or used.

This consent will be obtained in line with the school's annual data collection process.

14. Policy links

This policy also links to our policies on:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behaviour• Staff Behaviour Policy / Code of Conduct• Whistleblowing• Anti-bullying• Health & Safety• Allegations against staff• Parental concerns• Attendance• Curriculum• PSHE• Teaching and Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Administration of medicines• Drug Education• Relationships and Sex Education• Physical intervention• Online Safety, including staff use of mobile phones• Risk Assessment• Recruitment and Selection• Child Sexual Exploitation• Intimate Care• Radicalisation and Extremism• Data Protection/GDPR Guidance |
|--|---|

Appendix

1. Categories of abuse

Categories of Abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse and Exposure to Harmful Parental Behaviours)
- Sexual Abuse (including Child Sexual Exploitation [CSE] and online sexual abuse)
- Neglect

Signs of Abuse in Children

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

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive or attention-seeking behaviour
- Suspicious bruises or injuries with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury or self-harm
- Depression and/or anxiety
- Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Signs of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), including online grooming
- Criminality or involvement in antisocial behaviour
- Substance abuse
- Mental health problems
- Poor attendance
- Unexplained or persistent absences from education

Risk Indicators

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

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another experienced colleague
- May require consultation with and/or referral to Local Authority Children's Services

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

In an abusive relationship the child may:

- Appear frightened of their parent(s)/carers
- Act in a way that is inappropriate for their age and development (considering individual developmental patterns and additional needs)

The parent or carer may:

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

Additional Considerations

Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals previously known or suspected to have abused children move into the household, including step-parents, partners, or family members.

Recognising Physical Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

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

Bruising

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

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

Mongolian Blue Spot

Bruising in non-mobile children is rare and may indicate abuse or neglect. Birth marks, especially Mongolian Blue Spots, can mimic bruising. Staff should:

- Recognise flat, non-painful areas of hyperpigmentation present at birth or soon after
- Usually located on lower back or buttocks, but can appear elsewhere (e.g., back of shoulder or limb); scalp/face rarely affected
- Typically blue/grey, uniform, may be single/multiple, and gradually fade over years
- If in doubt about a bruise, refer to DCC Child Protection Procedures for guidance

Bite Marks

- Human bite marks are oval or crescent-shaped. Marks over 3 cm are likely caused by an adult or older child.
- Seek medical opinion if there is any doubt over the origin.

Burns and Scalds

- Accidental vs. non-accidental burns/scalds can be difficult to distinguish; always seek experienced medical opinion.

Suspicious burns may include:

- Circular burns from cigarettes
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds with clear immersion or poured-liquid lines
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds with inadequate explanation

Fractures

- May cause pain, swelling, and discolouration. Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures.
- Grounds for concern include:
 - Vague or inconsistent history
 - Associated old fractures

- Delayed medical attention
- Unexplained fractures in the first year of life

Scars

- Large numbers of scars, scars of different sizes, ages, or locations may suggest abuse.

Recognising Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is often behavioural rather than physical and may indicate the presence of other abuse types. Possible indicators include:

- Developmental delay
- Abnormal attachment to parent/carer (e.g., anxious, indiscriminate, or absent attachment)
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others

Recognising Signs of Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused. Children may be fearful, ashamed, or reluctant to disclose. Recognition can be difficult without disclosure.

Behavioural indicators:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct, play, or conversation
- Continual or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorders), self-mutilation, or suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate sexual relationships
- Anxious unwillingness to remove clothes (may be influenced by cultural norms or physical difficulties)

Physical indicators:

- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in younger girls where paternity is unknown
- Injuries to genital/anal areas, bruising to buttocks, abdomen, thighs
- Sexually transmitted diseases or presence of semen

Recognising Neglect

Neglect can be cumulative and covers different aspects of parenting. Indicators include:

- Failure to meet a child’s basic needs (food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care)
- Child appears listless, apathetic, or unresponsive without medical cause
- Failure to grow within expected pattern; weight loss
- Thriving away from home environment
- Frequent school absences
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Abandonment or being left alone for excessive periods

2. Anti-bullying/cyberbullying

Our school's Anti-Bullying Policy is set out in a separate document. We recognise that allowing or condoning bullying behaviour may result in consideration under child protection procedures.

Bullying can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Cyber-bullying (online, social media, messaging)
- Racist bullying
- Homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic bullying (HBT)
- Sexist or gender-based bullying
- Bullying related to SEND, disabilities, appearance, or perceived differences

We keep a clear record of all reported bullying incidents. These are reviewed, analysed, and monitored by the Governing Body to ensure accountability and ongoing improvement.

All staff are aware that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), or those with perceived differences, may be particularly vulnerable to bullying and/or other forms of abuse.

Where bullying is persistent, severe, or not effectively resolved through our Anti-Bullying procedures, the Head teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider the implementation of child protection procedures in line with local authority safeguarding guidance.

The subject of bullying and respectful relationships is addressed regularly through PSHE and RSE education, whole-school assemblies, and targeted interventions where necessary, to ensure a proactive and preventative approach.

3. Bullying, prejudice and racist incidents

Our Policy on Racist Incidents is set out separately. We acknowledge that repeated prejudice or racist incidents, or a single serious incident, may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

The school maintains a record of all bullying, prejudice, and racist incidents, which are reported to the Local Authority in line with statutory requirements.

4. Radicalisation and extremism

The Prevent Duty for England and Wales (2023), under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, places a duty on schools and children's services to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Extremism is defined as:

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

Some children may be vulnerable to radicalisation: adopting extremist beliefs or engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal, or dangerous. The school is clear that radicalisation and exploitation are safeguarding concerns. Staff will follow the Department for Education guidance on preventing children from being drawn into terrorism.

The school seeks to protect pupils from the messages of all forms of violent extremism, including but not limited to:

- Islamist ideology
- Far Right / Neo-Nazi / White Supremacist ideology
- Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups
- Extremist Animal Rights movements

Staff Training & Curriculum

- All school staff receive Prevent training to identify the early signs of radicalisation and extremism.
- Indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation are detailed in the Appendix section of this policy.
- Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity, culture, and respect. The school follows DfE guidance on Promoting Fundamental British Values (2014) as part of SMSC (spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education).

Risk Assessment & Oversight

The Governing Body, Headteacher, and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) regularly assess the level of risk within the school and implement actions to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include:

- The use of school premises by external agencies
- The implementation of the anti-bullying policy
- Contextual issues linked to the school's profile, community, or philosophy

Referral Procedures

- Where a member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or terrorism, they must report immediately to the DSL.
- The DSL will follow normal safeguarding procedures, including referral to Children's Social Care or the Police Prevent team if necessary.
- Urgent cases: Staff should contact the Police by dialling 999.
- Non-urgent advice: Call 101 or the National Police Prevent Advice Line on 0800 011 3764.

Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

1. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
2. Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:
“Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.”
3. Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) as:
The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:
 - Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs.
 - Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts.
 - Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
 - Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

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

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

Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis – the pupil is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
- Personal Crisis – the pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; low self-esteem; dissociation from existing friendship groups and involvement with a new/different group of friends; or they may be searching for answers around identity, faith, and belonging.
- Personal Circumstances – migration, local community tensions, or events affecting the pupil’s country/region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance. This may be triggered by racism, discrimination, or aspects of government policy.
- Unmet Aspirations – perceptions of injustice, feelings of failure, or rejection of civic life.
- Experiences of Criminality – including involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration.
- Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) – pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy, understanding consequences of actions, or recognising others’ motivations.

Note: This list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing these factors are at risk of radicalisation.

More critical risk factors may include:

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

Prevent Duty & Channel

The Prevent Duty (2023) places a statutory duty on schools and colleges to have ‘due regard’ to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Channel is the voluntary, confidential support programme that provides early intervention for individuals identified as being vulnerable to radicalisation. Prevent referrals may be considered by the multi-agency Channel Panel to determine whether individuals require tailored support.

- The Prevent Duty – Safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation (DfE guidance)
- The Prevent Duty in Higher Education: Training and Guidance
- [Channel Guidance](#) (Home Office, 2020 update)
- Further information is available via the Home Office Prevent pages.

5. Domestic abuse (incl Operation Encompass)

Domestic abuse accounts for around one quarter of all violent crime. It may involve actual or threatened physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, or financial abuse. At its core, it is about one person exerting power and control over another. It occurs regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, religion, or mental or physical ability. Domestic abuse often involves a combination of abusive and controlling behaviours, not just physical violence.

How does it affect children?

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. This abuse can include (but is not limited to) psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional harm. Children can be victims of domestic abuse directly or indirectly. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (sometimes referred to as teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. In some cases, children may internalise the abuse and blame themselves, while others may be forced to leave the family home as a result. Children who witness domestic abuse are at risk of significant harm.

What are the signs to look out for?

Children affected by domestic abuse may display their distress in a range of ways. For example, they may:

- Withdraw from usual activities or appear anxious, isolated, or excessively tired.
- Show signs of regression, such as bedwetting.
- Develop behavioural difficulties or sudden changes in personality.
- Be reluctant to leave home, or conversely, show reluctance to return home.
- Excel academically or socially, using school or activities as a safe escape from difficulties at home.

None of these signs are exclusive to domestic abuse. However, when you notice changes in a child's behaviour or have concerns, it is important to consider whether domestic abuse may be a factor.

What should I do if I suspect a family is affected by domestic abuse?

Contact: <https://new.devon.gov.uk/dsva/> The Domestic and Sexual Violence DCC website 0345 155 1074

If you are concerned about a child or young person in Devon please contact the [DCC - Request for support \(outsystemsenterprise.com\)](#) on 0345 155 1071

If you are concerned about an adult (aged 16+) in Devon please complete the [Risk Identification Checklist](#) (Safelives DASH RIC) to identify the level of risk which support service to refer them too, and follow the advice on the [MARAC page](#) for all levels of risk.

If you are concerned about a vulnerable adult please contact [Adult Social Care](#) on 03451551007 (9am – 5pm Monday to Thursday, Friday 9am – 4.30pm and 9am – 5pm on Saturdays), Alternatively, you can [download a Word version of the report a safeguarding concern form](#) and email it to adultsc.safeguardingadultservices-mailbox@devon.gov.uk (Devon Safeguarding Adults Service). In an emergency, please contact the Emergency Duty Service 0345 6000388.

FearFree Support Service is a charity delivering support services to women and young people experiencing the trauma of domestic abuse and sexual violence. Telephone 0345 155 1074 or email admin.devon@fearfree.org.uk

[SAFE \(Stop Abuse For Everyone\)](#) is a charity based in Exeter providing help and support to children and families who have experienced domestic abuse and violence. Telephone 030 30 30 0112 or visit the website [SAFE Foundation \(wearesafe.org.uk\)](#)

National Domestic Abuse Helpline Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, available 24hour a day 0808 2000 247 and its website offers guidance and support for potential victims.

Refuge: <https://www.refuge.org.uk/>

Operation Encompass

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

6. Exploitation (incl child sex exploitation, child criminal exploitation & county lines)

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

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

Victims can be exploited even when the activity appears consensual. Exploitation, as well as being physical, can also be facilitated and/or take place online. The experiences of girls who are criminally exploited can be different from those of boys; the indicators may not be the same, and both boys and girls who are criminally exploited may also be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

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

The DSL will use the appropriate Local Authority assessment tool (e.g. the Exploitation Toolkit or the Devon Children's Safeguarding Partnership Adolescent Safety Framework Safer Me Assessment) whenever there are

concerns that a child is being, or may be at risk of being, sexually or criminally exploited. These assessments will help determine whether an Early Help approach, referral to the Exploitation Hub, or Safeguarding Hub involvement is required. If in any doubt, the DSL will seek consultation with the Safeguarding Hub.

In all cases, if the assessment identifies any level of concern, the DSL should contact their local MACE (Missing and Child Exploitation) and email the completed assessment (e.g. Safer Me) along with a Safeguarding Hub enquiry form. If a child is in immediate danger, the police must be called on 999.

School staff are aware that children often do not recognise the coercive nature of the abuse and may not see themselves as victims. As a result, they may resent what they perceive as staff interference. Nevertheless, staff must act on their concerns as they would for any other type of abuse.

The risks of sexual and criminal exploitation are addressed within the PSHE and RSE curriculum. Pupils learn about grooming processes, how to protect themselves, how to recognise and assess risks (including online), and how and where to access support.

Indicators of CSE/CCE

The following list is not exhaustive or definitive but highlights common signs which may assist in identifying children or young people who could be victims of exploitation:

- Going missing from home or school
- Regular absence/truancy
- Underage sexual activity
- Inappropriate or sexualised behaviour
- Sexually risky behaviour, including 'swapping' sex
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections
- For girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- Receiving unexplained gifts, or gifts from unknown sources
- Multiple mobile phones and concern about losing contact
- Online safety concerns (e.g. youth-produced sexual imagery, coercion to share explicit images)
- Possession of unaffordable new items (clothes, phones) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- Changes in dress or personal appearance
- Visiting hotels or unusual locations to meet friends
- Being seen at known places of concern
- Travelling to new towns/cities and not knowing where they are
- Travelling in unknown cars with unknown adults
- Older boyfriends/girlfriends
- Contact with known perpetrators
- Intimidation and fear of certain individuals or groups
- Involvement in abusive relationships
- Association with older peers or antisocial groups
- Recruiting other young people into exploitative situations
- Truancy, exclusion, disengagement from education
- Sudden changes in behaviour or personality
- Mood swings, emotional distress, volatility
- Self-harming, suicidal thoughts/attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- Drug/alcohol misuse
- Involvement in crime, gang activity, gang fights
- Injuries from assault or sexual abuse

County Lines and Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) can include forcing or manipulating children into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, pickpocketing, vehicle crime, or violent offences. County lines is a term describing gangs and organised criminal networks exporting drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into other areas of the UK, using dedicated phone lines or 'deal lines.' Exploitation is a central feature of this model, with children and vulnerable adults being coerced to move and store drugs/money. Grooming methods used in sexual exploitation are also used in county lines.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. It may occur over time or as a one-off incident. It can affect any child, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to sex, where coercion or exploitation is present.

Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape, oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (e.g. masturbation, kissing, touching outside clothing). It may also involve non-contact activities, such as producing or viewing sexual images, being forced to watch sexual acts, being encouraged to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse, including via the internet.

For further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

For further information on County Lines: [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance](#)

7. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is essential that all staff are aware of FGM practices, signs, symptoms, and other indicators, and understand their duty to act if concerns arise.

Legal Framework

- FGM is illegal in England and Wales under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act").
- It is recognised internationally as a violation of human rights and constitutes both child abuse and violence against women.
- Section 5B of the 2003 Act introduced a mandatory reporting duty (in force since 31 October 2015). This requires all regulated health and social care professionals and teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in girls under 18 directly to the police.

What is FGM?

FGM involves procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Types of procedure include:

1. Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of the clitoris.
2. Excision – partial/total removal of the clitoris and labia minora.
3. Infibulation – narrowing of the vaginal entrance by repositioning the inner/outer labia.
4. Other practices – pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising, or scraping the genital area.

Cultural Beliefs Associated with FGM

FGM may be carried out because of beliefs that it:

- Brings status/respect and ensures social acceptance for marriage.
- Preserves virginity and upholds family honour.
- Is part of becoming a woman/rite of passage.
- Is a religious requirement, tradition, or custom.
- Enhances cleanliness, purity, or cosmetic desirability.
- Makes childbirth easier (a mistaken belief).

Mandatory Reporting Duty

- Any teacher who is informed by a girl under 18 that FGM has been carried out, or who observes physical signs that indicate FGM has been performed, must make a direct report to the police (101) by the close of the next working day.
- The duty applies to the individual staff member; it cannot be transferred to the DSL, although the DSL must be informed.
- If there is immediate risk of serious harm or a threat to life, staff should call 999 without delay.

Risk Indicators

Staff should be alert to warning signs such as:

- A child talking about preparing for a special ceremony.
- Plans for a long family trip abroad.

- A child's family being from a high-prevalence FGM community (e.g. Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea, Yemen, Afghanistan, Kurdistan, Indonesia, Pakistan).
- Knowledge that a sibling has undergone FGM.
- References to being 'cut' or preparing for marriage.

Signs a Child May Have Undergone FGM

- Prolonged absence from school or activities.
- Changes in behaviour on return from overseas (withdrawal, subdued).
- Bladder, menstrual, or repeated urinary tract problems.
- Difficulty sitting or appearing uncomfortable.
- Disclosure of something done to them that they cannot discuss.
- Pain, distress, or reluctance to participate in physical activity.
- Secretive or isolating behaviours.

The 'One Chance' Rule

As with Forced Marriage, professionals may only have one opportunity to act. It is critical that staff respond immediately and follow child protection procedures without delay.

Important Safeguarding Note

At no time should a teacher or member of staff examine a pupil to confirm suspicions of FGM.

8. Forced marriage

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is one in which one or both individuals do not consent (or, in the case of people with learning disabilities, cannot consent) to the marriage but are coerced into it. Coercion may take many forms, including physical, psychological, financial, sexual, or emotional pressure, and can also involve violence and abuse.

Forced marriage is recognised in the UK as:

- A form of violence against women and men.
- A form of domestic abuse and child abuse.
- A serious violation of human rights.

Since June 2014, forcing someone to marry has been a criminal offence in England and Wales under the *Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014*.

Forced marriage vs. arranged marriage

It is important to distinguish between the two:

- In an arranged marriage, families may take a leading role in arranging the union, but the choice to accept or refuse remains with the individuals.
- In a forced marriage, there is no free or valid consent from one or both parties.

School response

- School staff must never attempt to intervene directly or through a third party.
- Concerns should be reported immediately to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub in line with child protection procedures.
- The 'One Chance' rule applies: staff may only have one opportunity to save a potential victim from harm, and it is vital that immediate action is taken.

9. Honour-based abuse

Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

Honour Based Abuse (HBA) refers to a collection of practices used to control behaviour within families or social groups in order to protect perceived cultural or religious beliefs and/or the family's 'honour'. It often arises when perpetrators believe that a relative has brought shame on the family or community by breaking an 'honour code'.

Examples of situations where HBA may occur include individuals who:

- Form a relationship with someone from a different culture or religion.
- Seek to leave an arranged marriage.
- Attempt to escape a forced marriage.
- Wear clothing, make lifestyle choices, or participate in activities that are not considered 'traditional' within their culture.

Key points:

- HBA is a violation of human rights.
- It may take the form of domestic abuse, sexual abuse, physical violence, or coercion.
- There is no honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others.

School response:

- Staff must remain vigilant to the signs and risks of HBA.
- Any concerns should be treated as a safeguarding matter and reported immediately in line with the school's child protection procedures.
- The 'One Chance' rule applies: there may only be one opportunity to prevent harm, and action must be taken without delay.

10. One chance rule

All staff are aware of the 'One Chance' Rule in relation to Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Honour Based Abuse (HBA). Staff recognise that they may only have one opportunity to speak to a pupil who is a potential victim – and that this may be the only chance to save a life.

School acknowledges that if a victim is not offered support at the time of disclosure, the 'One Chance' opportunity may be lost.

Therefore:

- All staff are clear about their responsibilities when they become aware of potential Forced Marriage, FGM or HBA cases.
- Concerns must be acted on immediately, following the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Staff must never delay or assume that someone else will take responsibility for raising the concern.

11. Mental health

Staff will be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

While the school recognises that only appropriately trained professionals can diagnose mental health problems, staff are able to make day-to-day observations of children and identify behaviours that may suggest they are experiencing a mental health problem or are at risk of developing one.

Training will cover how traumatic Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and experiences of abuse, neglect, and exploitation can impact a child's mental health, behaviour, and education through adolescence and into adulthood.

If staff have a concern about a child's mental health that also raises safeguarding concerns, they must share this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy.

When supporting children experiencing mental health difficulties school will explore resources such as

[Senior Mental Health Lead Training](#)

[Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#)

[Rise Above: Resources for School from Public Health England #esafety](#)

[Every Interaction Matters Webinar](#)

[Wellbeing for Education Recovery](#)

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#)

[Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges](#)

12. Private fostering arrangements

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

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

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

By law, a parent, private foster carer, or other person involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and the DSL will notify the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) of the circumstances.

13. Looked after children and previously looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and neglect. Our school will ensure that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after/previously looked after children safe.

Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child, and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the Local Authority's Virtual School Head for children in care.

The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children works with the Virtual School Head to discuss how Pupil Premium Plus funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs in the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP).

The Designated Teacher will follow the statutory guidance: *"Promoting the Education of Looked After Children"*.

14. Children missing education & children absent from education

Attendance, absence, and exclusions are closely monitored. The school will hold more than one emergency contact number for pupils and students where reasonably possible.

A child going missing or who has unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education is a potential indicator of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

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

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

15. Child on child abuse (including sexual violence, sexual harassment & HSB)

The DSL, Governing Body/Board and Head Teacher will take due regard to Part 5, KCSiE.

In most instances, the conduct of pupils towards each other will be covered by our Behaviour Policy. However, some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they raise safeguarding concerns. The school recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. It will not be passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

The forms of child-on-child abuse are outlined below:

- Domestic abuse – an incident or pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, financial and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent against a current or former dating partner regardless of gender or sexuality.
- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) – children under 18 may be sexually abused in the context of exploitative relationships, contexts and situations by peers who are also under 18.
- Harmful sexual behaviour – children and young people presenting with sexual behaviours that are outside of developmentally 'normative' parameters and harmful to themselves and others.
- Upskirting – taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, intending to view their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Serious youth violence – any offence of most serious violence or weapon-enabled crime, where the victim is aged 0–19 (e.g., murder, manslaughter, rape, wounding with intent, causing grievous bodily harm). Youth violence also includes assault with injury offences. All staff will receive training to recognise indicators of serious violence and crime.
- Initiation/hazing-type violence and rituals – activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way to initiate a person into a group, which may include an online element.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images/videos (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery).

The term child-on-child abuse can refer to all these definitions. A child may experience one or multiple facets of abuse simultaneously, and our response will capture the complex web of their experiences.

Different gender issues may be prevalent, e.g., girls being sexually touched/assaulted, or boys being subjected to initiation/hazing-type violence.

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

- An ethos of respect, friendship, courtesy and kindness.
- High expectations of behaviour.
- Clear consequences for unacceptable behaviour.
- A developmentally appropriate PSHE curriculum that develops understanding of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour, consent, and keeping safe.
- Systems for pupils to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, valued and believed.
- Robust risk assessments and targeted support for pupils identified as potential risks or at risk themselves.

Research indicates that young people rarely disclose child-on-child abuse, and when they do, it is likely to be to friends. Therefore, the school will educate pupils on how to support friends, how to talk to a trusted adult, and where to find further advice/services.

Any concerns, disclosures, or allegations of child-on-child abuse should be referred to the DSL using the school's child protection procedures. Where a concern is disclosed to the DSL, advice and guidance will be sought from the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub, and if a crime has been committed or is at risk, the Police will be contacted. Working with external agencies, the school will respond to unacceptable behaviour. If a pupil's behaviour negatively impacts the safety and welfare of others, safeguards will be put in place, and both victim and perpetrator will receive support.

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

The boundary between abusive behaviour and normal childhood experimentation can be blurred. Determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate, or abusive hinges on consent, power imbalance, and exploitation.

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a continuum: normal and developmentally expected → inappropriate → problematic → abusive → violent.

Problematic, abusive, and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause long-term harm. This can include behaviours such as:

- Indecent exposure
- Obscene telephone calls
- Fetishism
- Bestiality
- Sexual abuse against adults, peers, or children

Staff should be vigilant to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical abuse – hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or other harm
- Sexual violence and harassment
- Sexting/youth-produced sexual imagery
- Initiation/hazing violence and rituals
- Upskirting

Developmental Sexual Activity

Encompasses expected actions as children move from infancy to adulthood, including information gathering and experience testing, and is characterised by mutuality and consent-seeking.

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour

May be socially inappropriate, developmentally inappropriate, or both. Consider:

- Negative effects on involved parties
- Concerns raised about the child or young person
- Some actions may be information-seeking, but still cause upset, confusion, worry, or physical damage.
- Behaviour may be “acting out” from other sexual experiences.
- Educational input may suffice in some cases.

Abusive Sexual Activity

Includes coercion, threats, aggression, secrecy, or unequal power dynamics. Key considerations:

Equality – consider differences in physical, cognitive, emotional development, power, control, authority, and passive/active tendencies.

Consent – agreement must include:

- Understanding based on age, maturity, development, functioning, and experience
- Awareness of society’s standards
- Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives
- Assumption that agreements/disagreements will be respected equally
- Voluntary decision
- Mental competence

Coercion – young perpetrators may use bribery, manipulation, emotional threats (loss of love, friendship) or physical force/brutality regardless of victim resistance.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide. Further information and advice is available in the Devon multi-agency protocol “Working with Sexually Active Young People” available at [South West Child Protection Procedures](#).

16. Online safety

Our pupils increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and ooVoo.

Unfortunately, some adults and other children use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts or emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexual behaviour, such as webcam photography or face-to-face meetings. Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate

material, including pornographic websites, or sites which promote extremist behaviour, criminal activity, suicide, or eating disorders.

The school has an Online Safety Policy which explains how we try to keep pupils safe in school and how we respond to online safety incidents (See flowchart, Appendix 7).

The school will also provide advice to parents when pupils are being asked to learn online at home and consider how best to safeguard both pupils and staff.

Pupils are taught about online safety throughout the curriculum, and all staff receive online safety training, which is regularly updated, including an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

What to do if you have an online safety concern:

A concern is raised

Refer to the DSL if concerns are about a child
 Refer to Headteacher if concerns are about staff
 Refer to Chair of Governors if concerns are about the Headteacher

If concerns are about staff or Headteacher refer to LADO before taking any further action

What type of activity is involved? (Use screening tool/e-safety legal framework)

Incident closed
 (Is counselling or advice required?)

Who is involved?

Child as instigator

Child as victim

Staff as victim

Staff as instigator

Establish level of concern. (Screening tool)

Establish level of concern. (Screening tool)

Establish level of concern. (Screening tool)

Establish level of concern. (Screening tool)

DSL to consider need for CP referral

Other children involved?

Yes

No

Potential illegal or child protection issues?

Yes

If appropriate, disconnect computer, seal and store.

In-school action:
 DSL,
 Head of ICT, senior manager.

SW Child Protection Procedures refer to LADO

Counselling
 Risk assessment

If concerns are about staff or Headteacher refer to LADO before taking any further action

School disciplinary and child protection procedures (possible parental involvement)

Possible legal action

Possible legal action

Duty LADO: telephone 01392 384964
 or email ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk
 for a notification form

17. Youth produced sexual imagery (sexting)

The practice of children sharing images and videos via text message, email, social media, or mobile messaging apps has become commonplace. However, these technologies also give children the opportunity to produce and distribute sexual imagery in the form of photos and videos. Such imagery involving anyone under the age of 18 is illegal. Youth produced sexual imagery refers to images and videos where:

- A person under 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under 18.
- A person under 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under 18 with a peer under 18 or an adult.
- A person under 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under 18.

All incidents of this nature should be treated as a safeguarding concern and handled in line with UKCIS guidance, including:

- *Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people*
- *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident*

Sexual imagery shared by adults or where an adult shares sexual imagery with a child is child sexual abuse and must be responded to accordingly.

Staff Response

If a member of staff becomes aware of an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery, they must:

- Follow child protection procedures and refer immediately to the DSL.
- Confiscate the device involved and set it to flight mode, or turn it off if flight mode is unavailable.
- Not view, copy, or print the youth produced sexual imagery.

The DSL should:

- Hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff.
- Conduct subsequent interviews with the children involved, if appropriate.
- Inform and involve parents at an early stage unless this would put the child at risk of harm.

If at any point there is concern that a young person has been harmed or is at risk, a referral must be made to the Local Authority Safeguarding Hub and/or the Police.

Immediate Referral to Safeguarding Hub / Police

Immediate referral should be made if:

- The incident involves an adult.
- There is reason to believe a young person has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or concerns exist about their capacity to consent (e.g., special educational needs).
- The imagery depicts sexual acts unusual for the child's developmental stage or violent sexual acts.
- The imagery involves sexual acts.
- The imagery involves anyone aged 12 or under.
- There is reason to believe the child is at immediate risk of harm (e.g., suicidal, self-harming).

Use of Professional Judgement

If none of the above criteria apply, the DSL will use professional judgement, possibly in consultation with the Head teacher, to assess risk and determine whether escalation is necessary. All decisions must be recorded.

In applying judgement, the DSL will consider:

- Significant age differences between sender and receiver.
- Coercion or encouragement beyond the sender/receiver.
- Whether the imagery was shared with knowledge and consent of the child depicted.
- Whether the child is more vulnerable than usual (e.g., at risk).
- Significant impact on the children involved.

- Whether the image is severe or extreme in nature.
- Whether the child understands consent.
- If the situation is isolated or widely distributed.
- Other concerning circumstances relating to sender or recipient (e.g., difficult home circumstances).
- Prior involvement of the children in youth produced imagery incidents.

If any of these circumstances are present, the situation will be escalated according to child protection procedures, including reporting to the Police or Local Authority Safeguarding Hub. Otherwise, the incident will be managed within the school.

Recording

The DSL will record all incidents of youth produced sexual imagery, including:

- Actions taken and not taken
- Reasons for these actions
- Resolution

All records will comply with the school's safeguarding recording procedures.

18. Additional resources

Further advice on child protection is available from:

NSPCC: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/home.aspx>

Anti-Bullying Alliance: <http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Beat Bullying: <http://www.beatbullying.org/>

Childnet International –making the internet a great and safe place for children. Includes resources for professionals and parents <http://www.childnet.com/>

Thinkuknow (includes resources for professionals and parents) <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Safer Internet Centre <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

Provision for transgender pupils: [Guidance for maintained schools and academies in England on provision for transgender pupils November 2022](#)



Children's Front Door



If you are concerned that a child is being abused, or to request Early Help (L3) support you can

call: 0345 155 1071 or

complete the Request for Support online form available at:

<https://devoncountycouncil.outsystemsenterprise.com/MAS/H/homepage>

The DevonSCP Children's Front Door consultation line for professionals only: 01392 388428

Emergency Duty Team out of hours 0345 6000 388

Police non-emergency 101

For all LADO enquiries Exeter (01392) 384964

ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gcsx.gov.uk

Further info: <https://new.devon.gov.uk>

[Managing allegations - Devon Children and Families Partnership \(dcfp.org.uk\)](http://dcfp.org.uk)

Early Help Team

Head of Service: Lise Bird

Early Help Locality Contact information:

<https://www.devonscp.org.uk/document/early-help-locality-contact-information/>

Locality Early Help Mailbox

North: earlyhelpnorthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Mid & East: earlyhelpmideastsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

South & West: earlyhelpsouthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Exeter: earlyhelpexetersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

For emergencies outside of office hours please call:

0345 6000 388

Much of the policy content has remained the same as previous year 2023/4

Title page	Additional information to remind reader to personalise and adapt according to settings needs.
Contents page	App 19. Reference now to Devon Children's Front Door
Throughout document reference to Abuse and Neglect has been changed to Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation	
1.Safeguarding Statement	Slight change in text to ensure protected characteristics are listed together
2.Terminology	Working Together to Safeguarding Children's definition of safeguarding included
4.Policy Principles, Aims and Values	Slight change in text to ensure protected characteristics are listed together
6.Roles and Responsibilities	Headteacher table – included the phrase open and positive (bullet point 3)
Footnote 3 (page 9)	Updated document linked
Page 11	Page references amended to reflect document
Making a Referral Table (page 13)	Bullet point 1 – reference made to Early Help
Footnote 4 (page 13)	DCFP changed to Devon Safeguarding Children's Partnership
9.Children who are particularly vulnerable	Bullet point 5 – additional of 'education' Additional bullet point added - Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit.
13.Confidentiality, Sharing Information and GDPR	Updated link document paragraph 5.
Footnote 6 (page 16)	Updated links to Data Protection in Schools DfE 2023
Appendices	
Page 18 Signs of Abuse in Children	Additional bullet point- Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
Page 18 Risk Indicators	Changes in text – Bullet point 3 – Local Authority Bullet point 4 – Carers Bullet point 5 – Specific Needs
Page 22	Racist Incidents changed to a subheading of – Bullying, Prejudice and Racist Incidents Prevent police advice line added
Footnotes 7,8,9 & 10 (Page 22)	Additional footnotes added to include - BPRI reporting for Devon CC
Page 25	Contact details for support and charities (DV&A) updated
Page 26	Paragraph 3 – changed DCFP to Devon Safeguarding Children's Partnership
Footnotes 11, 12	Updated links and retitled Devon Safeguarding Children's Partnership
Page 31	Added – And Children Absent from Education – to subheading 14. Paragraph 1 included the phrase - who has unexplainable and/or persistent absences
Page 34	Updated the link to South West Child Protection Procedures
Page 38	MASH and Early Help contacts poster updated to reflect change to Devon Children's Front Door Services.