

**Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy  
2026/27**

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| Policy reviewed and ratified:                                                                                                                                                 | 01/09/2026 |
| Date of next review:                                                                                                                                                          | 01/09/2027 |
| This policy will be subject to ongoing review and may be amended prior to the scheduled date of the next review in order to reflect changes in legislation where appropriate. |            |

**Important contacts within the school**

| ROLE                                | NAME          | CONTACT DETAILS                                                          |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Designated Safeguarding Lead        | Farah Ahmed   | <a href="mailto:fahmed@hfschool.org.uk">fahmed@hfschool.org.uk</a>       |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead | Gayle McCombe | <a href="mailto:gmccombe@hfschool.org.uk">gmccombe@hfschool.org.uk</a>   |
| Safeguarding Governor               | Joan Greening | <a href="mailto:jgreening@hfschool.org.uk">jgreening@hfschool.org.uk</a> |

## **1. Policy statement and principles**

### **Policy Statement**

*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”. All staff are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused.*

The fundamental aim of this policy is to promote a safer environment where children will be believed, supported and protected, when they report abuse, maltreatment, violence and harassment.

Our policy ensures that child safeguarding concerns are managed in a timely, appropriate and relevant way.

Harefield School acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice standards and Ofsted requirements.

This policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that, regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children have a positive and enjoyable experience of activities at school in a safe child centred environment. That they are protected from abuse whilst participating in education wherever such learning/activity takes place.

- This policy is available on the school website and is shared with staff
- This policy will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review
- This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding policies

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and are consistent with the Hillingdon LSCB's Safer Partner Arrangements, local policies and procedures.

Hillingdon Safeguarding Partner Arrangements is referred to as the LSCB locally and as such will be in this policy.

### **Policy principles**

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection (under Equality Act 2010)
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- Children and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support
- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

### **Evaluating effectiveness of the policy**

It is the responsibility of the Nominated Safeguarding Governor to monitor the effectiveness of the policy in consultation with the DSL and safeguarding team.

## 2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children, and the Governance Handbook.

This policy is based on the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026**, the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education, which sets out the legal duties that schools and colleges must follow to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**, which sets out the statutory expectations for agencies and professionals to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- **Section 175 of the Education Act 2002** (and **Section 157** for independent schools and academies), which places a statutory duty on governing bodies, proprietors and local authorities to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- **Part 3 of the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- **The Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004**, which provide the legal framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and place a duty on organisations to work together to protect children from harm.
- **The Children and Social Work Act 2017**, which strengthens safeguarding arrangements and places responsibilities on safeguarding partners to work collaboratively to improve outcomes for children.
- **Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003**, as inserted by **Section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015**, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.
- **Multi-agency statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation**, which sets out the responsibilities of professionals in identifying, safeguarding and supporting girls who are at risk of, or have been subjected to, FGM.
- **The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**, which outlines when individuals with criminal convictions may work with children and the circumstances in which criminal history must be disclosed.
- **Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**, which defines regulated activity in relation to children and underpins safer recruitment and barring arrangements.
- **The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015** and the accompanying **Prevent Duty Guidance**, which require schools to have due regard to the need to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism and to safeguard pupils who may be vulnerable to radicalisation.
- **The Human Rights Act 1998**, which recognises that children have the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation. Schools should consider how safeguarding decisions support children's rights under the European Convention on Human Rights.
- **The Equality Act 2010**, which protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics, including disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Schools must consider how they support pupils with protected characteristics, make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required, and take proportionate positive action where appropriate to reduce disadvantage.
- **The Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010)**, which requires schools to have due regard to the need to:
  - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
  - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- In fulfilling these duties, schools should recognise that some children may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation because of protected characteristics, additional needs, family circumstances or other barriers to accessing support.
- **The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)**, which provide the legal framework for processing and sharing personal information. These should never prevent the appropriate sharing of information where there is a safeguarding concern or where doing so is necessary to protect a child.
- **Data (use and access) Act 2025** is a major UK law that received Royal Assent in June 2025 and is being phased into effect. It modernizes the UK's data protection framework to boost economic growth and innovation while updating rules around public data access, artificial intelligence, and digital identities
- **Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers**, which supports professionals in making timely, proportionate and lawful decisions about sharing information to safeguard children.

### 3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and should be child-centred. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.**

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

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

**Abuse can be perpetrated by adults or by other children. It can take place online, offline or through a combination of both. Abuse may also include children causing harm to adults, often referred to as child-to-parent abuse or caregiver abuse.**

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

**Emotional abuse may include persistent verbal abuse such as criticism, belittling, humiliation, intimidation or name-calling, as well as other behaviours that adversely affect a child's emotional development and self-esteem.**

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including deepfakes or deep nudes, videos or live streams.

Children include everyone under the age of 18.

**Early help refers to providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, to improve outcomes and prevent concerns from escalating. This may include community-based early help or targeted early help, sometimes referred to as Family Help, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).**

The following three safeguarding partners are identified in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017. They are responsible for working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the local area by identifying and responding to children's needs:

- The Local Authority (LA)
- The Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- The Chief Officer of Police for the police area

### **Child-on-child abuse**

**Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse, coercive control or exploitation between children. It is recognised that this can happen both inside and outside of school, online and offline.**

**Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the child who has experienced the abuse and the child alleged to have caused the harm. Appropriate safeguarding support should be provided to both. Timely, evidence-based intervention can play a significant role in preventing abusive behaviour from escalating.**

**Child-on-child abuse can include, but is not limited to:**

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
- physical abuse, including hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm
- serious violence, including assault causing significant injury or threats of harm involving a weapon
- sexual violence
- sexual harassment
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos
- upskirting
- initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

**Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) are forms of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal or sexual activity.**

**Exploitation may be perpetrated by individuals or organised criminal networks. In some cases, children may identify themselves as belonging to the group exploiting them and may not recognise that they are being abused.**

**CCE and CSE may also constitute modern slavery. Where there are indicators that a child may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking, consideration should be given to making a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral, in accordance with statutory guidance.**

**Children who are exploited are victims of abuse. They may not recognise themselves as victims and should never be viewed as choosing to participate in criminal or exploitative behaviour. They may instead be criminalised for offences they have been coerced into committing.**

### **Sexual abuse**

**Most incidents of child sexual abuse are committed by someone known to the child. Schools should not assume that abuse is perpetrated only by strangers.**

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term. However, we recognise that not everyone who has experienced abuse considers themselves to be a victim or wishes to be described in this way. When managing safeguarding concerns, we will use language that reflects the preferences of the child wherever appropriate.

Alleged perpetrator and perpetrator are also widely understood and recognised terms. However, we will carefully consider the language we use, particularly when speaking with children, recognising that children who display harmful behaviour may themselves have experienced abuse, trauma or exploitation and may require safeguarding support. Appropriate terminology will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

#### **4. Equality statement**

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

**We recognise that safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or college, can take place online and offline, and can occur between children outside of school. All staff should consider whether children may be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.**

**We recognise that children may face additional barriers to safeguarding because of protected characteristics, additional needs, communication difficulties, family circumstances or previous experiences. We are committed to ensuring that all children receive equal protection and that safeguarding responses are child-centred, inclusive and free from discrimination.**

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see Section 10).
- Are young carers.
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.
- Have English as an additional language.
- Are known to be living in difficult situations, for example temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance misuse, domestic abuse or parental mental ill health.
- Are at risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), serious violence, forced marriage, honour-based abuse or radicalisation.
- Are asylum seekers, refugees or are seeking sanctuary.
- Are at risk due to their own or a family member's mental health needs.
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see Section 12).
- Have a social worker or have previously had a social worker.
- Are missing or absent from education, particularly repeatedly or for prolonged periods.
- Whose parent or carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to educate them at home.
- **Are privately fostered.**
- **Are at risk of county lines, modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation.**
- **Are lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender identity, recognising that these children are not inherently at greater risk, but may be more vulnerable to abuse because of prejudice, discrimination or targeted behaviours.**
- **Are affected by bullying, including prejudice-based bullying or discriminatory language.**

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all staff should ensure that their approach is child-centred and that they always act in the best interests of the child.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, governors, trustees, contractors, supply staff, trainee teachers and visitors working in the school. Our safeguarding arrangements also apply to extended school activities, educational visits and off-site provision.

Our school plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing children for life in modern Britain and creating a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Preventative education is most effective within a whole-school approach that creates a culture where children feel safe, are listened to, know who to speak to if they have concerns, and where safeguarding is embedded throughout the curriculum and wider school life. Staff recognise that safeguarding incidents and behaviours can occur outside school, outside the home and online, and will always consider whether children may be at risk of abuse or exploitation in these situations.

This whole-school approach is underpinned by our:

- Behaviour Policy
- Pastoral Support System
- Planned programme of Personal Development, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) and safeguarding education, which is inclusive, age-appropriate and delivered regularly.

This curriculum includes, but is not limited to:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent
- Stereotyping, prejudice, equality and protected characteristics
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- How to recognise abusive relationships, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, online abuse, so-called honour-based abuse (including forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation)
- How and where to access support
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence, why they are always unacceptable, and how reports will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately
- Online safety, including recognising misinformation, disinformation, online scams, cybercrime, harmful content, online relationships and healthy digital behaviours.

### 5.1 All staff

- Read and understand at least Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026). The DSL and Deputy DSLs will also be familiar with Annex B, which sets out the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online, including websites they are expected to use and who they may interact with online.
- Understand that online safety is a safeguarding issue and recognise that children may be exposed to abuse, exploitation, misinformation, disinformation, online scams, cybercrime, harmful content and harmful online interactions. Staff will help children develop the knowledge and resilience to stay safe online.

- Provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where all children feel able to speak to trusted adults about safeguarding concerns. Staff should recognise that children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender identity may experience additional vulnerability because of prejudice, discrimination or bullying and should ensure these children receive appropriate support where needed.
- Staff will be aware that generative artificial intelligence (AI) can create convincing but false or manipulated content, including images, audio and video, and will support pupils to critically evaluate online information and report concerns.

All staff will be aware of:

- The school systems which support safeguarding, including this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, the role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs, the Behaviour Policy, the Online Safety Policy (including the school's filtering and monitoring responsibilities), the staff behaviour expectations, and the safeguarding response to children who are missing or absent from education.
- The school's early help arrangements, including the distinction between community-based early help and targeted early help (Family Help), their role in identifying emerging needs, working with the DSL and making appropriate referrals where additional support is required.
- The process for making referrals to Children's Social Care, undertaking Early Help assessments where appropriate, and contributing to statutory assessments and multi-agency plans where required.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding concern or a child discloses abuse or neglect, including concerns relating to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), child-on-child abuse, allegations about adults working with children (including supply staff, contractors, volunteers and trainee teachers), low-level concerns, and concerns about organisations or individuals using school premises. Staff will understand how to maintain appropriate confidentiality while ensuring that information is shared promptly with those who need to know.
- The signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), county lines, serious violence, domestic abuse, honour-based abuse (including forced marriage and FGM), radicalisation, modern slavery, human trafficking, online abuse, mental health concerns where they may indicate safeguarding issues, and children who are missing or absent from education.
- The importance of reassuring children that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported and kept safe, and that they will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse. Staff should recognise that children may not immediately identify themselves as victims or disclose abuse, particularly where coercion, exploitation or grooming has occurred.
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online.
- The fact that children who are, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender identity may be targeted by other children because of prejudice, discrimination or bullying. Staff should remain vigilant to these risks whilst recognising that these characteristics do not, in themselves, place a child at greater risk of harm.
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection.

All staff should recognise that safeguarding is a shared responsibility requiring effective multi-agency working. They should always be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help, work collaboratively with other agencies and escalate concerns where they believe a child is at risk of significant harm.

## **5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Each school has an appointed DSL who takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider

safeguarding across the school. This includes online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes used on school devices and networks to help keep children safe online.

The DSL is responsible for promoting a culture of safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively, and supporting staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.

The school will ensure that staff know how to contact the DSL outside normal school hours where this is necessary, for example during educational visits, residential trips or other out-of-hours activities.

When the DSL is unavailable, one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will act as cover.

**The school will have robust arrangements in place to ensure safeguarding support remains available whenever the DSL is absent due to illness, annual leave, training or any other circumstance. This may include designated deputy cover, secure shared safeguarding systems, confidential shared email arrangements and clear communication to staff about who is acting as DSL.**

If both the DSL and Deputy DSLs are unavailable, each school will identify an appropriately trained senior member of staff who will act as safeguarding cover for the duration of the absence.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and authority necessary to carry out the role effectively. This includes time to:

- Provide advice, guidance and support to staff on safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Act as a source of safeguarding expertise within the school.
- Manage referrals to Children's Social Care, the Police, the Channel Programme, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and any other relevant agencies.
- Work with other agencies and professionals to safeguard children.
- Take part in strategy discussions, child protection conferences, core group meetings and other multi-agency meetings, or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to assessments of children and their families.
- Understand the local assessment process for providing **Family Help** and support staff in identifying children who may benefit from early intervention.
- Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.
- Have a secure understanding of child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour and sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Have a good understanding of the school's filtering and monitoring systems and processes, ensuring that these are effective in safeguarding children online.

The DSL will also:

- Keep the Headteacher informed of safeguarding issues, especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Social Care, police, health professionals and other relevant agencies where appropriate.
- Work closely with safeguarding partners and other agencies to ensure children receive coordinated support.
- Ensure that all safeguarding records are accurate, secure, confidential and kept in accordance with data protection legislation.
- Ensure that child protection files are transferred securely and without delay when a child moves school.

- **When transferring child protection files, include a clear safeguarding summary outlining current safeguarding concerns, relevant background information, actions taken, agencies involved and any ongoing support required to ensure continuity of safeguarding.**
- **Take particular care to distinguish between current safeguarding concerns and historic information so that previous concerns are presented with appropriate context and do not obscure current risk assessments.**
- **Where appropriate and lawful to do so, share relevant safeguarding information with a receiving school before a child leaves, enabling appropriate support to be in place from the first day of attendance.**
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and Children's Social Care colleagues to ensure that school procedures reflect local safeguarding arrangements.
- Be confident in accessing specialist services to support all children involved in incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment, including victims, alleged perpetrators and other children who may have been affected.
- Be aware that children who are involved in police investigations or searches must have an appropriate adult present in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Promote a culture in which children feel able to report concerns and where staff are confident to raise safeguarding issues without delay.

### 5.3 The governing board

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is at the forefront of all decision-making and that safeguarding underpins all relevant aspects of policy development, strategic planning, school improvement and the school's culture.
- Ensure that the school has effective safeguarding arrangements that are child-centred, comply with statutory guidance and promote the welfare of all children.
- Evaluate, approve and review this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy annually (or sooner if required), ensuring it complies with current legislation and statutory guidance, including **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)**, and hold the Headteacher to account for its effective implementation.
- Be aware of its responsibilities under the **Human Rights Act 1998**, the **Equality Act 2010** (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)** and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a nominated safeguarding governor (or equivalent board-level lead) to monitor safeguarding arrangements on behalf of the Governing Board. This individual will not be the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction and that this is regularly updated to enable them to provide effective strategic challenge and support.
- Ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, as part of induction and that safeguarding updates are provided regularly, including whenever there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that the school has effective filtering and monitoring systems in place to safeguard children online and review their effectiveness regularly.

This includes ensuring:

- the leadership team, governors and staff understand the filtering and monitoring arrangements in place and their respective roles and responsibilities;
- the school's arrangements are informed by the Department for Education's **Filtering and Monitoring Standards**;
- regular discussions take place with IT providers and technical staff to ensure systems remain effective and proportionate.

- The governing board will receive regular assurance that the school's filtering and monitoring systems remain effective and proportionate to identified risks.

The Governing Board will ensure that:

- the Designated Safeguarding Lead has the appropriate status, authority, capacity, funding, time, training, resources and support to fulfil the responsibilities set out in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026);
- robust safeguarding arrangements are in place to provide appropriate cover whenever the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable;
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead has lead responsibility for safeguarding, including online safety, and understands the school's filtering and monitoring systems and processes;
- online safety is recognised as a safeguarding issue and remains a running and interrelated theme throughout the curriculum, safeguarding arrangements and all relevant school policies;
- safeguarding is embedded within the school's ethos and that children are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online;
- the school has effective procedures to manage safeguarding concerns, allegations and low-level concerns relating to staff, supply staff, contractors, volunteers and trainee teachers, in accordance with statutory guidance (see Appendix 3);
- this policy reflects that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), certain medical conditions or disabilities, children with a social worker, looked after children and previously looked after children may face additional barriers to recognising, reporting or disclosing abuse and may require additional support;
- staff understand the school's early help arrangements, including the distinction between **community-based Early Help and targeted Early Help (Family Help)**, and their responsibilities for identifying children who may benefit from additional support;
- the school fulfils its responsibilities for information sharing, record keeping and the secure transfer of child protection files when children move schools.

Where another organisation or individual is using the school premises to provide services or activities (regardless of whether the children attending are on the school roll), the Governing Board will seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place by:

- obtaining and reviewing safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures where appropriate;
- ensuring there are effective arrangements for communication and information sharing with the school regarding safeguarding concerns;
- ensuring safeguarding requirements are included within contracts or lettings agreements;
- terminating agreements where safeguarding requirements are not met.

The Chair of Governors will act as the Case Manager where an allegation of abuse is made against the Headteacher, where appropriate, in accordance with statutory guidance (see Appendix 3).

**The Governing Board will ensure that safeguarding remains a standing agenda item and that it receives regular reports on safeguarding practice, training, audit findings, filtering and monitoring, attendance, behaviour, child protection trends and the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements to enable it to provide appropriate scrutiny and challenge.**

**All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) in its entirety and undertake safeguarding training appropriate to their role.**

Section 14 of this policy provides further information about how governors are supported to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

## 5.4 The Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and for ensuring that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is embedded within the school's culture, policies, procedures and day-to-day practice.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff (including temporary staff, supply staff, contractors, trainee teachers and volunteers) receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, as part of their induction and that safeguarding updates are provided regularly, including whenever there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensuring that all staff understand and follow the school's safeguarding systems and procedures, including this policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, the Behaviour Policy, the Online Safety Policy and procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring that all staff understand their responsibilities to identify children who may benefit from **community-based Early Help or targeted Early Help (Family Help)** and know how to make appropriate referrals.
- Ensuring that parents and carers are made aware of this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy when their child joins the school and that the policy is published on the school's website.
- Ensuring that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has sufficient status, authority, capacity, time, funding, training, resources and support to carry out the responsibilities set out in **Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)**.
- Ensuring that robust arrangements are in place to provide appropriate safeguarding cover whenever the DSL is unavailable due to illness, annual leave, training or any other circumstance.
- Ensuring that safeguarding is a whole-school responsibility and that effective safeguarding arrangements are implemented consistently across all aspects of school life.
- Ensuring that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard children online and that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to online safety.
- Promoting a culture in which children feel safe, are listened to and know that they will be taken seriously if they raise a safeguarding concern.
- Ensuring that safeguarding records are maintained securely and that information is shared appropriately in accordance with statutory guidance and data protection legislation.
- Acting as the **Case Manager** where an allegation or safeguarding concern is made against a member of staff, supply staff, volunteer, contractor or trainee teacher, where appropriate, in accordance with statutory guidance (see Appendix 3).
- Managing all low-level concerns relating to adults working within the school, ensuring that concerns are recorded, reviewed, responded to appropriately and addressed in accordance with the school's Low-Level Concerns Procedure. The Headteacher may work in collaboration with the Designated Safeguarding Lead when managing such concerns.
- Ensuring that safer recruitment procedures are fully implemented and that all appropriate pre-employment checks are completed before adults begin working with children.
- Ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory safeguarding duties and works effectively with safeguarding partners, Children's Social Care, the police and other relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

## 5.5 Virtual school heads

Virtual School Heads have a **non-statutory responsibility** to provide strategic leadership and oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker, including those who have previously had a social worker, recognising that these children may face additional safeguarding and educational vulnerabilities.

Virtual School Heads should work collaboratively with schools, local authorities and partner agencies to promote educational outcomes for these children. This includes identifying, engaging

with and providing advice to key professionals, including Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs), social workers, mental health leads, designated teachers and other relevant professionals, to help ensure that children receive appropriate educational support and that barriers to learning, attendance and wellbeing are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity.

## 6. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All staff will understand that child protection and safeguarding issues warrant the highest level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child, their family and those involved, but also to ensure that any information shared does not compromise safeguarding enquiries, criminal investigations or future legal proceedings.

Staff should only discuss safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy DSL, Headteacher or Chair of Governors (where appropriate, depending on who is the subject of the concern). The DSL, Headteacher or Chair of Governors will determine who else needs to receive the information and will ensure it is shared only on a strict **need-to-know** basis.

The school recognises that:

- Timely, accurate and proportionate information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Fears about sharing information must never stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the data (use and access) Act 2025 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information where this is necessary to protect children or promote their welfare.
- Where staff need to share special category personal data, the Data Protection Act 2018 includes safeguarding children and individuals at risk as a lawful processing condition. Information may therefore be shared without consent where it is not possible to obtain consent, it cannot reasonably be expected that consent can be obtained, or where seeking consent would place a child or another person at increased risk of harm.
- Information sharing decisions should be recorded appropriately, including the reasons for sharing or not sharing information, where appropriate.
- Staff should always distinguish between current safeguarding concerns and historic information so that previous concerns are understood within their appropriate context and do not obscure current safeguarding risks.

Staff must never promise a child that they will keep information relating to abuse or neglect confidential. Children should be reassured that information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to help and protect them.

Where a child reports sexual violence or sexual harassment and asks that the information is not shared:

- There is no single or automatic response. Even where a child does not consent to information being shared, staff may still lawfully share information where there is another lawful basis under the UK GDPR or where it is necessary to safeguard the child or others.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will carefully balance the child's wishes with the school's legal duties to safeguard the child and protect other children who may be at risk.
- Unless doing so would place the child at greater risk of harm, parents or carers will normally be informed and involved at an appropriate stage.
- The wishes of the child should be considered carefully, alongside their age, understanding, competence and the level of risk identified.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will always consider whether:

- A referral to Children's Social Care is required because the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.
- Immediate action is required to protect the child or another child from harm.

- The matter should be referred to the police. Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are criminal offences and should ordinarily be reported to the police. Although the age of criminal responsibility is 10 years old, where the alleged perpetrator is under the age of 10, the starting principle remains that the police should be consulted alongside Children's Social Care to determine the most appropriate safeguarding response.

The school will always work collaboratively with safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies to ensure that children receive timely and appropriate support, protection and intervention.

## 7. Recognising abuse and taking action

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All staff, volunteers and governors have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of help or protection and to take appropriate action without delay.

All staff should adopt a child-centred approach, act in the best interests of the child at all times and maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** where safeguarding is concerned.

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below whenever they have a safeguarding concern, receive a disclosure, witness an incident, or become aware of information that may indicate a child is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding concerns can occur inside and outside the home, within the family, within peer relationships, in the community and online. Children may also be at risk from multiple forms of abuse occurring simultaneously.

Staff should recognise that children may not always feel ready, or know how, to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected. They may not recognise their experiences as harmful, may be embarrassed, afraid, or unable to communicate what has happened. This should not prevent staff from having professional curiosity, speaking with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and taking appropriate action where there are concerns about a child's welfare.

Where appropriate, staff should consider whether a child may benefit from **community-based Early Help** or **targeted Early Help (Family Help)** and discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**For the purposes of this policy, any reference to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be taken to include the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s), who are trained to carry out the role in the absence of the DSL or when delegated to do so.**

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

If you believe that a child is suffering, is likely to suffer, significant harm, or is in immediate danger, you must act immediately.

A referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police without delay. **Anyone can make a referral.**

If you make a referral directly, you must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible, unless doing so would place the child or another person at increased risk of harm.

Staff should follow the local safeguarding partnership procedures and seek advice from the DSL where appropriate. However, this must never delay making a referral where immediate action is required to protect a child.

For local procedures, staff should refer to the **Hillingdon Safeguarding Children Partnership** guidance and local referral procedures.

The national guidance for reporting concerns to Children's Social Care can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

## 7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses abuse, neglect or exploitation to you, you should:

- Listen carefully and take what the child says seriously.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Allow the child to speak freely and do not interrupt or ask leading questions.
- Remain calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Do not express shock, disbelief or anger.
- Explain that you cannot promise confidentiality and that the information will need to be shared only with people who need to know in order to help keep them safe.
- Tell the child what will happen next in a way that is appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Avoid making promises you cannot keep.
- Make a clear, accurate and contemporaneous record of the disclosure as soon as possible, using the child's own words wherever possible.
- Record only factual information and avoid interpretation, opinion or speculation.
- Clearly distinguish between the child's account, your observations and any professional opinion.
- **Where relevant, distinguish between current safeguarding concerns and historic information to ensure that previous events are recorded with appropriate context.**
- Record the concern promptly on CPOMS in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff should remember that children may:

- Not feel ready, or know how, to tell someone that they are being abused, neglected or exploited.
- Not recognise that what they are experiencing is abuse or believe it is normal.
- Delay telling someone because they are frightened, embarrassed, ashamed, threatened or have been groomed.
- Find it difficult to communicate because of their age, developmental stage, disability, additional needs, language barriers or communication difficulties.
- Worry about the consequences of telling someone or fear that they will not be believed.

None of these factors should prevent staff from maintaining **professional curiosity**, recognising potential indicators of abuse, and discussing concerns promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

A child-centred approach should always be adopted. Staff should act in the best interests of the child at all times and maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** where safeguarding concerns arise.

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

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) defines **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** as **all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs, for non-medical reasons.**

FGM is illegal in the UK, is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls, and has serious short-term and long-term physical, emotional and psychological consequences.

Possible indicators that a child has already been subjected to FGM, and factors which may indicate that a child is at risk, are detailed in **Appendix 4** of this policy.

Mandatory reporting duty

Teachers (including qualified teachers, headteachers and those carrying out teaching work) have a **statutory duty** to report to the Police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either:

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

In these circumstances, the teacher **must make a report to the Police personally and without delay**, in accordance with the mandatory reporting duty.

Following the report to the Police, the teacher should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible, unless they have been advised that doing so would place the child or another person at increased risk of harm.

The DSL will ensure that Children's Social Care is informed where appropriate and that the child receives any necessary safeguarding and support.

### **Other safeguarding concerns relating to FGM**

The mandatory reporting duty does not apply where:

- a child is considered to be at risk of FGM;
- FGM is suspected but there is no confirmed disclosure or visual evidence;
- the individual is aged 18 or over.

In these circumstances, any member of staff who has concerns that a child may be at risk of FGM, suspects that FGM may have been carried out, or becomes aware that a person aged 18 or over may have been subjected to FGM, must report their concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff must **never** attempt to examine a child to confirm whether FGM has taken place.

The school will follow the procedures of the **Hillingdon Safeguarding Children Partnership** and make referrals to Children's Social Care and other agencies, including the Police, where appropriate, to ensure that children receive timely protection and support.

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

Figure 1 (below, before Section 7.7) illustrates the procedure to follow where there are concerns about a child's welfare.

Where possible, staff should discuss any safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to agree an appropriate course of action.

If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL (or Deputy DSL) is unavailable, this must **not delay** appropriate safeguarding action. Staff should speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or seek advice from Children's Social Care. Advice can also be obtained from the NSPCC Helpline on **0808 800 5000**.

Any actions taken must be shared with the DSL as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where appropriate, any member of staff may make a referral directly to Children's Social Care. If this happens, the member of staff must inform the DSL as soon as possible, unless doing so would place the child or another person at increased risk of harm.

Early Help and Family Help

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from **community-based Early Help or targeted Early Help (Family Help)**.

Early intervention is particularly important where a child:

- is disabled or has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- has a mental health need;
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement or county lines;
- is frequently missing or absent from education or home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, exploitation or radicalisation;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance misuse, domestic abuse or parental mental ill health;
- has returned home to their family from care;
- is showing early signs of abuse, neglect or exploitation; or
- would otherwise benefit from additional support to improve their outcomes.

The DSL will usually lead on liaising with other agencies and coordinating appropriate support through community-based Early Help or targeted Early Help (Family Help), where appropriate.

Staff may be required to contribute to assessments, attend multi-agency meetings and, where appropriate, act as Lead Practitioner in accordance with local arrangements.

The school will work in partnership with the **Hillingdon Safeguarding Children Partnership**, Children's Social Care and other safeguarding partners to ensure that children receive the right support at the right time.

The DSL will keep all cases under regular review. If a child's circumstances do not improve, or if concerns increase, consideration will be given to making a referral to Children's Social Care. All interventions, decisions and outcomes will be recorded, monitored and reviewed.

Staff should refer to the **Hillingdon Family Help and Early Help guidance** for local procedures.

## **Referral**

Where it is appropriate to refer a case to Children's Social Care or the Police, the DSL will normally make the referral or support the member of staff to do so.

However, **any member of staff may make a referral** if they believe a child is at risk of significant harm or immediate danger.

Where a member of staff makes a referral directly, they must inform the DSL as soon as possible, unless doing so would place the child or another person at increased risk of harm.

Following a referral, Children's Social Care should acknowledge receipt and decide, within **one working day**, what action will be taken. The DSL, or the person who made the referral, must follow up if a decision is not received within this timescale and ensure that all actions and outcomes are accurately recorded.

If, after a referral has been made, the child's circumstances do not appear to be improving, the DSL or the person who made the referral must use the local safeguarding partnership's escalation procedures to ensure that concerns are appropriately addressed and that the child receives the protection and support they need.

The school recognises that some children live in different local authority areas. Referrals will therefore be made to the Children's Social Care service for the local authority in which the child

normally resides, whilst continuing to work collaboratively with all relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

### 7.5 If you have concerns about radicalisation or extremism

Radicalisation is a safeguarding issue and should be dealt with in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.

If you have concerns that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation or is being drawn into extremism or terrorism, you should discuss your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible to agree an appropriate course of action.

If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL (or Deputy DSL) is unavailable, this must **not delay** appropriate safeguarding action. Staff should seek advice from a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or Children's Social Care where appropriate. Any actions taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where appropriate, any member of staff may make a referral directly to Children's Social Care if they believe a child is at risk of significant harm. The DSL should be informed as soon as possible unless doing so would place the child or another person at increased risk of harm.

The DSL will consider the nature and level of risk, undertake an appropriate safeguarding assessment and determine whether a referral should be made to Children's Social Care, the Police, the **Channel Programme**, or another appropriate agency.

The **Channel Programme** is a voluntary, confidential, multi-agency programme which provides support to individuals who are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Staff should remain professionally curious and be alert to indicators that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation. Any concerns, however small, should be reported promptly in accordance with this policy.

The Department for Education provides a dedicated Prevent helpline for education settings to raise non-emergency concerns relating to radicalisation and extremism:

- **Telephone:** 020 7340 7264
- **Email:** [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk)

This service should **not** be used where there is an immediate risk to life or where a crime is suspected.

In an emergency:

- Call **999** if you believe someone is in immediate danger.
- Call the confidential **Anti-Terrorist Hotline** on **0800 789 321** if you believe:
  - someone is planning or preparing an act of terrorism;
  - someone may be travelling to join a terrorist organisation; or
  - you have seen or heard information that may relate to terrorist activity.

The school will work in partnership with safeguarding partners, Children's Social Care, the Police and other relevant agencies to safeguard children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or extremism.

### 7.6 If you have a concern about a child's mental health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse childhood experiences.

Staff should remain alert to behavioural, emotional and physical indicators that may suggest a child is experiencing mental health difficulties or is at risk of developing them. These indicators should always be considered alongside the wider safeguarding context.

Mental health concerns should be approached in a child-centred manner. Staff should maintain professional curiosity and consider whether there are underlying safeguarding issues that may be contributing to a child's presentation.

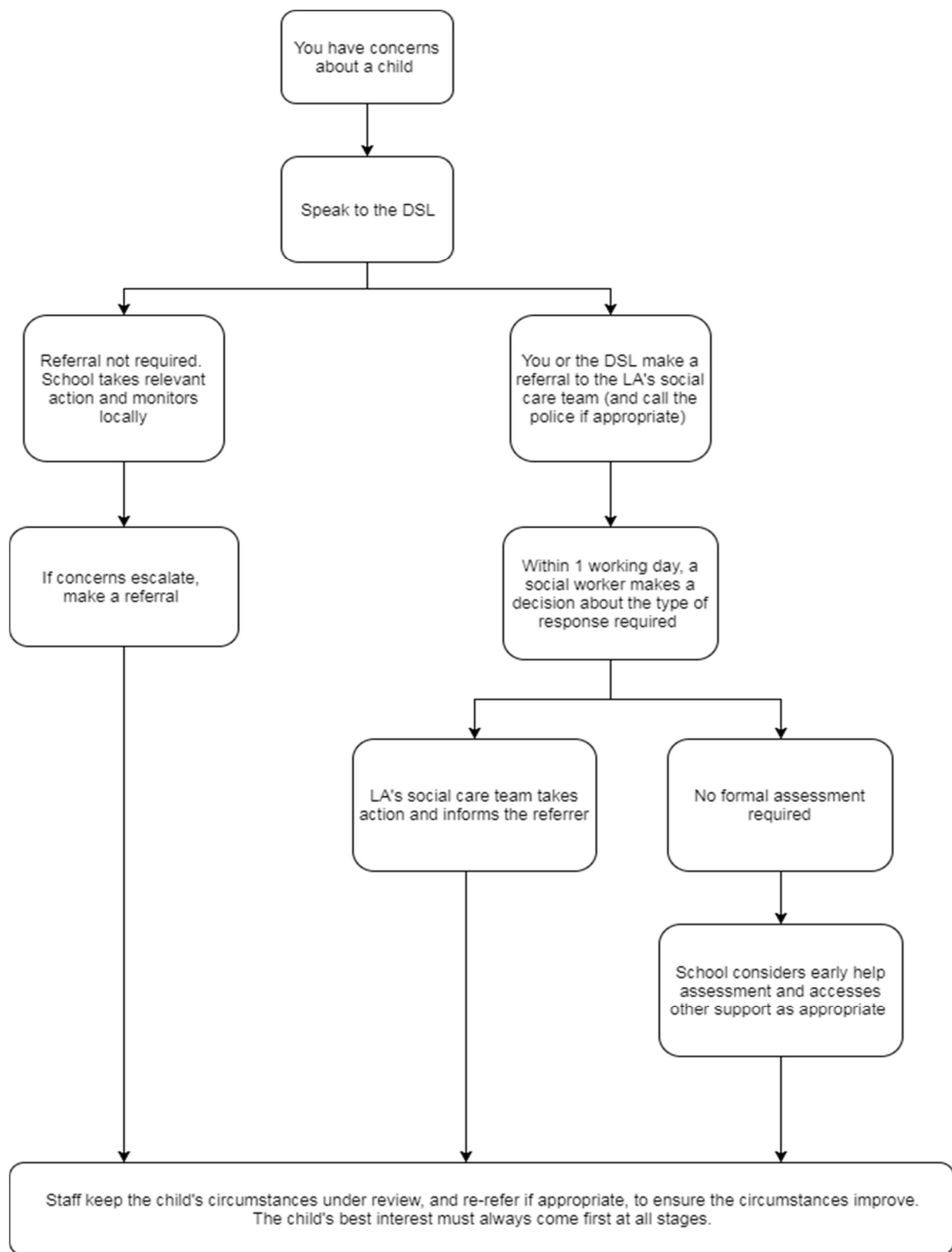
If you have concerns about a child's mental health **and** believe there is a safeguarding concern, you must take immediate action by following the procedures set out in **Section 7.4** of this policy and report your concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay.

If your concerns relate to a child's mental health but do **not** indicate an immediate safeguarding concern, you should discuss these with the DSL to agree the most appropriate course of action. This may include consideration of **community-based Early Help, targeted Early Help (Family Help)**, pastoral support, referral to appropriate mental health services or other external agencies where appropriate.

The school recognises that early identification and appropriate intervention can significantly improve outcomes for children experiencing mental health difficulties. The DSL will work collaboratively with relevant professionals, including the school's Mental Health Lead (where applicable), Children's Social Care, health professionals and other partner agencies to ensure that children receive appropriate support.

**Figure 1** below sets out the procedure to follow where there are concerns about a child's welfare but the child is not believed to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm or to be in immediate danger.

**Note:** If the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL is unavailable, this must **not** delay appropriate action. Staff should follow the procedures outlined in **Section 7.4**.



## 7.7 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor

The school has procedures in place to manage safeguarding concerns, allegations and low-level concerns relating to adults working with children.

If you have concerns about the conduct of a member of staff (including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor), or receive an allegation that they may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children,

you must report the concern **immediately** to the Headteacher.

Where the concern or allegation relates to the Headteacher, it must be reported immediately to the Chair of Governors, who will act as the Case Manager.

The Headteacher or Chair of Governors will manage the concern or allegation in accordance with the procedures set out in **Appendix 3** of this policy and the statutory guidance in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)**.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation to the Headteacher, or where the Headteacher is the subject of the concern, you should report the matter directly to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**.

Where appropriate, the school will work closely with the LADO, Children's Social Care, the Police, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and any other relevant agencies.

If the school receives an allegation relating to an incident involving an individual or organisation using the school premises to provide activities or services for children, the allegation will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors where appropriate) will inform the LADO and take appropriate action, as would be expected for any safeguarding allegation involving adults working with children.

All concerns and allegations will be dealt with fairly, consistently, promptly and in accordance with statutory guidance, ensuring that the welfare of children remains the paramount consideration throughout.

## 7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other children

We recognise that child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), abuse in intimate personal relationships between children, physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, upskirting, initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals, and other forms of abuse or exploitation.

We recognise that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the child who has experienced the abuse and the child alleged to have caused the harm. Both children are likely to require safeguarding support and intervention. Timely, evidence-based support is essential in preventing abusive behaviour from escalating and improving outcomes for all children involved.

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

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put children in the school at risk
- Involves violence, serious physical assault, significant injury or threats of harm, including threats involving a weapon.
- Involves children being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

See appendix 4 for more information about child-on-child abuse.

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

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

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it
- Records should distinguish clearly between current safeguarding concerns and historic information and should be factual, accurate and recorded without delay.
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s). Support will be reviewed regularly and adapted in response to the needs of each child, recognising that the impact of child-on-child abuse may continue over time.
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate. The DSL will consider whether Early Help, Family Help or other specialist services should be involved to provide appropriate support for all children affected.

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

We have robust reporting procedures for recording, investigating and dealing with allegations, and supporting victims, perpetrators and any other children affected.

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female children, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate children about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure children are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 6.10 below)

- Ensure children who report abuse are listened to, believed, reassured that they are being taken seriously and supported throughout any safeguarding process.
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
- How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
- That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. Children may not recognise their experiences as abuse, may not identify themselves as victims, or may delay disclosure because of fear, shame, embarrassment, coercion or grooming.

For example:

- Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
- A friend may make a report
- A member of staff may overhear a conversation
- A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, SEND, disability, communication needs, age, culture, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or questioning their gender identity, or because English is an additional language.
- That a child harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
- That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side

The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn’t (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children’s social care to determine this
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

The school will adopt a child-centred approach throughout the management of all child-on-child abuse cases. The wishes, feelings and lived experiences of the child who has experienced the abuse will be central to all safeguarding decisions, whilst ensuring that the child alleged to have caused the harm also receives appropriate safeguarding support and intervention.

## 7.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

The school's approach to incidents involving the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos is based on **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)** and the **UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance: *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people***.

The sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos is a safeguarding issue which requires a child-centred response. Children who share images may themselves be experiencing abuse, coercion, exploitation, grooming or other safeguarding concerns. All incidents will therefore be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

### Staff responsibilities

If you become aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images or videos (sometimes referred to as "sexting" or "youth-produced sexual imagery"), you must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

Staff must **not**:

- view, copy, print, download, share, store or save the image or video;
- ask a child to share, download or forward the image;
- delete the image or ask a child to delete it;
- investigate the incident or ask children detailed questions about the image or video;
- share information about the incident with anyone other than the DSL or those who need to know;
- make assumptions, apportion blame or shame any child involved.

If a member of staff has viewed an image accidentally, this must be reported immediately to the DSL, who will record the circumstances and determine any further action required.

Staff should reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking to an adult, explain that the information cannot remain confidential because it is a safeguarding matter, and reassure them that appropriate support will be provided.

### Initial review by the DSL

Following a report, the DSL will carry out an initial review with appropriate members of staff to establish the nature of the incident and determine the most appropriate safeguarding response.

The review will consider:

- whether any child is at immediate risk of harm;
- whether a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the Police is required;
- whether it is necessary to view the image or video to safeguard a child (in most cases this will not be necessary);
- what further information is required to inform safeguarding decisions;
- whether the images have been shared more widely and through which platforms;
- whether immediate action should be taken to remove images where possible;
- the needs, vulnerabilities and safeguarding risks affecting each child involved;
- whether another school, college or agency should be informed;
- whether parents or carers should be informed, recognising that they will normally be involved unless doing so would place a child at greater risk of harm.

### Referral to Children's Social Care and/or the Police

The DSL will make an immediate referral to Children's Social Care and/or the Police where appropriate, including where:

- an adult is involved;

- there is evidence or concern that a child has been coerced, blackmailed, groomed or exploited;
- there are concerns regarding a child's capacity to consent because of age, learning difficulties, SEND or other vulnerabilities;
- the imagery depicts sexual acts that are unusual for the child's developmental stage, violent or abusive;
- any child shown in sexual imagery is under the age of 13;
- there are concerns that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm;
- there are concerns regarding self-harm, suicidal ideation or any other immediate safeguarding risk.

Where none of the above criteria apply, the DSL, in consultation with the Headteacher and other relevant professionals where appropriate, may decide to manage the incident through the school's safeguarding procedures without involving Children's Social Care or the Police.

All decisions and the reasons for them will be fully recorded.

### **Further review**

Where an external referral is not required, the DSL will undertake a further safeguarding assessment, gather additional information where appropriate and determine the support required for all children involved.

Support will be provided for:

- the child who shared the image;
- any child depicted in the image;
- any child who has received or shared the image;
- any other children affected by the incident.

If, at any stage, safeguarding concerns increase or further information becomes available, the DSL will immediately reconsider whether a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the Police is required.

### **Parents and carers**

Parents and carers will normally be informed at the earliest appropriate opportunity and involved in safeguarding planning unless doing so would place a child at increased risk of harm or compromise a police or safeguarding investigation.

### **Recording**

All incidents involving the sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos, together with the rationale for decisions made, actions taken and support provided, will be recorded securely in accordance with the school's safeguarding recording procedures.

Records will be factual, timely and, where appropriate, distinguish between current safeguarding concerns and historic information.

### **Education and prevention**

Children are taught about the risks associated with sharing nude and semi-nude images through the school's Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), Computing and Personal Development curriculum.

Teaching includes:

- understanding what constitutes nude and semi-nude image sharing;
- recognising coercion, grooming and online exploitation;
- understanding consent, healthy relationships and respect;

- the legal implications of creating, possessing and sharing indecent images of children;
- online sexual harassment and abuse;
- the emotional, social and reputational impact of image sharing;
- strategies for responding to pressure to create or share images;
- what to do if they receive a nude or semi-nude image;
- how and where to seek help.

Children are also made aware of the school's safeguarding procedures so they understand how incidents will be managed and how they will be supported if they report concerns.

### **7.10 Reporting systems for children**

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the school will always take account of the child's wishes and feelings when determining what action to take and what services to provide. These will be considered alongside the school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and the need to protect them from harm.

The school recognises that children may not always feel ready, or know how, to tell someone that they are being abused, neglected or exploited. They may not recognise that what they are experiencing is harmful, may feel embarrassed, ashamed or frightened, or may worry about the consequences of telling someone.

We are committed to creating a culture in which all children feel safe, respected, listened to and confident that they will be taken seriously if they raise a concern.

To achieve this, we will:

- Provide a range of accessible and well-promoted ways for children to report safeguarding concerns, worries or allegations.
- Ensure that children know who their trusted adults are and how they can seek help whenever they need it.
- Ensure our reporting systems are clearly communicated, easy to understand and accessible to all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or communication needs.
- Make it clear that all safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously, responded to promptly and managed in a child-centred manner.
- Reassure children that they will be listened to, believed where appropriate, supported and kept informed about what will happen next, taking account of their age and understanding.
- Encourage children to express their views, wishes and feelings and provide opportunities for them to give feedback about the support they receive.
- Ensure that children know they can report concerns about their own safety or the safety of another child, both inside and outside school, including concerns relating to online safety.
- Promote an open safeguarding culture in which children understand that there is no concern too small to report and that they will never be made to feel they are creating a problem by sharing a safeguarding concern.

The school will regularly review the effectiveness of its reporting systems to ensure they remain accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of all children.

## **8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology**

Harefield School recognises that safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material is a key safeguarding responsibility. Technology is an integral part of children's everyday lives and, whilst it offers many educational and social benefits, it can also present significant safeguarding risks.

Online safety is therefore approached as a **whole-school safeguarding issue** and is embedded throughout our safeguarding culture, curriculum, policies and daily practice.

The school recognises that online risks can arise from contact with others, the content children access online, the way services are used, and children's own conduct online. Online risks include, but are not limited to:

- child-on-child abuse;
- online bullying and cyberbullying;
- child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- child criminal exploitation (CCE);
- sexual abuse and sexual harassment;
- grooming and coercion;
- sharing of nude and semi-nude images;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- misinformation and disinformation;
- online scams, fraud and cybercrime;
- exposure to harmful or illegal content;
- the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies and generative AI;
- risks associated with social media, gaming and live streaming platforms.

To safeguard children online, Harefield School aims to:

- Maintain effective filtering and monitoring systems that are proportionate, age appropriate and reviewed regularly in line with the Department for Education's **Filtering and Monitoring Standards**.
- Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Senior Leadership Team, Governors and relevant technical staff understand the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements and their respective safeguarding responsibilities.
- Protect and educate the whole school community in the safe, responsible and respectful use of technology, including computers, tablets, mobile phones, wearable technology and other internet-enabled devices.
- Deliver a comprehensive online safety curriculum through Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), Computing, Personal Development and assemblies, enabling children to understand online risks, develop digital resilience and know how to seek help.
- Establish clear procedures for identifying, responding to, recording and escalating online safety concerns in accordance with this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to promote safe online behaviours and provide information about emerging online risks and available support.

## **Mobile Phones and Personal Devices**

The school has clear expectations regarding the use of mobile phones and personal devices by children, staff, visitors and volunteers.

**To further strengthen safeguarding, reduce distractions to learning and promote positive wellbeing, Harefield School has introduced secure mobile phone pouches for all pupils. Mobile phones are secured in the pouches during the school day and remain inaccessible unless authorised by a member of staff in exceptional circumstances. This helps minimise opportunities for cyberbullying, online abuse, unauthorised photography or filming, inappropriate social media use and other safeguarding risks associated with mobile phone use during the school day.**

The use of mobile phone pouches forms part of the school's wider safeguarding strategy and supports a calm, focused and safe learning environment.

Staff must continue to remain vigilant to online safeguarding concerns, recognising that children may still access harmful content or experience online abuse outside school hours or through other internet-enabled devices. Any online safeguarding concern will be responded to in accordance with this policy and, where appropriate, in partnership with parents, carers and external agencies.

## The 4 key categories of Online Risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the four categories of online risk identified by the Department for Education:

**Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, including pornography, child sexual abuse material, fake news, misinformation, disinformation, racism, misogyny, antisemitism, hate content, self-harm, suicide, eating disorders, radicalisation, extremism and other harmful online material.

**Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, including peer-on-peer abuse, cyberbullying, online harassment, commercial exploitation, grooming, coercive behaviour, sextortion, adults posing as children or young people, and individuals seeking to exploit children for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

**Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. This includes online bullying, sharing personal information, creating, sending or receiving nude or semi-nude images, sharing explicit material, inappropriate use of social media, harmful online behaviour, and the misuse of technology, including artificial intelligence (AI).

**Commerce** – risks associated with online gambling, financial exploitation, phishing, scams, fraudulent activity, inappropriate advertising, in-app purchases and other commercial risks that may place children at financial or safeguarding risk.

To meet our safeguarding responsibilities and address these risks, Harefield School will:

- Deliver a progressive online safety curriculum through Computing, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), Personal Development and assemblies, enabling children to develop the knowledge and skills needed to stay safe online.
- Teach children about:
  - safe and responsible use of the internet, social media and technology;
  - protecting personal information and digital identity;
  - recognising healthy and unhealthy online relationships;
  - cyberbullying and online harassment;
  - misinformation, disinformation and fake news;
  - artificial intelligence (AI) and the safe and responsible use of AI technologies;
  - online scams, fraud and cybercrime;
  - recognising grooming, coercion, exploitation and harmful online behaviour;
  - how and where to report online concerns, whether they affect themselves or another child.
- Ensure all staff receive safeguarding training that includes online safety, filtering and monitoring, cyberbullying, online exploitation, online radicalisation, the safe use of technology and emerging online risks. Staff will receive safeguarding updates regularly and at least annually.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers by providing information, guidance and resources through the school website, newsletters, parent information evenings and other communications to help them support their children to stay safe online.
- Ensure all staff understand the expectations relating to the use of personal devices and cameras. Staff may bring personal mobile phones onto school premises but must only use them during non-contact time and must never use personal devices to photograph, record or communicate with children.
- Ensure that all children, parents, carers, staff, volunteers and governors understand the school's acceptable use expectations for technology, internet access and mobile devices.
- Make children, parents and staff aware of the school's behaviour expectations and sanctions relating to the misuse of technology, online behaviour and mobile phones.
- Ensure staff understand their powers under the Department for Education's guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation, including when it may be appropriate to search or examine a mobile phone where there are safeguarding concerns.

- Maintain effective filtering and monitoring systems that are proportionate to the school's safeguarding needs, are reviewed regularly and meet the Department for Education's Filtering and Monitoring Standards.
- Ensure the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Senior Leadership Team, Governors and technical staff understand the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements and their respective safeguarding responsibilities.
- Carry out regular reviews of online safety arrangements, informed by risk assessment, safeguarding trends, filtering and monitoring reports, emerging technologies and the needs of the school community.
- Provide regular safeguarding updates, including online safety and emerging online risks, to all staff throughout the academic year.
- Review this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, together with the Online Safety Policy and related procedures, at least annually or sooner where changes in legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding arrangements require.
- Support the school's mobile phone pouch system, which forms part of our wider safeguarding strategy. By securing mobile phones during the school day, the school reduces opportunities for cyberbullying, online abuse, unauthorised photography or filming, inappropriate social media use and other safeguarding risks associated with personal mobile devices, while promoting positive wellbeing and focused learning.

This section provides an overview of the school's approach to online safety and mobile technology. Further information can be found in the school's Online Safety Policy, Acceptable Use Agreements, Behaviour Policy, all of which are available on the school website.

## **9. Notifying parents**

Where appropriate, the school will discuss safeguarding concerns with a child's parents or carers. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will normally lead these discussions following a safeguarding concern, disclosure or referral.

Other staff will only speak to parents or carers about safeguarding concerns after consulting the DSL.

The school recognises the important role parents and carers play in safeguarding children and will work in partnership with them wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Before informing parents or carers, the DSL will consider the child's wishes and feelings, their age and understanding, and whether informing parents could place the child or another person at increased risk of harm or compromise a police or Children's Social Care investigation. Where necessary, advice will be sought from Children's Social Care before parents are informed.

## **Child-on-child abuse**

Where allegations of child-on-child abuse are made, the school will normally inform the parents or carers of all children involved as soon as appropriate. Information will be shared lawfully, proportionately and in line with advice from the Police and/or Children's Social Care.

The DSL will work with relevant agencies to ensure that both the child who has experienced the abuse and the child alleged to have caused the harm receive appropriate safeguarding support. Parents and carers will be informed of the support and safeguarding measures being put in place, where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

## **10. Children with special educational needs, disabilities or medical conditions**

We recognise that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or certain medical conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be at greater risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation than their peers.

Additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect may include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, such as behaviour, mood, injury or changes in presentation, relate to the child's disability or medical condition without further exploration.
- Children being more vulnerable to bullying, including prejudice-based bullying, child-on-child abuse and social isolation.
- Children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately affected by abuse or neglect without outwardly showing signs.
- Communication barriers that make it more difficult for children to recognise, disclose or report abuse.

The school will ensure that safeguarding arrangements are responsive to the individual needs of children with SEND and medical conditions. Staff will adopt a child-centred approach and work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), parents, carers and relevant professionals to ensure that children receive appropriate protection and support.

Any safeguarding concerns involving a child with SEND or a medical condition will be managed through close liaison between the DSL (or Deputy DSL) and the SENCO.

## **11. Children with a social worker**

Children may have a social worker due to safeguarding, child protection or welfare needs. We recognise that experiences of adversity and trauma can leave children vulnerable to further harm and may create barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour, mental health and wellbeing.

The school also recognises that children who have previously had a social worker may continue to benefit from additional support and consideration.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and all staff will work collaboratively with social workers, the Virtual School Head (where appropriate) and other relevant professionals to help safeguard children and promote their educational outcomes.

Where the school is aware that a child has, or has previously had, a social worker, the DSL will ensure this is considered when making decisions that may affect the child's safety, welfare and education. This may include decisions relating to:

- responding to unauthorised absence or children who are missing from education where there are known safeguarding concerns;
- pastoral, emotional and mental health support;
- academic support and educational progress;
- participation in wider school life and access to appropriate services and interventions.

The school will continue to work in partnership with Children's Social Care and other agencies to ensure that children receive timely and appropriate support.

## **12. Looked-after and previously looked-after children**

The school will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to safeguard and promote the welfare of looked-after and previously looked-after children, recognising that these children may be particularly vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation and poor educational outcomes.

In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have access to relevant information about a child's legal status, care arrangements, contact arrangements with parents or others who have parental responsibility, and any safeguarding considerations.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has the contact details for the child's social worker, Virtual School Head and other relevant professionals.

- A Designated Teacher is appointed to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children in accordance with statutory guidance.
- The Designated Teacher receives appropriate training and has the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to fulfil the role effectively.

The Designated Teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that safeguarding concerns relating to looked-after and previously looked-after children are identified and responded to promptly.
- Work in partnership with the Virtual School Head, social workers, parents, carers and other relevant professionals to promote children's educational achievement, attendance, wellbeing and wider outcomes.
- Support the development, implementation and review of Personal Education Plans (PEPs), including ensuring that Pupil Premium Plus funding is used effectively to meet identified needs.

The school will work collaboratively with all relevant agencies to ensure that looked-after and previously looked-after children receive the support and protection they need to achieve the best possible outcomes.

### **13. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies**

#### **13.1 Complaints, Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations about Adults Working in the School**

Safeguarding concerns, complaints or allegations relating to members of staff (including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors) that may indicate a risk of harm to children will be managed in accordance with the school's procedures for managing allegations and safeguarding concerns against adults working with children (see Appendix 3).

Where concerns do not meet the harm threshold, they will be managed through the school's Low-Level Concerns Procedure, in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2026).

#### **13.2 Other complaints**

The school has a formal Complaints Procedure, which is available on the school website.

Any complaint relating to safeguarding will be considered promptly and managed in accordance with this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the school's Complaints Procedure and **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)**. Where a complaint raises a safeguarding concern, child protection procedures will take precedence, and appropriate action will be taken to safeguard the welfare of children.

#### **13.3 Whistle-blowing**

The school has a Whistleblowing Policy, available on the school website, which enables staff to raise concerns about poor, unsafe or unlawful practice, including concerns relating to safeguarding and child protection.

All staff are expected to read and understand the Whistleblowing Policy as part of their induction and ongoing safeguarding training.

Staff should feel able to raise safeguarding concerns about the conduct or practice of colleagues, leaders or any aspect of the school's safeguarding arrangements without fear of detriment. Where staff feel unable to raise concerns internally, or believe that appropriate action has not been taken, they should follow the escalation procedures set out in the Whistleblowing Policy, including contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Children's Social Care, the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line or other appropriate external agencies where necessary.

The school is committed to fostering an open and transparent culture in which safeguarding concerns are identified, reported and acted upon promptly.

#### 14. Record-keeping

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions, actions taken and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded promptly, accurately and in writing. If staff are unsure whether a concern should be recorded, they should consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Safeguarding records will include:

- a clear, factual and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- the child's wishes and feelings, where appropriate;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- decisions made, actions taken, by whom and the outcomes achieved;
- the rationale for any decisions made.

Records will be objective, distinguish clearly between fact, observation and professional opinion, and, where appropriate, distinguish between **current safeguarding concerns and historic information** to ensure that previous concerns are understood within their proper context.

A separate confidential child protection file will be maintained for any child about whom there are safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely and will only be accessible to those who have a legitimate professional need to access them. The school uses **CPOMS** as its secure electronic safeguarding recording system.

Safeguarding records will be retained in accordance with statutory guidance and the school's records management procedures.

Where a child transfers to another school or college, the DSL will ensure that the child protection file is transferred securely and separately from the main pupil file as soon as possible, and **within five working days for an in-year transfer or within the first five working days of the start of a new term**.

In accordance with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)**, the transferred file will include a **clear safeguarding summary** outlining current safeguarding concerns, relevant background information, actions taken, agencies involved and any ongoing support required to ensure continuity of safeguarding.

Where safeguarding concerns are significant or complex, the DSL will speak directly with the receiving school's DSL before, or as soon as possible after, the child transfers to ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place from the child's first day.

The school will share safeguarding information with relevant agencies where it is lawful, necessary and proportionate to do so in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

In addition:

**Appendix 2** sets out the school's record-keeping arrangements for safer recruitment and pre-employment checks.

**Appendix 3** sets out the school's record-keeping arrangements relating to safeguarding concerns, allegations and low-level concerns about adults working with children.

## **15. Training**

### **15.1 All staff**

All staff, including temporary staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, contractors and volunteers (where appropriate), will receive safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction. This will include child protection, the Staff Code of Conduct, whistleblowing, online safety, the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and the school's safeguarding systems and procedures.

Safeguarding training will be regularly updated and will:

- Form part of the school's whole-school approach to safeguarding.
- Include online safety, filtering and monitoring responsibilities, and emerging online risks.
- Promote a child-centred approach and the principle of "it could happen here."
- Include recognising children who may benefit from community-based Early Help or targeted Early Help (Family Help) and how to report safeguarding concerns.
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards, ensuring teachers understand their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

All staff will receive Prevent Duty training and regular safeguarding updates, including online safety and changes to statutory guidance, throughout the academic year and at least annually.

Contractors and volunteers will receive safeguarding information and training appropriate to their role.

### **15.2 The DSL and deputy DSLs**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs will undertake safeguarding and child protection training every two years to ensure they have the knowledge and skills required to carry out their roles.

They will update their knowledge and skills regularly, and at least annually, through safeguarding updates, training, networking, reading statutory guidance and local safeguarding developments.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will also complete Prevent Duty training and maintain an up-to-date understanding of local safeguarding arrangements, community-based Early Help and targeted Early Help (Family Help), multi-agency working, online safety, filtering and monitoring, and emerging safeguarding risks, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

### **15.3 Governors**

All governors will receive safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction, with regular updates thereafter, to ensure they understand their statutory responsibilities and can provide effective strategic challenge and oversight of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

This training will enable governors to:

- Understand their safeguarding responsibilities and the school's whole-school approach to safeguarding.
- Be assured that safeguarding policies, procedures and training are effective and compliant with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).
- Understand the school's online safety, filtering and monitoring arrangements.

The Chair of Governors will receive appropriate training to fulfil their role as the Case Manager where an allegation or safeguarding concern is made against the Headteacher, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

#### **15.4 Recruitment – interview panels**

The school will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and selection of staff have the appropriate training, knowledge and skills to carry out safer recruitment practices in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and local safeguarding procedures.

Recruitment panels will ensure that safeguarding is embedded throughout the recruitment process and that appropriate safeguarding and suitability checks are undertaken for all appointments.

Further information about the school's safer recruitment procedures can be found in Appendix 2 of this policy.

#### **15.5 Staff who have contact with children and families**

The school recognises the importance of providing appropriate support and safeguarding supervision for staff whose roles involve regular contact with children and families.

Where appropriate to their role, staff will have access to supervision, support, coaching and professional development. This will provide opportunities to discuss safeguarding matters, reflect on practice, promote the welfare of children and consider any emotional impact of safeguarding work in a confidential and supportive environment.

Supervision arrangements will complement the school's wider safeguarding training and support staff in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities effectively, in line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)**.

#### **16. Site security**

The school is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all children, staff and visitors.

All visitors, including contractors, supply staff and other professionals, are required to report to reception on arrival, provide identification where appropriate, sign in, wear a visitor badge and comply with the school's safeguarding, child protection, health and safety and security procedures.

The Headteacher (or delegated member of staff) will exercise professional judgement in determining whether visitors should be escorted or supervised while on site, taking account of the purpose of their visit and whether appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed.

Where visitors, contractors or external providers undertake regulated activity or have unsupervised access to children, the school will ensure that appropriate safeguarding and suitability checks have been completed in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

#### **17. Extended school and off-site arrangements**

All extended school activities, educational visits and off-site provision are subject to appropriate risk assessments to ensure that health and safety and safeguarding requirements are met.

Where activities are organised and managed by the school, this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the school's safeguarding procedures will apply.

Where services or activities are provided by external organisations or individuals on behalf of the school, or on school premises, the school will seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place. This includes appropriate safer recruitment procedures, staff suitability checks, safeguarding policies and clear arrangements for reporting safeguarding concerns.

Before children attend off-site activities, including alternative provision, educational visits and residential visits, the school will ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and that providers have appropriate procedures to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, in accordance with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)**.

### **18. Monitoring arrangements**

This Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed **at least annually** by the school, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements or school procedures.

The Governing Board will review and approve the policy annually and monitor its implementation to ensure it remains effective and compliant with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)**.

### **19. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour for Learning
- Anti-bullying
- SEND
- Relationships & Sex Education
- Online Safety Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing
- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff
- Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- GDPR (Data Protection) Policy
- Complaints Policy

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

## **Appendix 1: types of abuse**

**Abuse**, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by 1 definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap and may occur simultaneously. Abuse can be perpetrated by adults or by other children. It may also include children causing harm to adults, often referred to as child-to-parent abuse or caregiver abuse.

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

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone. Persistent verbal abuse, including criticism, belittling, humiliation, intimidation or name-calling, which adversely affects a child's emotional development and self-esteem.

Emotional abuse may involve:

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

**Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
  - Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)
- Abuse can take place online, offline or through a combination of both. Technology may be used to facilitate abuse, exploitation, coercion and grooming.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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

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

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **Appendix 2: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures**

### **Safer recruitment policy**

#### **Recruitment and selection process**

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

To make sure we recruit suitable people, the school will ensure that those involved in recruitment have the appropriate training, knowledge and skills to carry out safer recruitment practices in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

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

#### **Advertising**

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

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

#### **Application forms**

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

#### **Shortlisting**

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

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns

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

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
  - If they have a criminal history
  - Whether they are included on the barred list
  - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
  - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
  - Any relevant overseas information

Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

Online searches will only consider publicly available information relevant to assessing a candidate's suitability to work with children. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

## **Seeking references and checking employment history**

We will obtain references before the interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the Headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

## **Interview and selection**

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

## **Pre-appointment vetting checks**

### **Single Central Record**

#### **New staff**

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

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their fitness to carry out the responsibilities of the role in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
  - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
  - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach

- Check that candidates taking up a management position\* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

\* Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, Headteachers, Principals and Deputy/Assistant Headteachers.

**Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

### **Existing staff**

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

### **Agency and third-party staff**

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made. The school will also confirm the identity of agency workers on arrival and that they have been appropriately vetted before they begin work.

### **Contractors**

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

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

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

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

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

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

## **Trainee teachers**

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

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

## **Volunteers**

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment

## **Governors**

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008). [Section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have retained or been delegated any management responsibilities.]
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

## **Staff working in alternative provision settings**

The school will also seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place within the alternative provision setting and will continue to monitor the child's welfare while the placement remains in place.

## **Adults who supervise children on work experience**

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

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

## **Children staying with host families**

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

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

## **Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff**

### **Allegations against staff (including low-level concerns) policy**

#### **Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold**

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

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

If the school is in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, they will consult the local authority designated officer (LADO).

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

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Headteacher, or the chair of governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

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

If we receive an allegation of an incident happening while an individual or organisation was using the school premises to run activities for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures and inform our LADO.

#### **Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved**

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

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

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

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

#### **Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations**

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

## Procedure for dealing with allegations

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

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate. All schools will be able to signpost the individual to places they can turn to for advice – trade union representatives, or a colleague also can support with welfare counselling or medical advice
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)

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

### **Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff**

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

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

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

### **Timescales**

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

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

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

### **Specific actions**

#### **Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution**

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

#### **Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated**

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

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

#### **Individuals returning to work after suspension**

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

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

## **Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports**

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

## **Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations**

If an allegation is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

## **Confidentiality and information sharing**

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

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

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

## **Record-keeping**

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

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

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

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

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

We will retain all records at least until the accused individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

## **References**

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious

- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

### **Learning lessons**

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

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

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

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

### **Non-recent allegations**

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

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

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

### **Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold**

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

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

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

### **Definition of low-level concerns**

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

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

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

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating children

## **Sharing low-level concerns**

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

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section 7.7 of this policy
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

Please also refer to the school's Code of Conduct Policy

## **Responding to low-level concerns**

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

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

The Headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's code of conduct. The Headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

## **Record keeping**

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

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

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

## **References**

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

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

## **Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues**

### **Children who are absent from education**

Children who are absent from education, particularly repeatedly or for prolonged periods, may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, mental health concerns, radicalisation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and other safeguarding concerns.

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

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

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

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

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

### **Child criminal exploitation (CCE)**

CCE may be committed or facilitated by individuals acting alone or by organised criminal groups or networks. Children may not recognise that they are being exploited and may believe they are part of, or accepted by, the group exploiting them. Victims should never be viewed as making a voluntary choice to participate in criminal activity. Where appropriate, consideration should be given to making a Modern Slavery referral where a child may be a victim of criminal exploitation.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

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

### **Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. CSE may also be committed or facilitated by organised groups or networks. Victims may not recognise that they are being exploited and should never be blamed for their abuse.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

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

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

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

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

### **Child-on-child abuse**

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the two. Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the child who has experienced the abuse and the child alleged to have caused the harm. Both children are likely to require safeguarding support.

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening.

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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party

- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and will offer them appropriate support. Timely, evidence-based intervention can play an important role in preventing abusive behaviour from escalating.

### **Domestic abuse**

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse may include child-to-parent or caregiver abuse, where a child causes physical, emotional, psychological, financial or controlling harm towards a parent or caregiver.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others – for example, the impact of all forms of domestic abuse on children.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Older children may also experience and/or be the perpetrators of domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. This can include sexual harassment.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

### **Homelessness**

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

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

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

### **So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

## **FGM**

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 6.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a child is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A child confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/child already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
  - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
  - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
  - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
  - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
  - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
  - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period

Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour

Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations

Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem

- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a child may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

- Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- Having limited level of integration within UK society
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

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

## Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 1 or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

It is also illegal to cause a child under the age of 18 to marry, even if violence, threats or coercion are not involved.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the '1 chance' rule, i.e. we may only have 1 chance to speak to the potential victim and only 1 chance to save them.

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

The DSL will:

- Speak to the child about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or [fmv@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmv@fco.gov.uk)
- Refer the child to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

## Preventing radicalisation

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups
- **Extremism** is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces
- **Terrorism** is an action that:
  - Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
  - Causes serious damage to property; or
  - Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system

The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk. Staff should maintain professional curiosity and recognise that radicalisation may present differently in each child.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our children to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a child is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends

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

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

If staff are concerned about a child, they will follow our procedures set out in section 6.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

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

Further information on the school's measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in other school policies and procedures, including online/e-safety policy.

### **Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between two children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school. Children may not recognise that they have experienced abuse or identify themselves as victims.

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

- Reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them
- Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt
- Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns
- Consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again
- Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours

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

### **Serious violence**

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

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

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

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

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a child being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL. Risk assessments should consider both contextual safeguarding risks and wider environmental factors.

### **Checking the identity and suitability of visitors**

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

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

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

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

- Will be asked to provide evidence that appropriate safeguarding and suitability checks have been completed where required, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate)

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

### **Non-collection of children**

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will ensure parents/carers are contacted immediately. Schools will record this information as part of the Safeguarding recording keeping on CPOMS.

### **Missing children**

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will follow all safeguarding procedures including contacting parents/carers, advising the police, contacting the LA.