



Child Protection Policy

Applicable to:	✓	Seaton Valley High School
	✓	Seaton Sluice Middle School
	✓	Whytrig Middle School
Approval body:	Full Governing Body	

Status:

Statutory policy or document	Yes
Review frequency	Annual
Approval by	Full Governing Body

Publication:

Statutory requirement to publish on school website	Yes
Agreed to publish on school website	Yes

Review:

Frequency	Next Review Due
Annually	Autumn 2027

Version Control:

Author	Creation Date	Version	Status
Information and Curriculum Support Manager (NB)	11 November 2016	0.1	Draft policy for SVF for consultation with SLT based on NCC model policy
Changed by	Revision Date		
Head of School WMS (JS)	3 December 2016	0.2	Operation Encompass added
Head of School WMS (JS)	6 December 2016	0.3	
Business Manager (SH)	16 January 2017	0.4	Amendments to format etc
Head of School WMS (JS)	18 January 2017	1.0	Final version for publication
Business Manager (BW)	26 January 2018	1.1	Updated in line with NCC model policy (September 2017)
Designated Safeguarding Lead ACHS/WMS (GS)	13 February 2018	1.2	Review of proposed changes
Designated Safeguarding Lead SSMS (SL)	20 February 2018	1.3	Review of updated draft policy prior to governor approval
Business Manager (BW)	23 February 2018	1.4	DSL comments incorporated and training details updated
Business Manager (BW)	7 March 2018	2.0	Final approved version for publication
Business Manager (BW)	1 November 2018	2.1	Updated to include details of additional DSL at SSMS
Business Manager (BW)	3 January 2019	2.2	Updated in line with NCC model policy (September 2018) to reflect latest <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> guidance
Business Manager (BW)	12 January 2019	2.3	Reviewed by DSLs and updated to include Operation Endeavour and latest training
Business Manager (BW)	1 February 2019	3.0	Final approved version for publication, with updated email addresses for SVF staff
Business Manager (BW)	8 November 2019	3.1	Updated in line with latest <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> and NCC model policy (September 2019)
Business Manager (BW)	12 November 2019	4.0	Final approved version for publication
Business Manager (BW)	14 September 2020	4.1	Updated in line with latest <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> and NCC model policy (September 2020)
Business Manager (BW)	13 October 2020	5.0	Final approved version for publication

Business Manager (BW)	13 January 2021	5.1	Inclusion of response to COVID-19 at Appendix K based on NCC model appendix (January 2021)
Business Manager (BW)	22 April 2021	5.2	Updated with new LADO contact information
Business Manager (BW)	28 September 2021	5.3	Updated in line with latest <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> and NCC model policy (September 2021), including removal of COVID-19 Response at Appendix K
Business Manager (BW)	14 October 2021	6.0	Final approved version for publication
Business Director (BW)	11 October 2022	6.1	Updated in line with latest <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education</i> and NCC model policy (September 2022), including addition of hyperlinks to guidance, details of governor training, and dealing with low level concerns
Business Director (BW)	27 October 2022	7.0	Final approved version for publication
Business Director (BW)	22 September 2023	7.1	Updated for 2023-24
Business Director (BW)	5 October 2023	8.0	Final approved version for publication
Business Director (BW)	13 September 2024	8.1	Updated for 2024-25 in line with NCC model policy (September 2024) with addition of Annex M for ACHS
Business Director (BW)	23 September 2024	9.0	Final approved version for publication
Business Director (BW)	29 September 2025	9.1	Updated for 2025-26 in line with NCC model policy (July 2025); replaced references to ACHS with SVHS
Business Director (BW)	13 October 2025	10.0	Final approved version for publication
Business Director (BW)	10 November 2025	10.1	Updated key contact details
Business Director (BW)	26 January 2026	10.2	Updated key contact details
Business Director (BW)	18 September 2026	10.3	Fully revised for 2026-27 in line with NCC model policy (August 2026)
Business Director (BW)	5 October 2026	11.0	Final approved version for publication

1 Policy aims, statement and principles

1.1 The aims of this policy are as follows:

- To ensure appropriate and timely action is taken to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- To ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- To ensure all staff are trained and confident to recognise and report safeguarding concerns appropriately
- To maintain consistently high standards of safeguarding practice

1.2 The Seaton Valley Federation fully recognises its responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued.

1.3 This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the setting and is consistent with the procedures of the three safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended setting and off-site activities.

1.4 This policy has been written with reference to key statutory guidance (as referenced throughout). The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers, visitors and governors and are consistent with those of the Northumberland Children's and Adults Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP).

1.5 We facilitate a whole setting approach to safeguarding. All systems, processes, support and policies operate with the best interests of the children. Our pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities and the setting is fully committed to this as part of the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum.

1.6 It is the responsibility of **every** member of staff, volunteer and visitor to our setting to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, at all times, work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all of the pupils at this setting. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

1.7 All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and 'think the unthinkable', where safeguarding is concerned. Where there is a safeguarding concern, we ensure the child's voice is heard and taken into account.

1.8 The federation understands information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes and our responsibility to share, hold and use information in an appropriate way.

1.9 Our principles are as follows:

- The setting's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.

- The setting assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the wellbeing of its pupils; in Northumberland, this is known as Risks Outside the Home.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

2 Legislation and statutory guidance

2.1 This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance [Keeping children safe in education](#) and [Working together to safeguard children](#), and the [Maintained schools: governance guide](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our three local safeguarding partners as identified in *Keeping children safe in education*: the local authority, integrated care boards within the local authority, and the chief of police for an area in the local authority.

2.2 This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- [Section 175 of the Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on settings and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to have completed safer recruitment training
- The [Crime and Policing Act 2026](#), which includes the removal of the Supervision Exemption effective 1st September 2026, meaning adults working in regulated activity, including unpaid volunteers, and even if supervised by a teacher, need an enhanced DBS check; the Act also sets out the duty to report child sexual abuse
- The [Children Act 1989](#) and [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026](#) which provide a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by [section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- [Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), issued under the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#), which places a statutory obligation on settings to protect susceptible individuals from the risk of radicalisation and from being drawn into terrorism
- The [Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation); this means our governors and Executive Headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics; the Act allows our setting to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting a specific group of pupils (where we can show

it's proportionate), and this includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils - for example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment

- The [Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; the PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes; some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination

3 Definitions

3.1 **Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This means:**

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

3.2 **Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including in foster care and residential care, as well as online.

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

3.4 **Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

4 Equality statement

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

4.2 We give special consideration to children who:

- have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see section 10)
- are young carers
- may experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- have English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- are known to be living in difficult situations e.g. temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence

- are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- are asylum seekers
- are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or frequently
- whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from setting to be home educated

5 Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1 This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and governors in the setting and is consistent with the procedures of the three safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended setting and off-site activities.
- 5.2 Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility and applies to all staff, volunteers, visitors and governors. As a setting we will promote a culture of safeguarding through effective training, briefings and practice as well as collaborative multiagency working.
- 5.3 The setting identifies opportunities within the curriculum to teach safeguarding. This is in the context of a whole-setting approach to supporting pupils to become resilient learners and prepare them for life outside settings. In this setting we promote a culture where sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment will not be tolerated.

All Staff

- 5.4 All staff will read Part 1 and Annex A of *Keeping children safe in education* annually. A record that all staff have read and understood Part 1 and Annex A must be held by the federation.
- 5.5 Due to their day-to-day contact with pupils, setting staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and recognise signs and indicators of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in setting when they are in distress or at risk.
- 5.6 All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as abusive. This should not prevent staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children which facilitate communication.
- 5.7 All staff will be aware of:
- systems that support safeguarding, including this Child Protection Policy, the Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers, the Behaviour Policy for the school(s) they work in, the role and identity of the DSL and deputies, the Online Safety Policy, and the safeguarding response to children who are frequently missing or go missing from education, home or care
 - the early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment

- the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- what to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- the signs of different types of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including domestic and sexual abuse (including controlling and coercive behaviour, as well as parental conflict that is frequent, intense, and unresolved), as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, grooming, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- new and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm
- the importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- the fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at setting and online, known as Risks Outside the Home in Northumberland
- the fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
- that a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time
- what to look for to identify children who need help or protection

DSL Responsibilities

5.8 The DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). They take the lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in setting. Each school has Deputy DSLs who are trained to the same level as our DSLs and who will take responsibility for safeguarding and child protection in their absence. All DSLs should have read *Keeping children safe in education* in its entirety and further details about the role of the DSL can be found in Part 2.

5.9 The DSLs in each school are as follows:

SVHS

- **DSL: Stephen Wood** - stephen.wood@svf.org.uk (0191 2371505)
- **Deputy DSLs:**
 - o Ali Bartlett
 - o Nat Gilhooley
 - o John Hamilton
 - o Steve Henderson
 - o Bex Hewitson
 - o Lucy Shield

SSMS

- **DSL: Karen Hopper** - karen.hopper@svf.org.uk (0191 2370629)
- **Deputy DSLs:**
 - o Katie Mason
 - o Katie Middlemiss

- o Clare Tennant

WMS

- **DSL: Kath Lennon** - kath.lennon@svf.org.uk (0191 2371402)
- Deputy DSLs:
 - o Jon Souter
 - o Bev Telfer

5.10 The DSLs will be given time, training, resources and support to:

- act as a source of support and expertise to the setting community
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- follow locally agreed processes for providing early help and intervention
- refer cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police, as appropriate
- notify children's social care if a child with a child protection plan has unexplained absences
- keep detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely
- develop effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including NCASP
- be the lead for Operation Encompass and Operation Endeavour in the setting
- attend and contribute to multi agency meetings including child protection conferences and/or support other appropriate staff to do so
- have a working knowledge of NCASP procedures and priorities
- keep the Executive Headteacher informed of any issues
- ensure all staff have an awareness of Prevent and that any concerns around radicalisation are referred in through the Northumberland Prevent Pathway
- ensure the setting has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, and all staff are aware of these systems
- refer any cases, as appropriate, to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- ensure the child protection policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated
- ensure child protection records are securely transferred when a child moves on to a new setting, and a confirmation of receipt is obtained
- liaise with any professions involved with a child when they move on to a new setting
- ensure parents/carers are aware of the setting's duty of care with regards to safeguarding and that referrals will be made when appropriate
- attend appropriate DSL training, receive regular updates and refresher training provided by Northumberland Schools Safeguarding Team every two years
- ensure a record is kept of staff compliance for child protection and safeguarding training
- ensure all staff are kept up to date with key priorities for the local authority, including learning from practice reviews
- complete and review Northumberland's S175 Safeguarding Audit and share this with the governing body
- exercise professional challenge where there is concern decisions do not adequately safeguard a child/children and to follow NCASP escalation procedures where necessary

- 5.11 Whilst the activities of the DSL can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the DSL.
- 5.12 **If the DSL (or deputies) are not available, staff should contact a member of the SLT to seek advice.**
- 5.13 Advice can also be sought from One Call (01670 536400) or from the Settings Safeguarding Team (01670 623261).

Governing Body

- 5.14 The governing body will:

- facilitate a whole-setting approach to safeguarding and an active culture of keeping children safe, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the Executive Headteacher to account for its implementation
- be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and NCASP priorities and procedures
- appoint a safeguarding governor to monitor the effectiveness of the settings safeguarding policies and procedures; this should be a different person from the DSL
- ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from NCASP
- ensure that the setting has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, review their effectiveness and make certain all staff know and understand the systems in place
- ensure the DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
- ensure online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-setting approach to safeguarding and related policies
- ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed
- ensure all staff know the procedures in place for any concerns around adults working with children and how to refer concerns to the Executive Headteacher who will then decide if a referral to the LADO needs to be made; the chair of governors will manage any cases where there is an allegation of abuse made against the Executive Headteacher
- ensure safeguarding policies highlight and consider the additional measures required for those who are most vulnerable including children with SEND, LGBTQ+, children with a social worker and children missing from education

- 5.15 In addition to the above, where the setting is being used by other services and providers:

- assurances should be sought that the provider has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place
- ensure the setting has relevant arrangements to liaise with the provider following any concerns, as well as ensuring the setting understands their responsibility to follow any concerns up that happen on the premises

- ensure the condition of use/lease of the setting is conditional that all safeguarding requirements are met

5.16 All governors will read *Keeping children safe in education* in its entirety.

Executive Headteacher

5.17 The Executive Headteacher:

- ensures that the Child Protection Policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- develops and maintain a culture of safeguarding across the federation through policy, practice, training and briefings
- communicates this policy to the whole federation community including parents/carers (and pupils where appropriate)
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSLs and deputies to carry out their roles effectively
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures - and making a decision as to whether the harm threshold has been met or not (low level concerns)
- ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn and talk about safeguarding, at home, school, in the community and online
- ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the DBS

Virtual School Headteacher

5.18 Virtual School Headteachers (VSHs) have a responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of all pupils with a social worker.

5.19 VSHs also have a responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children in kinship care (children who live with a relative or close family friend).

5.20 They should also identify and engage with key professionals e.g. DSLs, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinators (SENDCOs), social workers, mental health leads and others.

6 Information sharing

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare of, and protect the safety of, children.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if:
 - o it is not possible to gain consent
 - o it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or
 - o if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.

- If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
 - There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.
 - The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.
 - The DSL should consider that parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk).
 - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care.
 - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes; where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police - while the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.
- Regarding anonymity, all staff will:
 - be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
 - do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment - for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
 - consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities
- The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes seven 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

7 Recognising and responding to abuse

Recognising Abuse

7.1 All staff should be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation. All children and young people can suffer from abuse, but all staff must be aware of those who are more vulnerable and may need early help. This includes children who:

- have a disability or SEND
- are a young carer
- are bereaved or have an absent parent/carer
- have a parent in prison/custody
- are showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- are frequently missing/goes missing from care or home
- are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- are at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- are viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online

- are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- are misusing drugs or alcohol
- are suffering from mental ill health
- are a cared for child
- have returned home to their family from care
- are a privately fostered child
- are at risk of honour-based abuse such as FGM or forced marriage
- are missing education, or persistently absent from setting, or not in receipt of full-time education
- have experienced multiple suspensions and are at risk of being, or have been, permanently excluded

7.2 Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse.

7.3 Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of any safeguarding concerns.

If a Child is Suffering or Likely to Suffer Harm, or in Immediate Danger

7.4 Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.**

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

- Contact the police (999) or Onecall (01670 536400)
- Complete a [Multi-Agency Referral Form \(MARF\)](#)
- Ensure any referral has been acknowledged by safeguarding partners

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

If a Child Makes a Disclosure to You

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

- listen to and believe them
- allow them time to talk freely
- ask open, non-leading questions as appropriate
- stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you; do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on; do not promise to keep it a secret
- record your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words; stick to the facts, and do not include your own opinions
- share the record with the DSL, via paper, CPOMS or in person; if the DSL is not available and where appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so - **aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process**

7.8 Bear in mind that some children may:

- not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
- not recognise their experiences as harmful
- feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened; this could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers

7.9 None of this should stop you from having a ‘professional curiosity’ and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

If You Discover that FGM Has Taken Place or a Pupil is At Risk of FGM

7.10 *Keeping children safe in education* explains that FGM comprises “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs”.

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

7.12 **Any teacher who:**

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

must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

7.13 Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children’s social care as appropriate.

7.14 **Any other member of staff** who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

7.15 **The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM, or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.**

7.16 **Any member of staff** who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out should speak to the DSL and follow our [local safeguarding procedures](#).

If You Have Concerns About a Child (as Opposed to Believing a Child is Suffering or Likely to Suffer From Harm, or is In Immediate Danger)

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

7.18 If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the SLT and/or take advice

from Children's Social Care through Onecall (01670 536400). You can also seek advice at any time from the Northumberland Settings Safeguarding Team (01670 623261).

Early help assessment

- If an early help assessment is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.
- The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.
- Concerns which do not meet the threshold for child protection intervention will be managed through the Early Help process.
- Early Help Support Request forms can be found [here](#).

Referral

- If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.
- If you make a referral directly, you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.
- The local authority will make a decision within one working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.
- If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow [local escalation procedures](#) to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

If You Have Concerns About Extremism/Radicalisation

- 7.19 Where there is a concern about a child being radicalised, the DSL will consider the level of risk and follow the [Northumberland Prevent Pathway](#) to decide which agency to make a referral to. Some referrals may meet the threshold for [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
- 7.20 The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline (0207 3407264), which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. **Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.**
- 7.21 In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline (0800 789321) if you:
- think someone is in immediate danger
 - think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
 - see or hear something that may be terrorist-related

If You Have a Concern About Mental Health

- 7.22 Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

7.23 Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one:

- If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action.
- If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

7.24 Refer to the Department for Education guidance on [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) for more information.

7.25 Local support can be found [here](#).

Whistleblowing: Concerns About a Staff Member, Supply Teacher, Volunteer or Contractor

7.26 Staff who are concerned about an adult's behaviour should follow the federation's Whistleblowing Policy.

7.27 All concerns/allegations should be referred to the Executive Headteacher, who will consider whether a referral to the LADO should be made.

7.28 Where there is a concern/allegation about the Executive Headteacher, this should be referred to the chair of governors.

7.29 In the event of a concern/allegation involving both the Executive Headteacher and chair of governors, or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Executive Headteacher or chair of governors, this should be reported directly to the LADO (LADO@northumberland.gov.uk or 07500 606174).

Abuse of position of trust

- All setting staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.
- In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the setting staff and a pupil may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.
- The federation's Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers sets out our expectations of our staff.

Allegations of Child-on-Child Abuse

7.30 We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up", as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils.

7.31 All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Our settings are respectful places where bullying is not tolerated.

7.32 Most cases of child-on-child abuse will be dealt with under each school's behaviour policy, but this Child Protection Policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- is serious (including harassment), and potentially a criminal offence
- could put pupils in the school at risk
- involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)
- involves pupils being exploited including criminal exploitation, risk of serious violence

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

- If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:
 - o You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it.
 - o The DSL will contact the local authority Children's Social Care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence.
 - o The DSL may put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the child(ren) who have been harmed and the child(ren) alleged to have caused harm), with a named person they can talk to if needed; this will include considering setting transport arrangements where applicable.
- If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

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

- To achieve a supportive environment, and minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, we will:
 - o ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent and opportunities to teach safeguarding and keeping children safe are identified throughout the curriculum
 - o ensure pupils understand that their concerns will be taken seriously, and they are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems
 - o be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
 - o support children who have witnessed sexual violence; we will do all we can to make sure the child who has been harmed, children alleged to be causing harm, and any witnesses, are not bullied or harassed
 - o consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
 - o ensure staff are trained to understand:
 - the important role they have to play in preventing child on child abuse, how to recognise the signs and indicators of child-on-child abuse and how to respond to concerns appropriately
 - that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in setting, it does not mean it is not happening - staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"
 - that if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report - for example:

- children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
 - a friend may make a report
 - a member of staff may overhear a conversation
 - a child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
- that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
- that a pupil harming another child could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
- that they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
- that social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident and could impact all children involved including witnesses to the incident
- Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are ongoing, for example by the police; the fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent our setting from taking appropriate safeguarding and disciplinary action; we will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis taking into account whether:
 - taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution; we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children's social care to determine this before taking action
 - there are circumstances that make it unreasonable for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

Sharing of Nudes and Semi-Nudes ('Sexting')

7.33 This approach is based on [guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety](#) for all staff, DSLs and senior leaders.

Responsibilities when responding to an incident

- If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.
- You must **not**:
 - view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it; if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL
 - delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
 - say or do anything to blame or shame any children involved
- You should explain that you need to report the incident and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.
- Following a report of an incident, the DSL and other staff members involved will determine:
 - whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)
 - if a referral needs to be made to children's social care
 - what further information is required to decide on the best response
 - whether the image(s) has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown)
 - whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online services
 - if there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual

- o whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved; in most cases parents/carers should be informed

Informing parents/carers

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

Recording incidents

- All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out below also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage

- Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our relationships and sex education and computing curricula; teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:
 - o what it is
 - o how it is most likely to be encountered
 - o the consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
 - o issues of legality
 - o the risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation
- Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:
 - o specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
 - o the receipt of such images

Reporting Systems for Our Pupils

7.34 We recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

7.35 To achieve this, we will:

- put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse
- ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils
- make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

8 Online safety

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

8.2 To address this, our federation aims to:

- have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors including measures to protect children's personal information by ensuring cyber security systems are in place; this is in line with [Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges](#)

- protect and educate the whole federation community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as ‘mobile phones’)
- set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community based on [Mobile phones in schools](#) guidance
- establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate
- use the DfE guidance [Teaching online safety in schools](#)

The Four Key Categories of Risk

8.3 Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** - being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
- **Contact** - being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct** - personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying
- **Commerce** - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

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

- teach our pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum, for example:
 - o the safe use of social media, the internet and technology
 - o keeping personal information private
 - o how to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
 - o how to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they’re a witness rather than a victim
- train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring; all staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year
- educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents’ evenings; we will also share clear procedures with them, so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in federation, use of the federation’s ICT systems, and use of their mobile and smart technology
- make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils’ phones, as set out in the [DfE’s guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children’s exposure to the four key categories of risk from the federation’s ICT systems
- carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety

- provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- review the federation's Child Protection and Online Safety policies annually, and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- 8.5 Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini.
- 8.6 We recognise that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying, grooming, misinformation, fraud and the use of AI chatbots that may encourage harmful behaviour) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. This can be in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real, including AI generated nudes and semi-nude images of children.
- 8.7 Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used in school using the DfE guidance on [Generative AI: product safety standards](#).

Filtering and Monitoring

- 8.8 When pupils use the federation's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems, which are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness.
- 8.9 'Filtering' refers to the technology preventing access to harmful or inappropriate content, whilst 'monitoring' refers to the practical steps staff take to ensure harmful or inappropriate access is not made.
- 8.10 Monitoring can include:
- physical monitoring - staff being vigilant when children are using devices
 - live monitoring using software that screen captures trigger words/phrases
 - monitoring of individual devices/users
- 8.11 We make sure that any federation devices used away from the school sites are also subject to filtering and monitoring procedures.
- 8.12 Each year our DSLs, ICT team and the child protection governor review our filtering and monitoring procedures to ensure that they effectively prevent access to harmful or inappropriate content.
- 8.13 All staff undertake training to understand the risks of poor filtering and monitoring, and know how to share their concerns.
- 8.14 Staff and governors take part in annual cybersecurity training.
- 8.15 However, many pupils are able to access the internet using personal devices on journeys into school and going home. To minimise inappropriate use, we ask pupils and parents/carers to adhere to the guidance stated in our Online Safety Policy.

Photography and Images

8.16 The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images.

8.17 To protect pupils we will:

- seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- avoid using pupils' names with an image except where the identity of the pupil is integral to the story, in which case only the first name of the pupil will be used, and only where explicit consent has been granted
- ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
- encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them

Staff/Pupil Relationships and Online Contact

8.18 The federation provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

8.19 The Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers refers to expectations around internet use and social networking.

9 Notifying parents or carers

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

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

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

9.4 In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

10 Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

10.1 We recognise that pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group, including:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils
- the potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
- cognitive understanding i.e. being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content, and then repeating the content/behaviours in setting or being unable to understand the consequences of doing so

10.2 We offer extra pastoral support for these pupils, including support to help pupils overcome any communication barriers they face.

10.3 Any abuse involving pupils with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputies) and the SENDCo.

Safeguarding Children with Medical Conditions

10.4 A child having a medical condition is not in itself an indicator that a child is at greater safeguarding risk. In the event of an incident taking place the DSL will consider if any safeguarding duty has been triggered. This decision will be made in conjunction with the federation's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

11 Pupils with a social worker

11.1 Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

11.2 The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

11.3 Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

- responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- the provision of pastoral and/or academic support
- promoting a sense of belonging and stability, to reduce risks when not in setting
- using attendance in setting as a protective factor, and ensuring suspensions and reduced time in setting are only used as a last resort
- ensuring the child's social worker is informed prior to any suspensions

12 Looked after and previously looked after children

12.1 The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The Designated Teacher in the child's setting ensures staff have the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the child's local authority Virtual Head Teacher.

12.2 As part of their role, the Designated Teacher will:

- work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked after and previously looked after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- promote a sense of belonging and stability, to reduce risks when not in setting
- use attendance in setting as a protective factor, and ensure suspensions and reduced time in setting are only used as a last resort
- collaborate with the virtual setting and child's social worker for additional support prior to any suspensions
- work with VSHs to promote the educational achievement of looked after and previously looked after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

13 Pupils who are lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)

13.1 The fact that a child or a young person may be LGB is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGB can be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGB (whether or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGB.

13.2 Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBTQ lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. In our setting we endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by providing a safe space for any child to speak with a trusted adult of their choice.

14 Pupils who are questioning their gender

14.1 Staff will not initiate any action in the area of children questioning their gender. Where a child or their parent has raised a request relating to social transition, staff will:

- take time to understand the thoughts and feelings of those children who are questioning their gender and will be appropriately professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences
- be aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender including the possibility of complex mental health need
- be aware of the potential for discriminatory bullying and will challenge this appropriately

14.2 We will refer to paragraphs 253 to 282 of *Keeping children safe in education 2026* when making decisions around adopting any changes relating to social transition.

15 Young carers

15.1 Staff are alert to the needs of young carers, recognising that caring responsibilities can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing.

15.2 To support the needs of Young Carers the federation seeks support from the [Northumberland Young Carers service](#).

16 Complaints against staff

- 16.1 Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix F).

Other Complaints

- 16.2 The federation's Complaints Procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the Executive Headteacher and governors. The Complaints Procedure is published on the federation's website.
- 16.3 Complaints from staff are dealt with under the federations's complaints, disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- 16.4 Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the federation's child protection procedures.

17 Record keeping

- 17.1 We will hold records in line with our Record Keeping and Retention Policy.
- 17.2 All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the rationale for those decisions must be recorded in writing. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme, etc. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.
- 17.3 Records will include:
- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
 - details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
 - a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- 17.4 Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.
- 17.5 Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.
- 17.6 Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the setting.
- 17.7 If a child for whom the setting has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another setting, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main pupil file. To allow the new setting/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:
- five days for an in-year transfer
 - within the first days of the start of a new term
- 17.8 In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving setting and provide

information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

18 Training

- 18.1 It is important that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and know what to do if they have a concern. All staff must understand the federation's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities.
- 18.2 All staff, including the Executive Headteacher and governors, will receive training that is regularly updated. The NCASP recommends staff receive annual updates and a detailed programme (either online or face to face) at least every three years. All staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example through emails, staff meetings, e-bulletins).
- 18.3 All staff complete a Google Form to confirm they have read and understood the federation's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers, and *Keeping Children Safe in Education* Part One and Annex A.
- 18.4 All staff have Prevent training to enable them to identify children at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideologies.
- 18.5 New staff and governors will receive a mandatory briefing during their induction, which includes the federation's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers, reporting/recording arrangements, and details for the DSLs and deputies.

DSL and Deputy DSLs

- 18.6 The DSL and deputy DSLs will receive annual safeguarding training, with subjects reflecting local and national priorities, and a DSL refresher session on their roles and responsibilities every two years.
- 18.7 In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

Governors

- 18.8 Members of the governing body take part in mandatory safeguarding training to ensure that they:
- have the knowledge and information to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge
 - can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the setting to deliver a robust whole-setting approach to safeguarding

Visitors

- 18.9 Supply staff and other visitors, including trainee teachers, education professionals and volunteers, will be given the school's Information for Visitors leaflet, which will be made available to them on their arrival

18.10 Supply staff and trainee teachers will also be given a copy of the federation's Staff Handbook, so they clearly understand our procedures and protocols.

19 Safer recruitment

19.1 Our federation endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ safe staff by following the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and the federation's staff recruitment procedures:

- At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training, details of which are held on the single central record.
- The federation obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.
- Trainee teachers will be checked either by the federation or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

Single Central Record

19.2 The federation maintains a digital Single Central Record (SCR) of all recruitment checks undertaken, to ensure staff, governors and those in regulated activity are safe (as much as possible) to work within our setting. This information is only kept during the term of employment or activity within the federation.

19.3 The SCR is audited termly by the DSLs to ensure the accuracy of information held.

Volunteers

19.4 Volunteers, including governors, will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the federation and contact with pupils. Volunteers who have not been appropriately checked (Enhanced DBS) will not be allowed to engage in regulated activity.

Supervised Volunteers

19.5 Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are **not** in regulated activity will undergo the safer recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the federation's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

Contractors

19.6 The federation checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests confirmation that DBS checks and barred list checks have been undertaken by the contractor where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

Site Security

19.7 Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the federation's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The Executive Headteacher will exercise

professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Extended Setting, Out of Setting Providers and Off-Site Arrangements

- 19.8 Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the federation, we use the DfE's [After-school clubs, community activities, and tuition safeguarding guidance for providers](#), and this policy and procedures also apply.
- 19.9 When we host out-of-school providers on the premises, it should be noted that whilst the provider is responsible for their own safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, the school may refer any concerns they have about the provider to the local authority.
- 19.10 When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Appendix A: Definitions of abuse and other harmful behaviour

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

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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone. Emotional abuse may involve:

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

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

- physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing.
- non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

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

The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

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

Appendix B: Specific safeguarding issues

Risks Outside the Home / Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, settings and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. Risks outside the home can include anti-social behaviour, child criminal/sexual/financial exploitation, other extra-familial sexual abuse, serious youth violence, gang affiliation, radicalisation and violent extremism, trafficking and modern day slavery, child-on-child abuse including harmful sexual behaviour, bullying and unhealthy relationships, abuse by an adult working with children.

Local authority children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside of the home¹⁶, so it is important that settings and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process.

Child Criminal Exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.

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

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

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- misusing drugs and alcohol
- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- regularly missing setting or education
- not taking part in education

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

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into

sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

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

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

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

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

- having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

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

Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of setting. It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the two.

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

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

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

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

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

Children Who are Absent From Education

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse, exploitation, mental health concerns, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

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

Knowing where children are during setting hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding. We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay. We will follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at setting. This means we need to have at least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the setting as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) the setting has:

- staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
- appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions)
- staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage
- procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:
 - leave setting to be home educated
 - move away from the setting's location
 - remain medically unfit beyond compulsory setting age
 - are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to setting afterwards)
 - are permanently excluded

We will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the setting but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a pupil leaves the setting, we will record the name of the pupil's new setting and their expected start date.

The setting's attendance lead will submit a monthly return to the local authority indicating children missing education, and the DSL must review this submission before it is sent to ensure they are aware of any concerns or can add additional information.

Our procedures reflect the latest DfE guidance regarding [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [Children missing education](#).

Honour-Based Abuse (including FGM and Forced Marriage)

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

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

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

Forced Marriage

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

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

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage they will report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place
- will seek professional advice before contacting parent/carers
- activate the local safeguarding procedures
- seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 0207 0080151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk
- refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or setting counsellor, as appropriate

Preventing Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

- negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others

- undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights
- intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results outlined in either of the above points

Terrorism is an action that:

- endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people
- causes serious damage to property
- seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system

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

Settings have a duty to prevent children from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. All staff will undertake Prevent training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies. The federation will ensure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our settings from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

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

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

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

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

- refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- changes in friendship groups and appearance
- rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- converting to a new religion
- isolating themselves from family and friends
- talking as if from a scripted speech
- an unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- increased levels of anger
- increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- accessing extremist material online, including on social media
- possessing extremist literature
- being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

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

Staff should always take action if they are worried and report their concerns to the DSL. The DSL will fill out a Prevent referral form if appropriate and email to fimunorth@ctpne.police.uk and prevent@northumberland.gov.uk

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- between two children of any age and sex
- through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

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

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

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

When supporting victims, staff will:

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

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

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

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

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures and report their concerns to the DSL who will take appropriate action.

Incidents of rape and sexual assault will be reported to the police; referrals to Children's Services will be made as appropriate.

Children with Sexually Harmful Behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the setting's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

The management of children with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and the setting will work with other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole setting community. Children who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a pupil's sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

Serious Violence

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

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

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

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from setting
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Missing Pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is reported and found as soon as possible.

Private Fostering Arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's

parents. It applies to children under the age of 16 or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. Children looked after by the local authority or who are placed in a residential setting, children's home or hospital are not considered to be privately fostered.

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

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

When a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement, they will raise this with the DSL and the setting should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

Appendix C: Useful links

- [Keeping children safe in education](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#)
- [Crime and Policing Act 2026](#)
- [School inspection: toolkit, operating guides and information](#)
- [Northumberland Local Resources](#)
- NCASP Thresholds of Need [slides](#) and [guidance](#)
- [Operation Encompass](#)
- [Be You Northumberland](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)
- [Information sharing to safeguard children and young people](#)
- [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#)
- [Northumberland County Council: Safeguarding children](#)
- [Northumberland Education](#)
- [Be Connected](#) padlet
- [Schools Safeguarding Team Mailbox](#)
- [Offensive Weapon and Knife Carrying Protocol for Education \(Northumberland\)](#)
- [Family Hubs Northumberland](#)
- [Contact Us - Northumberland Education](#)

Appendix D: School paperwork for recording concerns

Safeguarding Concern Reporting Form

Name of young person: Form Class: Date of birth:
Concern:
Reported by:
Reported to and when:
Action taken, by whom and when:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Discussion with Young Person

Name of young person:

Form Class:

Date of birth:

Date:

Time : am/pm

Place:

Present:

What young person revealed:

Circumstances leading up to the disclosure:

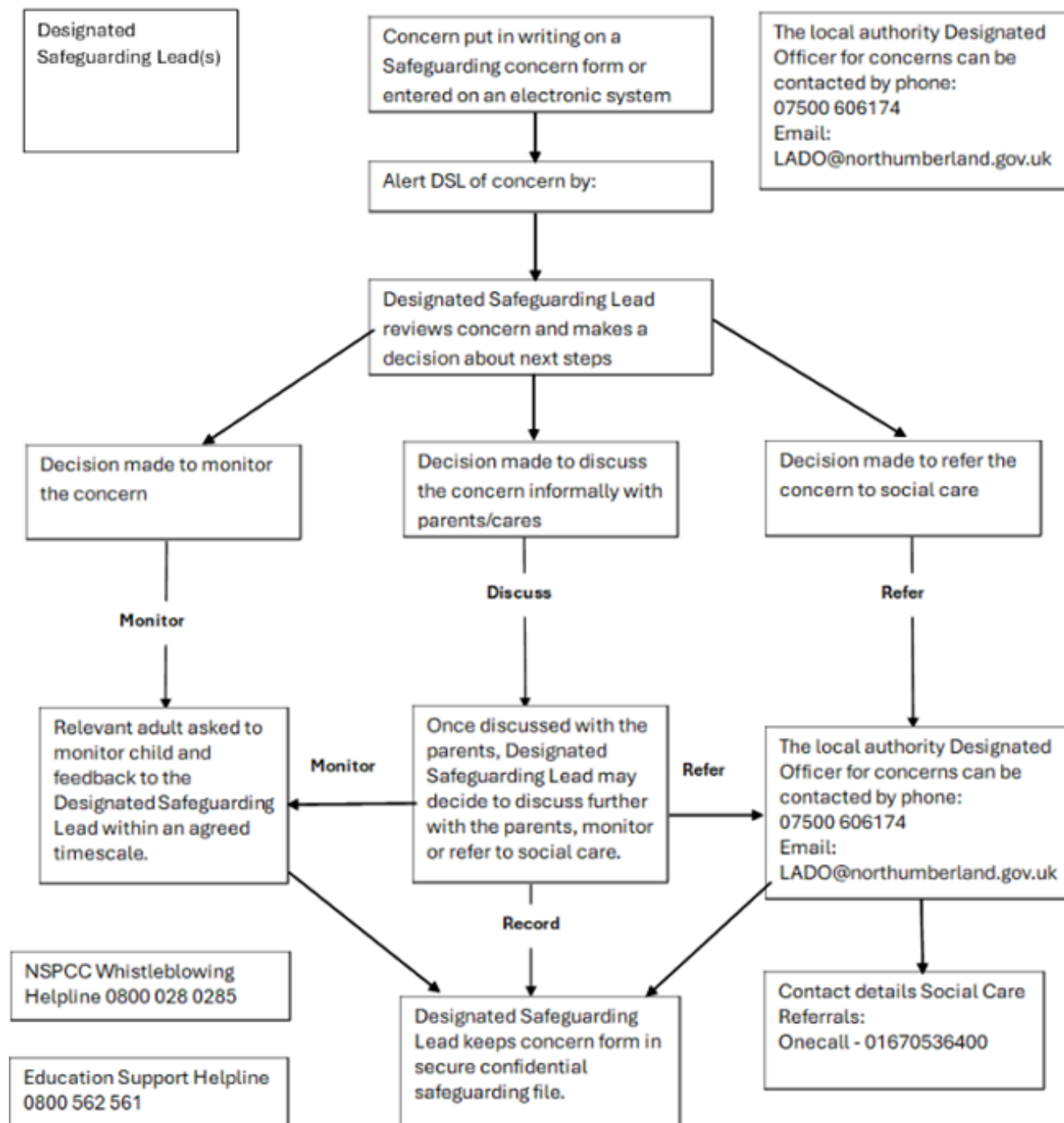
Questions asked of young person:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix E: Flowchart for following up concerns

FLOWCHART FOR RAISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD



Appendix F: Dealing with allegations against people who work with children

We recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the Executive Headteacher without delay; any concerns about the Executive Headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors.

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors should be reported to the Executive Headteacher.

Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

The Executive Headteacher has to decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Allegations should be reported to the LADO without delay.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school or college, or a combination of these.

The federation follows *Keeping children safe in education, Part four: Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors* when managing any allegations.

Staff should be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Low-level concerns

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing and shared with the Executive Headteacher, including:

- the name of individual sharing the concerns
- details of the concern
- the context in which the concern arose
- action taken

Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

What is a Local Authority Designated Officer or LADO?

The role of LADO was initially set out in the HM Government guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)* and continues in the current guidance.

The LADO works within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which 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 children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

This role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers and all adults outside the school workforce. They capture concerns, allegations or offences; this can include concerns about their own personal life, e.g incidents of domestic violence or child protection concerns relating to their own family.

If there is an allegation against the Headteacher then concerns should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors and LADO.

The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. They will provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures. Schools should seek advice from the LADO as soon as an allegation is made.

The LADO coordinates information-sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible.

LADO@northumberland.gov.uk

07500 606174

Appendix G: Specific considerations

Work Experience

- The federation has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Children staying with host families

- The federation may make arrangements for pupils to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. In such circumstances the federation follows the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.
- Some overseas pupils may reside with host families during school terms, and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable.

Sixth Form

- If the student is over 18, and is not a danger to themselves, permission must be obtained from the student to share the information they have disclosed with outside agencies.'
- We recognise that some procedures are different for those young people and adults over the age of 18 years. Once the student has reached the age of 18, they may be classed as a vulnerable adult, defined in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as a person who has reached the age of 18 and:
 - o is in residential accommodation or sheltered housing
 - o receives domiciliary care or any form of healthcare
 - o is detained in lawful custody
 - o is by virtue of an order of the court under supervision by a person exercising functions for the purposes of part one of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
 - o receives the welfare service of an agency outside the school
 - o receives any service or participates in any activity provided specifically for persons who fall within subsection 9 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2009
 - o payments are made to him/her (or to another on his/her behalf) in pursuance of arrangements under section 57 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001
 - o requires assistance in the conduct of his/her own affairs' child (i.e., a pupil at school who has not yet reached their 18th birthday)
- In general, adult safeguarding procedures should be implemented for 18-year-olds and in these situations. Children's Safeguarding should remain equal partners throughout the process so any issues that impact on the service can be addressed. These situations may be complicated by the different procedure's timescales and processes.
- Further information can be found at [Adult Safeguarding - Information for professionals](#).