

SAFEGUARDING and CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Ramsden Hall Academy

LAST REVIEW	September 2021	REVIEW PERIOD	Annual
NEXT REVIEW DATE	September 2022	OWNER	Ramsden Hall Academy
TYPE OF POLICY	Statutory	APPROVAL LEVEL	Board level

Named staff with designated responsibility for Safeguarding / Child Protection and contact details:

Academic Year	Designated Senior Person	Deputy designated senior person	Nominated CP Governor	Chair of Governors	Local Authority Designated Officer
2021/2022	Claire Parker	Tara Cordrey	Jo Oldham	Melanie Hall	Essex LADO

CONTENTS

Introduction, Aims and Ethos	3-4
Roles and responsibilities - School, DSL, Governors, Parents & Carers	4-7
The Child Protection Policy	6
What does significant harm mean?	6
Child Sexual Exploitation	8
Female Genital Mutilation	10
Force Marriage	10 - 11
Radicalisation	11
Children Missing Education	11 - 12
Child on Child Abuse	12
A disclosure has been made, what should I do?	13
Recording concerns	13
Storage of records and information	14
Referring to social care	14
Requests from social care to the school	15
Supervision and support	15
Safeguarding all children	15
E-Safety	16
Photographs and use of images	16
Use of mobile phones	16-17
Safer recruitment	17
Whistleblowing	17
Dealing with allegations against staff	18-26
Monitoring and Reviewing the policy	26
Glossary	
Appendix 1 – ‘KCSIE’ pro forma for staff to sign	28
Appendix 2 – Allegations against staff LADO reporting form	29 - 33
Appendix 3 – CME referral form to Essex	33
Appendix 4 – Prevent flowchart for referrals made by DSL	34-37
Appendix 5 – Flowchart for when to make a social care referral	38
Appendix 6 - Additional safeguarding arrangements during COVID-19	39
Appendix 7 – Harmful sexual behaviour / Child on Child abuse	39-47
Appendix 8 - Allegations of abuse made against staff	49-56

INTRODUCTION

The Governing body and staff of Ramsden Hall Academy take seriously their responsibility under Sections 175 and 157 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements are in place within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm.

Staff at Ramsden Hall are committed to a child centered and coordinated approach to safeguarding. At Ramsden Hall we maintain an attitude of “It could happen here.” When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child. Everyone has a role to play in safeguarding children.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. It has been updated to include statutory guidance as outlined in the DfE publication – ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (KCSIE) September 2021. It is a requirement that all staff are issued with and read Part 1 and 5 of KCSIE.

The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice in Essex are the responsibilities of the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). In Essex, all professionals must work in accordance with the SET Procedures (ESCB, 2019).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) reports annually to the Academy Council Hub and termly updates are also provided. The Academy Council Hub undertakes an annual review of the School’s Child Protection policies and procedures that are within the hub, and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, so that any deficiencies or weaknesses can be remedied without delay.

In compliance with the above-mentioned regulations and guidance, the Trust and its Academies operate safe recruitment procedures encompassing criminal records checks and all other checks as required by the Disclosure and Barring Service (see also Recruitment Policy). No facilities contractor comes on site without the knowledge of the Director of Human Resources and Facilities Manager. Unless the School has received a written statement demonstrating safe recruitment practices from the contractor in question, they are accompanied by a member of the facilities team at all times when there are pupils on site. Major works are undertaken out of school hours or out of term time wherever possible.

However, it is not simply a matter of implementing policies; the spirit in which we conduct school life is of central importance.

Contact details and information relating to outside agencies

Academy:	Ramsden Hall Academy
DSL	Claire Parker cparker@ramsdenhall.org.uk
Deputy DSL	Tara Cordrey tcordrey@ramsdenhall.org.uk
Essex LA Designated Officer / Safeguarding advisor	03330 139 797
Date of last full staff CP training	1st September 2021 – updates across the school year.
Date of last Safer recruitment training	13 July 2021
Date of last DSL and Deputy DSL training (Group 5)	June 2021
Policy adopted	October 2018
Policy to be reviewed / updated	September 2022

AIMS AND ETHOS

As part of the ethos of the school we are **all** committed to:

- Maintaining children’s welfare as a paramount concern in line with ‘Every Child Matters’ ‘Working together to safeguard children 2018’ and ‘KCSIE’ in line with statutory guidance provided in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021).
- Providing an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected; confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties
- Using the curriculum to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that students have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the school’s responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations
- Ensuring all staff receive up to date training and support and are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the school’s procedures and lines of communication. This training is provided fully on a yearly basis to all staff, and regularly updated throughout the year by the HT.
- Monitoring children who have been identified as at risk including the need for protection; keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School

The school is responsible for ensuring that all action taken is in line with PLT's Safeguarding Children procedure. The child protection process is now incorporated within this policy.

The role of the school within this procedure is to contribute to the identification, referral and assessment of children in need, including children who may have suffered, be suffering, or who are at risk of suffering significant harm. The school may also have a role in the provision of services to Children in Need and their families.

All governors and staff, including peripatetic, domestic and premises staff in school have a role to play in relation to:

- Protecting children from abuse
- Promoting the welfare of children
- Preventing children from being harmed

The role of the school in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer.

Our school also works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance (*this is not an exhaustive list*):

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE, 2021\)](#)

[Working Together \(DfE, 2018\)](#)

Education Act (2002)

[Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex \(ESCB\)](#)

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#)

[Serious Crime Act 2015](#) (Home Office, 2015)

Children and Social Work Act (2017)

[Children Missing Education - statutory guidance for local authorities \(DfE, 2016\)](#)

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006

[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners \(HMG, 2018\)](#)

[Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#)

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (HMG, 2015)

[Searching, screening and confiscation](#) (DfE, 2018)

Children Act (1989)

Children Act (2004)

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(DfE, 2017\)](#)

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)

[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(DfE, 2021\)](#)

[Promoting positive emotional well-being and reducing the risk of suicide \(ESCB, 2018\)](#)

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement \(Home Office, 2015\)](#)

[Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adult - county lines guidance \(Home Office, 2018\)](#)

[Teaching on-line safety in schools \(DfE, 2019\)](#)

[Education Access Team CME / Home Education policy and practice \(ECC, 2018\)](#)

[Understanding and Supporting Behaviour - good practice for schools \(ECC, 2021\)](#)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The school will nominate a DSL. This is usually the HT on each Trust site. The school will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Governor, receive updated training yearly also. All staff and volunteers must be provided with induction training that includes child protection. Temporary staff and voluntary staff who work with children are to be made aware of the school's arrangements.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Coordinating child protection action within school
- Liaising with other agencies
- Ensuring that locally established procedures are followed including reporting and referral processes
- Acting as a consultant for staff to discuss concerns
- Making referrals as necessary
- Maintaining a confidential recording system in liaison with the Deputy DSL
- Representing or ensuring the school is appropriately represented at inter-agency meetings in particular Child Protection Conferences
- Managing and monitoring the school's part in child care
- Organising training for all school staff
- Liaising with other professionals
- Transferring records when a child changes school
- Informing the designated governor of any allegations of child abuse

Governors

The Executive HT of each Academy Council Hub will inform their designated governor of the procedures the Trust has with regards to safeguarding and child protection. They will be informed of any external reports that audit our procedures and policies. Governors will not have access to individual cases that have been referred or to any names of any young people that have been referred. Their role is one of overseeing the law is being complied with and that they are satisfied that the school is discharging its duties robustly.

The designated governor provides the CEO with an annual review of the school's child protection policies, including an update and review of procedures and their implementation, and more regularly if required. The details relating to the designated governor's review and report are recorded in the minutes of the meetings at the respective Academy Council Hub. The Board of Trustees also have a copy of this policy and are welcome to visit any Trust site at

any time to see safeguarding in action.

In discussion with the Head Teachers, the designated governor ensures that all staff have received appropriate training on a yearly cycle.

Parents and Carers

We will always undertake to share our concerns with and support parents/carers but the school is required to take into account the safety of the pupil. Professional advice would be sought prior to contacting parents should the need arise.

If you have a concern about the safety and welfare of a child, and think that child may be at risk of significant harm, then please read this policy carefully.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Claire Parker (Engagement Manager): any concern of any kind no matter how trivial relating to Child Protection must be relayed to the DSL without delay. If the DSL is absent, please inform the Deputy DSL who is Tara Cordrey (Head of Care).

No employee of a PLT school setting may offer any guarantee of confidentiality to any parent or child in any matter relating to child protection. All employees have a legal and statutory responsibility to report any disclosure concerning child protection. (See 'What to do if you believe a child is being abused'. **Staff must be mindful of the fact that they CAN take a concern directly to 'Social Care.'**)

The DSL is responsible for ensuring staff including him/ herself receive yearly training in the area of safeguarding and child protection. An update is delivered to all staff by the DSL at the beginning of every new academic year.

All staff including temporary and volunteers, are provided with induction training that includes: -

- The School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- The identity of the DSL
- A copy of Part 1 and 5 of KCSIE
- The Behaviour Policy
- The school's response to Children Missing Education

What significant harm mean?

All staff in school should be aware of and have been trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. There are four categories of abuse. These are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

Some indications of possible abuse:

- unusual, even bizarre behaviour
- unexplained injuries
- emotional withdrawal – showing lack of trust in adults
- eating problems
- not growing or putting on weight
- timid and withdrawn
- over-demanding, mood swings, aggressiveness
- poor academic work, under-achievement
- tiredness
- poor attendance
- unwillingness to get changed in view of others
- unusually large sums of money or expensive belongings.

Behaviour that is out of character for a given pupil is not in itself an indication of abuse. Any staff concerned about a pupil's behaviour or demeanour should however report it to in the first instance to the Class Teacher who is in a better position to see the fuller picture and may already have other evidence leading to concern.

What other areas of child protection must I be aware of as someone who works in a school setting?

Child Sexual Exploitation

Please visit <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-exploitation/signs-symptoms-and-effects/>

Any concerns relating to this are reported in the usual way to the DSL in the school.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim that increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement,

including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyber bullying and grooming.

However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Signs that a child may be being exploited

- Going missing from home, care or education
- Be involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- Hang out with groups of older people or antisocial groups or with other vulnerable peers
- Associate with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- Involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- Have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Spend time at places of concern such as hotels or known brothels
- Not know where they are because they have been moved around the country
- Be involved in petty crime such as shop lifting
- Have unexplained physical injuries
- Have changed their physical appearance

Children who are sexually abused exhibit some or all of the following

- Avoid being alone with people such as family members or friends
- Seem frightened of someone or reluctant to socialize with them
- Sexually active at a young age
- Be promiscuous
- Use sexual language or know information that you wouldn't expect them to know
- Have soreness in the genital area
- Have STDs
- Be pregnant

Children who are being groomed may:

- Be very secretive, including what they are doing online
- Have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Go to unusual places to meet friends
- Have new things such as clothes or mobile phones that they can't or won't explain
- Have access to drugs and alcohol

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Please read 'Female Genital Mutilation Risk and Safeguarding May 2016' from DfE (can be 'googled' or is on the shared drive)

Any concerns relating to this are reported in the usual way to the DSL in the school.

Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

Teaching staff are legally obliged to report this if they suspect that a girl has been the victim of such abuse.

Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place:

- The family belongs to a community in which FGM is practiced
- The family is about to take the child on holiday (arranging vaccinations or planning absence from school)
- The child may also talk about a special procedure or ceremony

Signs that FGM may have taken place:

- Prolonged absence from school
- Noticeable change in behaviour on return
- Possibly some bladder or menstrual problems
- May find it difficult to sit still and look uncomfortable
- May complain about pain between their legs
- Talk of somebody did something to them and they are not allowed to talk about it

What staff can do:

- Talk to the child about your concerns – use simple language and straightforward questions
- Be sensitive and let them know they can talk to you again
- Follow the child protection procedures within your site – a referral to social care and to the police **must** be made if the child has disclosed something to you (Mandatory reporting duty)
- Call the NSPCC FGM helpline on 0800 028 3550

Forced Marriage

Please read 'The Right to Choose: Multi Agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage' June 2014

Any concerns relating to this are reported in the usual way to the DSL in the school.

The reasons given by parents who force their children to marry include, protecting their children, building stronger family links; protecting family honour, retaining / acquiring wealth and appeasement etc.

How to spot if forced marriage is about to happen

- A family history of older siblings leaving education and marrying early
- Depressive behaviour including self-harming and attempting suicide
- Unreasonable restrictions such as being kept at home by their parents or being unable to complete their education

- A child being in conflict with their parents
- A child going missing / running away
- A child always being accompanied to school and doctor appointments
- Talking about an upcoming family holiday they are worried about
- Direct disclosure of being forced to marry

Disclosures of this nature will be treated as any other disclosure and taken to the DSL immediately. The DSL can then seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit where experienced caseworkers will be able to offer support and guidance 0207 008 0151 or www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage

Honour based violence – is a violent crime or incident which may have been committed to protect the honour of the family. All cases are to be taken to the DSL immediately.

Radicalisation and Extremism

Please read ‘The Prevent Duty: Departmental Advice for schools and childcare providers’ July 2015

Any concerns related to this are reported in the usual way – the DSL please also refer to the flowchart in Appendix 5

We encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. We ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school and where political issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, reasonably practicable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to pupils.

We value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society’s values. Both pupils and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

We seek to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements. (Please see PREVENT policy)

If you have a concern about a child or young person, discuss this with the DSL, and where necessary, with Essex children’s services. Referrals should be made via Essex Children’s Services First Response Team using the Multi-Agency Referral Form. Essex Prevent Programme staff are happy to informally discuss concerns with schools first if required.

Children Missing Education

Please read ‘Children Missing Education Statutory guidance for local authorities’ Sept 2016.

Please see the referral form in Appendix 4

Children missing from school is a child protection concern, and all possible efforts must be made to try and locate the child in conjunction with any necessary outside agencies,

before their name is removed from the admissions register. If a pupil does not return to any PLT academy we will notify the relevant local authority when we are about to remove that pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the guidance under regulation 8. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include: (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register.

All schools must also notify the local authority **within five days** of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

When adding a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil.

Any academy within the PLT will inform their respective LA using the form in Appendix 4

Concerns involving pupils (child on child abuse) including physical and/or sexual violence and sexual harassment (including sexting)/ cyber bullying or other forms of bullying (including initiation/hazing type violence and rituals) between children in schools and colleges.

Where there is a concern that one or more pupils have been abusing another pupil when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, the procedures that are initiated in this policy come into force with any such abuse being referred to local agencies. Staff must be mindful of the need to support the pupil perpetrating the abuse as well as the victim and this should be viewed as an indicator that the perpetrator has or is experiencing serious harm themselves.

We recognise that any form of peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and we do not tolerate 'banter' or any excuse for students to harm their peers in any way.

We use lessons and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Our school understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor that are they creating a problem by doing so.

I have a concern that a pupil in my care may be at risk of significant harm, or has made a disclosure. What should I do?

Any member of staff who has a concern for a child or young person however insignificant this might appear to be, should discuss this with the DSL as soon as is practically possible that same day. Any sharing of concerns will be noted down on 'Sleuth' (purple button), cause for concern. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible.

This also applies where it is suspected that one or more pupils are abusing another pupil 'where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.'

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff they should:

- Allow the child or young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way
- Avoid interrupting except to clarify what the child is saying (attentive listening/reflective feedback)
- Do not ask leading questions or probe for information that the child or young person does not volunteer
- Reassure the child or young person that they have been heard and explain what will be done next and to whom they will talk. Explain that confidentiality cannot be promised to a pupil making a disclosure
- Record the conversation as soon as possible
- Inform the DSL

Record keeping

Any incident, disclosure or unexplained change of behaviour in a child that gives cause for concern will be recorded on Sleuth, every member of staff is issued with their log on details. It is important that records are factual and reflect the words used by the child or young person. Opinion should not be given unless there is some form of evidence base which can also be quoted. Records must be dated with timings if appropriate. It is important to remember that any issues are confidential and staff should know only on a 'need to know' basis. Every member of staff who have completed a **Cause for Concern' Sleuth** report shall receive feedback within 24 hours.

Information to be recorded

- Child's name and date of birth
- Child in normal context, e.g. behaviour, attitude, (has there been an extreme change)
- The incident(s) which gives rise for concern with date(s) and times(s)
- A verbatim record of what the child or young person has said.
- If recording bruising/injuries indicate position, colour, size, shape and time on body map.
- Action taken

The details above are vital to the information gathering process and do not constitute an investigation.

Storage of records

Sleuth is an online behaviour tool used to record, store and track confidential safeguarding concerns. *Sleuth* provides a secure means for all staff to record and refer concerns related to safeguarding. Authorised staff, usually the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s), can then use *Sleuth* to manage concern referrals confidentially, tracking each step taken to follow-up the concern and record any outcomes.

As *Sleuth* is also being used to track a pupil's behaviour, personal development and support, this information can all be used to investigate and assess concerns raised and to monitor the impact of additional support and interventions put in place.

The Safeguarding Concerns module allows the following:

- DSLs to efficiently manage their caseload, tracking the status, progress and outcomes of concerns raised.
- Use a range of 1-click reports to monitor and evaluate activity and outcomes for case conferences and strategy meetings;
- Provide detailed profiling of an individual's behaviour and history of interventions is available to inform an investigation and to plan appropriate support
- Ensure a secure, central record of information about concerns raised; detailed comments that have been recorded and any files related to the concern and its investigation be attached (e.g. letters, photos, meeting notes, phone transcripts)

In addition, Multi-factor authentication offers an additional layer of security for accessing concern records and a complete and tamper proof audit trail is maintained by *Sleuth* for any changes and updates to safeguarding concerns.

I have received some concerning information regarding a pupil in my care that makes me believe this child may be at risk of significant harm. What should I do?

DSLs please use the flow chart in Appendix 6 as guidance – if in doubt refer to social care, you can always ask for advice.

It is the responsibility of the DSL to decide when to make a referral to children's social care.

To help with this decision they may choose to consult, children's social care duty social workers who offer opportunities for consultation as part of the child in need / child protection process. Issues discussed during consultations may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a child or young person and the extent to which parents/carers are made aware of these. Some concerns may need to be monitored over a period of time before a decision to refer to children's social care is made. In all but the most exceptional cases parents/carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child at the earliest possible stage and in the event of this becoming necessary, their consent to a referral to children's social care will be sought.

Referrals to children's social care will be made using Essex's inter-agency referral form.

Referral forms are available on-line at:

<https://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/s4s/FormDetails/FillForm?formId=1>

In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the duty social services office (Tel: **0345 603 7627**).

If a child is referred, the DSL will ensure that other relevant staff are informed of this.

Requests for information about a child from social care can be made via telephone. Duty Social Workers are available on 0345 603 7627. The DSL will deal with all such requests and will ask for:

- The name of the child concerned
- The nature of the concern
- The exact information that is required – i.e. behaviour in class, appearance, attendance, academic achievement, friendships, contact with parents, any recent and notable concerns
- The name and contact details of the social worker
- The date and time of the first contact will be noted on an initial concern form

Please do not give information over the phone as this can be misinterpreted and misrepresented. Instead politely request answers to the questions above and respond to the request within the hour.

If after consultation with the DSL, staff feel that appropriate action is not being taken in respect of their concerns for a child they should be aware that they can refer directly to children's social care themselves.

**Enquiries and requests for information from Children and Families must be made through www.essex.gov.uk/ChildrenAndFamiliesEnquiries
Children subject of a Child Protection Plan**

The DSL will inform staff who have direct pastoral responsibility for pupils who are the subject of a child protection plan. These children must be monitored very carefully and the smallest concern should be recorded on sleuth and passed immediately to the DSL or deputy DSL in the DSL's absence. The DSL keeps chronological records of any incidences / concerns reported to them.

Supervision and Support

Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.

All newly qualified teachers have a mentor or coordinator with whom they can discuss concerns including the area of child protection.

The DSL can put staff and parents in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish.

Safeguarding all children from harm

It is important that all employees at any PLT school site are aware of their responsibilities inside the workplace both to the children and to one another. All staff should ensure that they have read and understand all relevant documentation.

Please also read the staff handbook as this has more detail of safer working practices that staff are expected to uphold.

E-safety

All members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates in e-safety and recognising and reporting concerns. Our Acceptable Use policy recognises that internet safety is a whole school responsibility (staff, pupils, parents).

Children and young people may expose themselves to danger, whether knowingly or unknowingly, when using the internet and other technologies. Additionally, some young people may find themselves involved in activities which are inappropriate or possibly illegal.

We therefore recognise our responsibility to educate our pupils, teaching them the appropriate behaviors and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies.

The Trust is fully compliant with LGfL filters that block inappropriate materials for children, without 'over-blocking'. Any websites that are inappropriate and appear in front of pupils, are reported by the teacher. Those sites are then blocked.

Photography and use of images

The welfare and protection of our children is paramount and consideration should always be given to whether the use of photography will place our children at risk. Images may be used to harm children, for example as a preliminary to 'grooming' or by displaying them inappropriately on the internet, particularly social networking sites.

For this reason, consent is always sought when photographing children and additional consideration given to photographing vulnerable children, particularly Looked After Children or those known to be fleeing domestic violence. Consent must be sought from those with parental responsibility (this may include the Local Authority in the case of Looked After Children).

Only school cameras are to be used to take appropriate photographs of the children. No photographs are to be taken of children with a mobile phone. These photos are only to be used and stored on school equipment within the school for record keeping purposes and must never be appropriated for staff use.

Mobile Phone Procedures

There are landlines sited in different locations around the school for calls relating to school business and these are available for staff use when necessary. In Ramsden Hall Academy, these phones are situated in:

- The main admin office
- The prep room
- The HT's office
- The Care Office

Staff may have their mobiles with them in school for emergency contact with their families. However, casual or inappropriate use of the phone, either through texts or calls, distracts from the care of the children or may cause a risk.

Should a member of staff need to answer their mobile phone in the case of an emergency or another essential purpose, they will immediately inform another member of staff that they are doing so and if possible warn colleagues that they may be expecting such a call if this is appropriate. They must ensure that staff/pupil ratios are adequate to enable them to take their call.

Text messages and casual phone calls should be made in the free time of the staff and never when supervising children.

It is important that staff take a mobile phone with them on outside trips and visits. Staff when on an educational visit off site, will take a list of phone numbers should they need to contact a parent and for use in emergencies.

All mobiles should have the school telephone number stored in them.

Please see separate mobile phone policy relating to student's phones.

Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff

The PLT and its Academies has a written recruitment and selection policy statement and procedures linking explicitly to this policy. The statement is included in all job advertisements, publicity material, recruitment websites, and candidate information packs.

The recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates to support the school's measures to safeguard children and to identify, deter or reject people who might pose a risk of harm to children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them.

All staff working within our school who have substantial access to children have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications and a satisfactory barred list check, enhanced DBS check and a right to work in the UK.

Our governors are subject to an enhanced DBS check and enhanced barred list check -this includes section 128 checks

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks for audit purposes.

Any member of staff working in regulated activity prior to receipt of a satisfactory DBS check will not be left unsupervised and will be subject to a risk assessment.

Volunteers who are not working in regulated activity, will be supervised at all times.

Whistleblowing

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

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues using the school's confidential reporting (whistleblowing) policy.

Whistleblowing concerns about the HT should be raised with the Chair of the Academy Council

Hub or Executive HT. However, for any member of staff who feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed, they may contact the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or by email at: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Parents or others in the wider school community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk .

Allegations of Abuse against Staff and Volunteers

This policy follows the Government Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

Duties as an employer and employee

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff, students on placement or volunteers, in our school is dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. The person to take your concerns to is the Headteacher. If your concern is about the Head Teacher, please contact the CEO.

This policy will be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a member of staff (including a volunteer, student) has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child (see above for definition of harm);
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or,
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children. This will include cases of verbal abuse.

As an employer,

- the school will ensure all unnecessary delays will be eradicated
- the school will not undertake its own investigation of an allegation without prior consultation with the local authority designated officer (LADO), or in the most serious cases, the police.
- the school will note that in borderline cases discussions with the LADO can be held informally and without naming the school or individual
- The school will provide information so that enquiries and assessment by Social Care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services can be undertaken.
- The school will consider disciplinary action in respect of an individual if necessary.

Members of staff who are currently working in any school or college regardless of whether the school or college is where the alleged abuse took place. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the police. Historical allegations of abuse should also be referred to the police.

Staff Code of Conduct

The Staff Code of Conduct and safer working practices is an important document to read in tandem with this policy as they are intrinsically linked. The staff handbook also contains important information with regards to safeguarding.

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with relation to child protection. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. Physical intervention is only used when the child is endangering themselves or others and such events are recorded using 'Sleuth'. Staff should be aware of the school's own Behaviour Management Policy, and any physical interventions must be in line with agreed policy and procedure in which appropriate training should be provided.

All school staff should work towards providing an environment and atmosphere for children to enable them to feel safe to talk. However, staff should never promise a child to keep certain information confidential. It must be explained that staff have certain duties to help keep that child safe, which may involve informing others.

More detailed information regarding the Staff Code of Conduct and safer working practices is available from the school office. These documents are given to all staff when they join and reviewed on a yearly basis to all staff.

Initial Considerations

The procedures for dealing with allegations need to be applied with common sense and judgement. Many cases may well either not meet the criteria set out above, or may do so without warranting consideration of either a police investigation or enquiries by local authority children's social care services. In these cases, local arrangements should be followed to resolve cases without delay.

Some rare allegations will be so serious they require immediate intervention by children's social care services and/or police. The designated officer(s) should be informed of all allegations that come to a school or college's attention and appear to meet the criteria so they can consult police and children's social care services as appropriate.

Procedure:

The first person hearing the allegation will

- Treat the matter seriously, avoid asking leading questions, communicate with the child in a manner appropriate to the child's understanding and communication style.
- Report on sleuth, (purple button), where possible in the child's own words stating when the alleged incident took place, who was present and what was said to have happened.
- **Report the matter immediately to the HT.**

The HT will:

- Investigate the matter
- Record any other information about times, dates and location of any incident and the

names of any potential witnesses.

The HT will then consider if the allegation meets any of the criteria below:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child (see above for definition of harm);
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or,
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children. This will include cases of verbal abuse.

If the allegations do meet the criteria above then it will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. Referral to the LADO will not be delayed in order to gather any further information.

Talking to the LADO:

1. Together with the HT, the LADO considers the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. The LADO may ask the HT to provide or obtain relevant additional information, such as previous history, whether the child or their family have made similar allegations previously and the individual's current contact with children. There may be situations when the HT will want to involve the police immediately, for example if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. Where there is no such evidence, the HT should discuss the allegations with the LADO in order to help determine whether police involvement is necessary.
2. The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern; in which case this decision and a justification for it should be recorded by both the HT and the LADO and agreement reached on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom. The HT should then consider with the LADO what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.
3. The HT should inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the LADO. It is extremely important that the HT provides them with as much information as possible at that time. However, where a strategy discussion is needed, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the case manager should not do that until those agencies have been consulted, and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the accused. Employers must consider carefully whether the circumstances of a case warrant a person being suspended from contact with children at the school or college or whether alternative arrangements can be put in place until the allegation or concern is resolved. All options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step (see further information on suspension which follows).
4. If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion should be convened in accordance with the statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children. If the allegation is about physical contact, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the police should take into account that teachers and other school and college staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain children in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behavior.
5. Where it is clear that an investigation by the police or children's social care services is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case, the LADO should discuss the next steps with the HT. In those circumstances, the options open to the school or college depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation

and the evidence and information available. This will range from taking no further action to dismissal or a decision not to use the person's services in future. Suspension should not be the default position: an individual should be suspended only if there is no reasonable alternative.

6. In some cases, further enquiries will be needed to enable a decision about how to proceed. If so, the LADO should discuss with the HT how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. In straightforward cases, the investigation should normally be undertaken by a senior member of the school staff.
7. However, in other circumstances, such as lack of appropriate resource within the school, or the nature or complexity of the allegation, the allegation will require an independent investigator. Many local authorities already provide for an independent investigation of allegations.

Suspension

The possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person should be evaluated and managed in respect of the child(ren) involved in the allegations. In some rare cases that will require the HT to consider suspending the accused until the case is resolved. Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported:

Suspension should be considered only in a case where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the school is/are at risk of harm or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. The HT will wish to seek advice from HR and the LADO. In cases where the school or college is made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual at the school or college, it will be necessary to immediately suspend that person from teaching pending the findings of the National College for Teaching and Leadership's (NCTL) investigation.

The HT should also consider whether the result that would be achieved by immediate suspension could be obtained by alternative arrangements. In many cases an investigation can be resolved quickly and without the need for suspension. If the LADO, police and children's social care services have no objections to the member of staff continuing to work during the investigation, the HT should be as inventive as possible to avoid suspension. Based on assessment of risk, the following alternatives should be considered by the case manager before suspending a member of staff:

- 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 to alternative work in the school so the individual does not have unsupervised access to children;
- moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the member of staff, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted; or
- temporarily redeploying the member of staff to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school within the academy trust.

These alternatives allow time for an informed decision regarding the suspension and possibly reduce the initial impact of the allegation. This will, however, depend upon the nature of the

allegation. The case manager should consider the potential permanent professional reputational damage to employees that can result from suspension where an allegation is later found to be unsubstantiated or maliciously intended.

If immediate suspension is considered necessary, the rationale and justification for such a course of action should be agreed and recorded by both the case manager and the designated officer(s). This should also include what alternatives to suspension have been considered and why they were rejected.

Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation should be dispatched within one working day, giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. It is not acceptable for an employer to leave a person who has been suspended without any support. The person should be informed at the point of their suspension who their named contact is within the organisation and provided with their contact details.

Children's social care services or the police cannot require the HT to suspend a member of staff or a volunteer, although they should give appropriate weight to their advice. The power to suspend is vested in the HT, Directors or CEO, or governing bodies of the school. However, where a strategy discussion or initial evaluation concludes that there should be enquiries by the children's social care services and/or an investigation by the police, the LADO should canvass police and children's social care services for views about whether the accused member of staff needs to be suspended. Police involvement does not make it mandatory to suspend a member of staff; this decision should be taken on a case-by-case basis having undertaken a risk assessment.

Outcomes

If after initial consideration between the HT and the LADO it is clear that police or social care investigations are not necessary, the school will be guided by the LADO as to the most appropriate action. The nature and circumstances of the allegation and evidence will determine the next course of action. If the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action will be instituted within 3 working days.

If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without any further investigation, the hearing will be held within 15 working days and subsequent procedures, as outlined in the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures will be followed.

If, on conclusion of the case, it is decided that the person can return to work, the HT will consider how best to facilitate the return and provide relevant support to the staff member and consider how to best manage the person's contact with the child who made the allegation.

The parents/carers of the child will be kept fully informed of any decisions/action taken by the Senior Leadership Team.

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome 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;

- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- **Unfounded:** there is no evidence or proper basis that supports the allegation being made. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively, they may not have been aware of all the circumstances.

In respect of malicious or unsubstantiated allegations

If an allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated or malicious, the LADO should refer the matter to the children's social care services to determine whether the child concerned is in need of services, or may have been abused by someone else. If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the HT should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil who made it; or whether the police should be asked to consider if action might be appropriate against the person responsible, even if he or she was not a pupil.

Supporting those involved

Employers have a duty of care to their employees. They should act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations process. Support for the individual is vital to fulfilling this duty. Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless there is an objection by the children's social care services or the police. The individual should be advised to contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support. They should also be given access to welfare counselling or medical advice where possible.

The HT should appoint a named representative to keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual. Particular care needs to be taken when employees are suspended to ensure that they are kept informed of both the progress of their case and current work-related issues. Social contact with colleagues and friends should not be prevented unless there is evidence to suggest that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence.

Parents or carers of a child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the HT should not do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the parents or carers. Parents or carers should also be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, and the information taken into account in reaching a decision, cannot normally be disclosed, but the parents or carers of the child should be told the outcome in confidence.

Parents and carers should also be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers whilst investigations are ongoing as set out in

section 141F of the Education Act 2002 (see paragraph 163). If parents or carers wish to apply to the court to have reporting restrictions removed, they should be told to seek legal advice.

In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, children's social care services, or the police as appropriate, should consider what support the child or children involved may need.

Confidentiality

It is extremely important that when an allegation is made, the school makes every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The Education Act 2002 introduced reporting restrictions preventing the publication, (publication" includes "any speech, writing, relevant programme or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public) of any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a pupil from the same school (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation). The reporting restrictions apply until the point that the accused person is charged with an offence, or until the Secretary of State publishes information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case arising from the allegation. The reporting restrictions also cease to apply if the individual to whom the restrictions apply effectively waives their right to anonymity by going public themselves or by giving their written consent for another to do so or if a judge lifts restrictions in response to a request to do so.

In accordance with the Association of Chief Police Officers' (ACPO) guidance the police will not normally provide any information to the press or media that might identify an individual who is under investigation, unless and until the person is charged with a criminal offence. (In exceptional cases where the police would like to depart from that rule, for example an appeal to trace a suspect, they must apply to a magistrates' court to request that reporting restrictions be lifted.)

The HT should take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services to agree the following:

- who needs to know and, importantly, exactly what information can be shared;
- how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip;
- what, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and
- how to manage press interest if, and when, it should arise.

Managing the situation and exit arrangements Resignations and 'settlement agreements'

If the accused person resigns, or ceases to provide their services, this should not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with this guidance. **A referral to the DBS must be made, if the criteria are met.** If the accused person resigns or their services cease to be used and the criteria are met, it will not be appropriate to reach a settlement/compromise agreement. A settlement/compromise agreement which prevents the school or college from making a DBS referral when the criteria are met would likely result in a criminal offence being committed as the school or college would not be complying with its legal duty to make the referral.

It is important that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of children, including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate with the process. Wherever possible, the accused should be given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations about it. But the process of recording the allegation and any supporting evidence, and reaching a judgement about whether it can be substantiated on the basis of all the information available, should continue even if that cannot be done or the accused does not cooperate. It may be difficult to reach a conclusion in those circumstances, and it may not be possible to apply any disciplinary sanctions if a person's period of notice expires before the process is complete, but it is important to reach and record a conclusion wherever possible.

Settlement agreements' (sometimes referred to as compromise agreements), by which a person agrees to resign if the employer agrees not to pursue disciplinary action, and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference, should not be used in cases of refusal to cooperate or resignation before the person's notice period expires. Such an agreement will not prevent a thorough police investigation where that is appropriate.

Record keeping

Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, is kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. The record should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The Information Commissioner has published guidance on employment records in its Employment Practices Code and supplementary guidance, which provides some practical advice on record retention.

On conclusion of a case

If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the employer ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services, the

LADO should discuss with the HT and their HR service whether the school will decide to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required; and, in the case of a member of teaching staff, whether to refer the matter to the NCTL to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

There is a legal requirement for employers to make a referral to the DBS where they think that an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child; or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

Where it is decided on the conclusion of a case that a person who has been suspended can return to work, the HT should consider how best to facilitate that. Most people will benefit from some help and support to return to work after a stressful experience. Depending on the individual's circumstances, a phased return and/or the provision of a mentor to provide assistance and support in the short term may be appropriate. The HT should also consider how the person's contact with the child or children who made the allegation can best be managed if they are still a pupil at the school or college.

Monitoring and Review of this policy

All school staff on each PLT site, all members of each Academy Council Hub, and the executive leadership team, including the Board of Trustees and Members, will have a copy of this policy and will have the opportunity to consider and discuss its contents, so everyone at all levels of leadership and responsibility will understand how to hold each other to account as far as safeguarding and child protection is concerned.

Reviews of safeguarding procedures take place yearly and are completed by the designated safeguarding member of each academy council hub. The review takes the form of a visit to the school to meet with the DSL and/or deputy DSL, scrutiny of any documentation relating to safeguarding and discussions with the staff.

Should any deficiencies or weaknesses in our procedures and processes be highlighted at any time, an immediate review will take place by the DSL and the Designated Governor and the revised procedure will be issued with immediate effect.

All staff have access to this policy and have signed to the effect that they have read and understood its content.

Links to other policies

In addition to protect themselves, their colleagues and the children in their care all employees must have read the following policies:

- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour
- Curriculum
- E-Safety
- Appropriate use of the internet
- Staff code of conduct
- Safer working practices (found within the staff handbook)
- Complaints policy
- Confiscation and Search policy

Prevent Physical Intervention

Abbreviations:

CME	Child Missing Education
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HT	Head Teacher
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education (Document)
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
MARF	Multi Agency Referral Form (Document)
PLT	Parallel Learning Trust

Appendix 1: Safeguarding / Keeping Children Safe in Education Declaration form

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES AT PLT

This pro-forma must be signed by all employees and returned to the HT.

I am aware that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is Claire Parker; any concern of any kind no matter how trivial relating to child protection must be relayed to the DSL without delay.

I understand that I may not offer any guarantee of confidentiality to any parent or child in any matter relating to child protection. I understand that I have a legal and statutory responsibility to report any disclosure concerning child protection. I understand that failure to report any such disclosure made to me will lead to disciplinary action being taken against me.

All members of staff have access to related document. I understand my obligations in responding to school policy and procedure.

I have read the PLT school policy and procedure relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection. In addition, I have read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 Part 1 and 5'.

I understand and accept my responsibilities outlined above in respect of The Parallel Learning Trust school policies and procedure on Child Protection and Safeguarding. I understand that I will be offered regular training to update my knowledge and understanding of issues surrounding child protection.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Please keep a copy of this acknowledgement in your own files and return the top copy to the HT. It will be stored in a file for accountability purposes. This file applies to all members of the community – full time, part time, volunteers, peripatetic staff etc.

APPENDIX 2 – referral to LADO form for allegations against members of staff

Managing Allegations About Adults Working With Children & Young People Notification / progress and monitoring form to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The referral form must be completed and emailed immediately to the Duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

The manager should then telephone the Duty LADO immediately to discuss the next course of action.

LADO: Duty

Tel: **03330 139 797**

Email: childrens.safeguarding@essex.gov.uk (password protect all documents)

Do not assume that the form has been received – telephone the Duty LADO.

For child protection enquiries that are not related to an allegation about a professional, please call 0845 603 7627.
If you think a child is at immediate risk of significant harm phone the Police.

When receiving an allegation:

- Treat it seriously and keep an open mind
- **Do not** investigate
- **Do not** make assumptions or offer alternative explanations
- **Do not** promise confidentiality
- Record the details using the child/adult's own words
- Note time/date/place of incident(s), persons present and what was said
- Sign and date the written record
- Do not tell the member of staff/volunteer if this might place the child at risk of significant harm or jeopardise any future investigation.
- **Do** refer to Essex County Council's 'managing allegations against people who work with children' policy.

The LADO will maintain a live record of the case on Sentinel Allegation Management System



Essex County Council

Allegations Management

Referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) based in the Childrens Workforce Development Team

Important Notes

1. Before completing this form please ensure you have held an initial telephone or face to face discussion with the Duty LADO.
2. Please remember those directly involved, including witnesses to the incident, **should not** be asked to write a statement at this stage.

Referral date:

Key Dates/times

<i>Complete as appropriate</i>	
Date of initial discussion with Duty LADO and their name	
Date and time the allegation/concern was reported to Designated Senior Manager for allegations	
Date and time of alleged incident	
If historic allegation, approximate date or year of incident/s	

Details of adult who is the subject of the allegation or concern

Full name	
Gender	
Role/job title	
Name of the setting where the adult usually works	
Home address	
Date of birth	
Ethnicity	
Adult's relations with your setting (e.g. employee, volunteer, contractor)	
How long employed/volunteering?	
Are there any pre-existing capability concerns regarding this member of staff (not necessarily safeguarding related)?	

Does this person work with children or vulnerable adults in any other capacity? Please give details.	
Does this person have children of their own? <i>Please give details (use further notes section if required)</i>	
Have there been any previous allegations or concerns regarding this person? <i>Please give details (use further notes section if required)</i>	
Is the adult aware that an allegation or concern has been raised? <i>(use further notes section if required)</i>	

The allegation or concern/complaint

Please summarise the allegation or concern below – use the notes page or additional sheet if required	
How did the allegation/concern emerge? e.g. child disclosed/parent complained/concerned professional, etc?	
Does the child/young person have an injury? If so describe the injury <i>If the injury has not been seen, describe what has been disclosed</i>	
Was the alleged incident witnessed? If so please give details	
Have parents/carers of the child been informed? Give details, including reasons if not informed at this stage	
What safeguards are in place currently ?	

Details of the child/young person subject to the allegation or concern

If more than one child/young person involved please give details in further notes section

Full name	
Gender	
Date of birth	
Home address	
Ethnicity (see attached list)	
Parents/carers names and contact details	
Who has parental responsibility for the child/young person?	
Has this child/young person made any previous allegations?	
Are other professional/agencies working with this child/young person? Please give details	

Further notes: Please use this space to expand on any of the questions above or give other relevant information. You may also attach other relevant documents if required.

Referrer's details:

Name	
Role	
Name of setting	
Contact details (Tel)	
Contact details (E-mail)	
Name of Designated Senior Manager for allegations if different from above	
Method of referral	

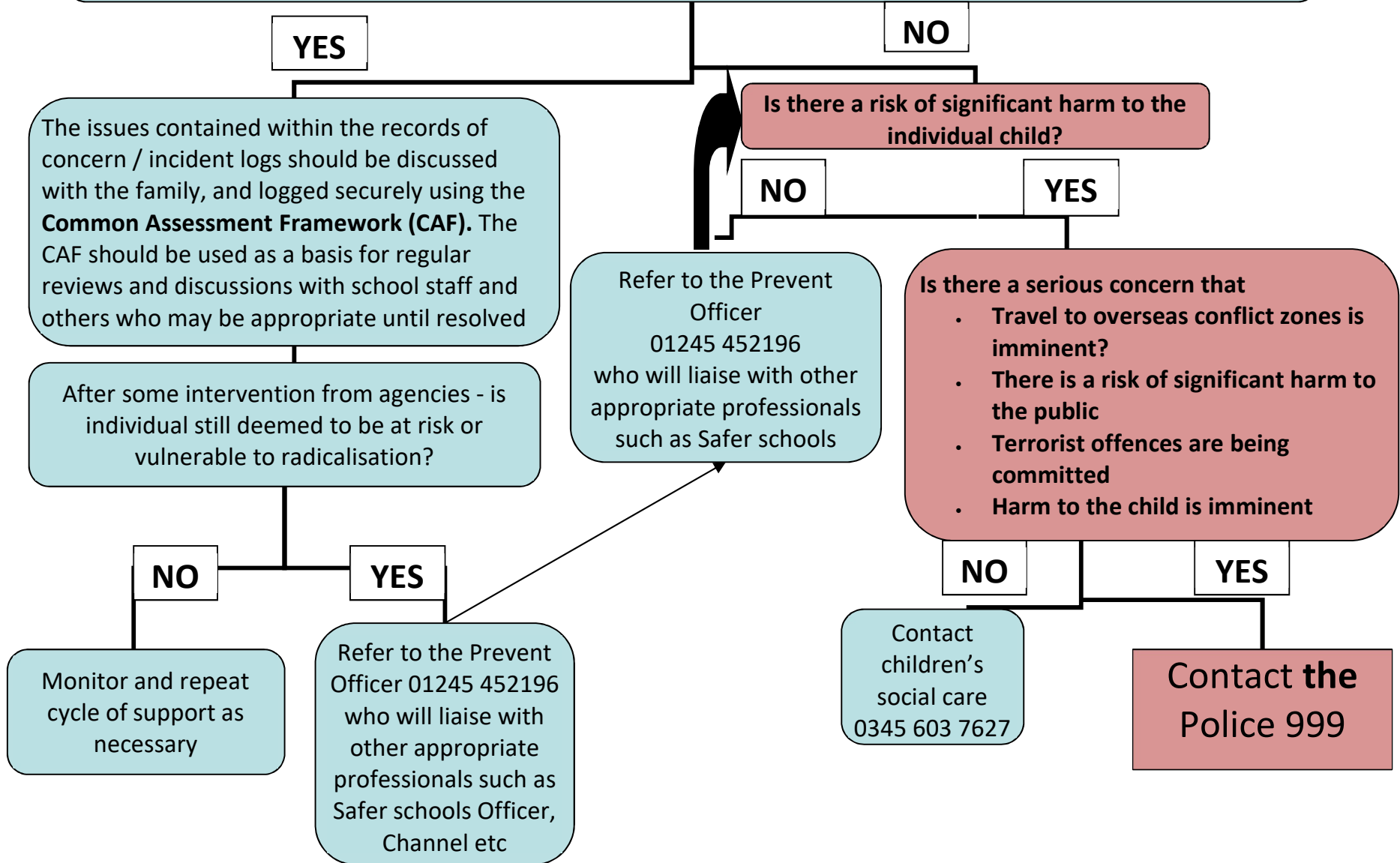
Referrers full name (print)	
Referrer's signature	
<i>When sending by e-mail please use electronic signature if available</i>	

Appendix 3 – children missing education referral form

Essex Schools InfoLink>Pupil Support & Welfare>Missing Education and Child Employment Service>Children Missing from Education

Appendix 4 – Flow chart to guide you in what to do if you have a PREVENT concern

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT AN INDIVIDUAL CHILD.....
 In light of the information contained with any risk assessment / local intelligence / discussions with colleagues, is it possible that the establishment can respond internally to a radicalisation incident



Situation	What to do
<p>A behaviour incident either in or out of school, occurs: I have a concern about an individual child in my school because they have been involved in an incident that could be seen as extremist or involving radicalisation</p>	<p>Most situations can be dealt with internally within the school itself through their behaviour and safeguarding policies – see the first referral pathway above You could call Essex’s Prevent team for advice on 01245 452196</p>
<p>A safeguarding incident or disclosure occurs in school: I have a concern that an individual child in my school is at risk of significant harm due to extremist or radical behaviour</p>	<p>Call social care referral and assessment in the usual way You could call Prevent team for advice also on 01245 452196</p>
<p>A very serious concern or threat: I have a serious concern that a travel to an overseas conflict zone is imminent There is a risk of significant harm to the public Terrorist offences are being committed as we speak or imminently Harm to the child is imminent</p>	<p>Call the police 999</p>
<p>A feeling / gut instinct about activity in your local area – not necessarily related to a child or family in your school: Suspicious activity <i>could</i> include someone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has bought or stored large amounts of chemicals, fertilisers or gas cylinders for no obvious reason; • Who has bought or hired a vehicle in suspicious circumstances; • Who holds passports or other documents in different names for no obvious reason; • Who travels for long periods of time, but is vague about where they’re going; 	<p>It’s probably nothing but... if you see or hear anything that could be terrorist-related trust your instincts and call the Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321. (see referral pathway below)</p> <p>Specially trained officers will take it from there.</p> <p>Or follow the link below to report it via email https://secure.met.police.uk/athotline/</p> <div data-bbox="1697 778 2042 1008" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>IT'S PROBABLY NOTHING, BUT...</p> <p><small>IF YOU SEE OR HEAR SOMETHING THAT COULD BE TERRORIST RELATED, TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS AND CALL THE COMPARTMENTAL ANTI-TERRORIST HOTLINE. OUR SPECIALLY TRAINED OFFICERS WILL TAKE IT FROM THERE.</small></p> <p>0800 789 321 YOUR CALL COULD SAVE LIVES</p> <p><small>METROPOLITAN POLICE CITY OF LONDON POLICE BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE</small></p> </div>
<p>I have seen online terrorist content in my school and/or elsewhere Some examples of illegal terrorist or extremist content include:</p>	<p>Contact your internet provider (see Damian) and let them know immediately – then call the counter terrorist hotline to report it on 0800 789 321</p>

- Speeches or essays calling for racial or religious violence.
- Videos of violence with messages of 'glorification' or praise for terrorists.
- Postings inciting people to commit acts of terrorism or violent extremism.
- Messages intended to stir up hatred against any religious or ethnic group.
- Bomb-making instructions.

Report concerns online at <https://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism>

All reports are anonymous, and should only take a few minutes to complete.
All you need is the web address (also called the 'URL') of the website.

ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT AN EXTREMIST **GROUP OPERATING IN YOUR AREA.....
perhaps not linked to your school or one child specifically?**

NO

If the concern is about an individual child or person directly related to your school, see the referral pathway above.

Call the counter terrorist hotline if you see or hear anything that could be **terrorist-related**

0800 789 321.

Or look at the link above

YES

**Do you believe there is a risk of significant harm to an individual child in your school?
Do you believe there is a risk of significant harm to anyone in the area?**

NO

Is there a serious concern that

- Travel to overseas conflict zones is imminent?
- There is a risk of significant harm to the public
- Terrorist offences are being committed
- Harm to the child is imminent

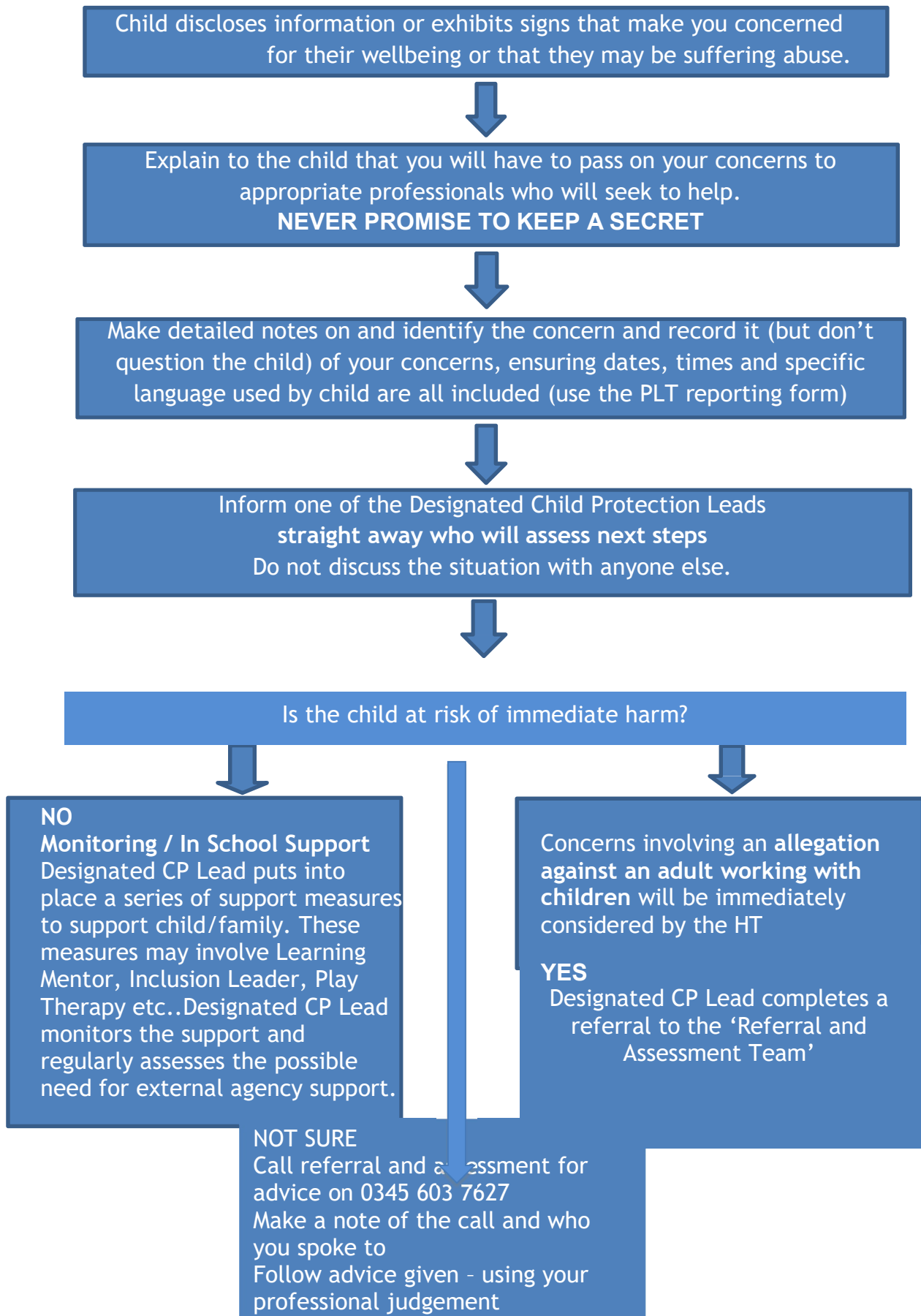
NO

Contact children's social care
0345 603 7627

YES

Contact **the** Police 999

Appendix 5 - Child Protection Flow Chart for Parallel Learning Trust



Appendix 6: Additional safeguarding arrangements during COVID-19

When schools were instructed to close, we assessed the needs of all our pupils and put in place plans to support them and their families during the summer term. These plans included an education offer and arrangements to support pupils with their safety and wellbeing. Where appropriate, the plans included actions and interventions from other agencies, as we continued to work with partners to provide an appropriate level of support. These plans were regularly reviewed to ensure they reflected current need and were updated accordingly to ensure appropriate support is in place.

We have now moved to full opening and our usual Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy applies. However, as a response to COVID-19 and to ensure we are compliant with [government guidance](#) and Health and Safety law, other arrangements are in place and we have communicated this to all parents.

We have a robust risk assessment in place and will continue to regularly review this and update it as required. This review process will consider whether our current plans and protective measures are:

- effective
- working as planned
- updated appropriately considering any issues identified and changes in public health advice

If, as a result of future local lockdown arrangements, the school is subject to further closure, our previous arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils will be reinstated.

Appendix 7: Harmful Sexual Behaviour / Child on Child Abuse

Contents

1	Introduction
2	Definition of sexual abuse
3	Harmful sexual behaviour
4	How we seek to minimise the risk of harmful sexual behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children• Parents and carers• Staff
5	Our response to an incident / allegation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recording• Investigation• Risk Assessment
6	Guiding principles <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Considerations• Supporting the child who has allegedly experienced harmful sexual behaviour• Supporting the child who has allegedly displayed harmful sexual behaviour

7	<p>Investigation outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage internally • Early Help • Requests for support to Children’s Social Care • Reporting to the police
8	Review

1. Introduction

It is normal for some children to display sexualised behaviour towards their peers as they develop. However, sexualised behaviour between children that has become harmful or abusive is unacceptable and must be addressed.

Our school recognises that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers sexually. We consider any allegation of child on child sexual abuse seriously and do not tolerate or pass off harmful sexual behaviour as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’ or ‘part of growing up’. These allegations are managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and follow the same procedures, including seeking advice and support from other agencies as appropriate.

This policy is in line with the safeguarding requirements in [Keeping children safe in education](#) (Department for Education (‘DfE’), 2021), which we must work to; Part 5 of the Keeping children safe in education statutory guidance sets out how schools should manage reports of child-on-child sexual violence and harassment. This policy also links to the guidance issued by the DfE in 2018 (updated in 2021): [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#).

2. Definition of sexual abuse

Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

3. Harmful sexual behaviour

Harmful sexual behaviour can manifest itself in many ways. This may include:

- inappropriate or unwanted sexualised touching;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm;
- pressurising, forcing, or coercing someone to share nude images (known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- sharing sexual images of a person without their consent;
- bullying of a sexual nature online or offline, for example sexual or sexist name-calling.

Our school also understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with harmful sexual behaviour.

Children can experience harmful sexual behaviour in various settings. This includes at school, at home (or at another home), in public places, and online. At school, issues can occur in places which are supervised and unsupervised. For example, abuse may occur in toilets, corridors, changing areas, common rooms, outside spaces such as the playground and sports facilities, and when children are travelling home.

4. How we seek to minimise the risk of harmful sexual behaviour

The principle aim of our approach is to foster the conditions in which our pupils can aspire to and realise safe and healthy relationships, at school and as they continue in life. We work to a culture in which the voice of our children is central, where pupils feel able to share their concerns openly, knowing that they will be listened to, and that they will not be judged.

Children and young people

We use relationships, sex and health education (Relationship and Sex and Health Education curriculum) to help our pupils understand, in an age-appropriate way, what harmful sexual behaviour is, including by peers. We teach them the knowledge they need to recognise and report abuse, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. We also teach them about the importance of making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online), whilst being clear that if a child is abused, it is never their fault.

We help our pupils to develop the skills to understand:

- what constitutes harmful sexual behaviour;
- that such behaviour is not acceptable;
- the possible reasons for such behaviour, and vulnerability of perpetrators;
- that they must tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable – and must tell a trusted adult if they witness such behaviour towards others.

We understand our pupils may not always feel able to talk to adults about child-on-child sexual abuse. To help them, we will encourage them to share their thoughts and opinions, respond to their concerns, and respect and listen to them. We want our pupils to feel confident that any concerns they raise will be responded to appropriately.

Parents and carers

It is important that parents and carers understand what is meant by harmful sexual behaviour and reinforce key messages from school at home. We work in partnership with parents to support our pupils and want to help them keep their child/ren safe. Parents and carers should understand:

- the nature of harmful sexual behaviour;
- the effects of harmful sexual behaviour on children;
- the likely indicators that such behaviour may be taking place;
- what to do if it is suspected that child on child sexual abuse has occurred;

Further information to support parents and carers in relation to harmful sexual behaviour is available online, including on the [NSPCC](#) and [Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#) websites.

Staff

Our staff undertake annual safeguarding training where the different types of abuse and neglect are discussed; this includes information about harmful sexual behaviour and our expectations for staff vigilance about this and other potential types of abuse. Staff also receive updates on safeguarding issues throughout the school year, including about the nature and prevalence of harmful sexual behaviour, where appropriate.

Importantly, the training also ensures that our staff know what to do if they receive a report that harmful sexual behaviour may have occurred, including how to support the child.

5. Our response to an incident / allegation

The wellbeing of our pupils is always central to our response to an allegation or incident of harmful sexual behaviour. Any child reporting a concern will be treated respectfully. We will reassure them that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe; no child will be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse or made to feel ashamed.

Our staff will never promise confidentiality to the child as the concern will need to be shared further. The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead will need to be informed as soon as possible of any incident and the details may also need to be shared with Children's Social Care / the police and other specialist agencies. We have in place effective working relationships with our safeguarding partners, which are essential to ensuring that concerns are appropriately managed.

We will explain next steps to the child so they understand what will happen, including who will be informed. Where the child already has Social Care involvement, such as a Looked After Child, a Child In Need or a child with a Child Protection Plan, we will inform the child's Social Worker and work in partnership with them as appropriate.

Whilst we establish the facts of the case and start the process of liaising with other agencies as appropriate, we will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises, and where applicable, on transport to and from the school.

Where an incident includes an online element, we will always work in accordance with appropriate guidance, taking advice from other partners as necessary. Our staff will not view an indecent image of a child unless absolutely necessary, nor forward it for any reason.

Recording

It is essential that information relating to allegations about harmful sexual behaviour are recorded within our school, as with any other child protection concern – and in line with our Child Protection Policy. The record may form part of a statutory assessment by Children's Social Care or by another agency.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of harmful sexual behaviour or noticing signs or indicators of this, will record it as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. The facts will be recorded as the child presents them.

The record will then be presented to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm, staff will speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies first, and deal with recording as soon as possible afterwards.

All related concerns, discussions, decisions, and reasons for decisions will be recorded on sleuth and will include the action taken.

Investigation

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for leading investigations, and for liaising with other agencies as appropriate, for example Children's Social Care and the police. They will also be the main point of contact for parents and carers. The Designated Lead will ensure there are accurate records of each stage of the investigation and that any supporting information is included in the Child Protection files.

Risk Assessment

We will complete a risk assessment following a report of harmful sexual behaviour, considering all children involved in an incident. We will also consider all other pupils at our school and any actions that may be appropriate to protect them.

Risk assessments will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain relevant and fit for purpose. Where appropriate, the affected children and their parents and carers will be invited to contribute to the completion and review of the risk assessment.

6. Guiding principles

The safety of our pupils is paramount. We will use a proportionate approach, basing our actions on the principle that harmful sexual behaviour is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All concerns will be considered carefully and on a case by case basis, underpinned by robust risk assessments. Our actions will not be judgemental about the guilt of the alleged perpetrator and will always be taken in the interests of all children concerned.

Our approach will help us to ensure that all pupils are protected and supported appropriately. The following principles will guide us:

- the wishes of the child in terms of how they want to proceed – the victim will be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed;
- the ages and developmental stages of all children involved;
- consideration of any power imbalance between the children – for example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature, or more confident / does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty;
- consideration of whether the alleged incident a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
- consideration of any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, or staff;
- consideration of any other related issues and wider context.

Supporting the child who has allegedly experienced harmful sexual behaviour

We will assess what short-term and long-term support a child may need to help them manage the immediate aftermath of an incident, and to recover from what they have experienced. The child's existing support network will be central to this work; we will work with other partners as appropriate and in accordance with the child's wishes and, wherever appropriate, in discussion with parents / carers.

We will consider what is necessary to support the child straightaway, for example by making adaptations to their timetable and in-school support and taking steps to protect them from attention or peer pressure they may experience due to making a report. This work will be guided by a robust risk assessment process and we will ensure that the child and their parents / carers have an opportunity to contribute. We will also ensure there is regular review of arrangements to be confident they meet the needs of all involved.

It may be necessary to make requests for support to mental health and wellbeing services or for therapeutic intervention. We may also need to link with other agencies to remove inappropriate material from the Internet, such as the [Internet Watch Foundation](#).

Supporting the child who has allegedly displayed harmful sexual behaviour

We have a duty of care to all pupils and we will protect and support children who have displayed abusive or harmful sexual behaviour. We will do this through considering the needs of the child, any risks to their safety and what multi-agency responses are needed to support them and their family. This work will be guided by a robust risk assessment process and we will ensure that the child and their parents / carers have an opportunity to contribute. We will also ensure there is regular review of arrangements to be confident they meet the needs of all involved.

Some children may not realise they have behaved abusively. We will avoid using language that may make them feel judged or criminalised and ensure that any intervention will be at the least intrusive level required to effectively address the behaviour.

We will consider appropriate sanctions using our behaviour policy, and work with the child and their support network to consider measures that may help to address the child's behaviour.

7. Investigation outcomes

Our investigation of an allegation or incident as set out in this policy will enable us to determine the outcome, working with our safeguarding partners as appropriate. We will always seek to ensure that the outcome of an investigation is appropriate and proportionate to the circumstances in relation to the report. Various options are open to us, as set out below:

Manage internally

In some cases, for example, one-off incidents, we may take the view that the child concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention. In these cases, we will follow our other school policies in addressing matters, for example our behaviour policy.

We will also consider what support the child involved may need going forward - for example, pastoral support, counselling services, and ensuring that there is a trusted adult for those affected to speak with if they wish to. We will also consider whether any intervention or support is required as part of a whole setting approach or with the wider school community.

Early Help

Where statutory intervention is not required or agreed, we may use early help instead. This means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. We will work with parents and carers and other relevant partners when following this approach, which can be particularly useful in addressing non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation.

Requests for support to Children's Social Care

Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, we will make a request for support to Children's Social Care. We will generally inform parents and carers of this unless to do so may put a child at additional risk. We will seek advice from other partners on such matters.

If we make a request for support, Children's Social Care will consider whether the child involved are in need of protection or other services. Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the school will work with Children's Social Care and other agencies as appropriate. Partnership working helps to ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator and any other children that require support.

In some cases, Children's Social Care will review the evidence and decide a statutory intervention is not appropriate. If a statutory assessment is not considered appropriate by Children's Social Care, we will consider what other support may be required. We will make further requests for support to Children's Social Care if we consider that a child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm.

Reporting to the police

Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, we will report it to the police. We will generally inform parents or carers about reports of sexual abuse, unless to do so may put a child at additional risk. We will seek advice from other partners in individual cases.

In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, we will ensure that we support the child in any decision we take. This is likely to be with the support of Children's Social Care and any appropriate specialist agencies.

Where we have made a report to the police, we will consult with them and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. We will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.

Where there is a criminal investigation, we will work closely with the police and other agencies as appropriate to support all children involved (including potential witnesses). This will help to ensure that any actions we take do not jeopardise a police investigation. Sometimes the police will decide that further action is not required. In these circumstances we will continue to engage with other agencies to support the children involved.

8. Review

All child protection concerns are reviewed regularly, to ensure that everything has been fully addressed, that actions are completed, and to consider whether the child/children involved need any further support. We will continue to work with parents and carers and other agencies as appropriate, and risk assessments will be reviewed and updated as required.

Appendix 8: Allegations of abuse made against staff

Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold

We have zero tolerance to sexual violence.

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply 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 he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school

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

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or 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.

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, for example to an alternative school or other work for the academy trust.

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.
- 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

All schools continue with:

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

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

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

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

- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation

- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

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

Timescales

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

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

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

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

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

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required. If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

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

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

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

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

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

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

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

Confidentiality and information sharing

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

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

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

Record-keeping

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

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

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

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

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

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

References

When providing employer references, we will:

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

Learning lessons

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

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

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

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

Non-recent allegations

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

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

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

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

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

Concerns may arise through, for example:

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

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

Definition of low-level concerns

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

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

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

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

Sharing low-level concerns

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

We will create this culture by:

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

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 staff behaviour policy/code of conduct.

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