Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2024-2025

USWORTH COLLIERY PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Person Responsible for this Policy: Alison Forster
Governor Responsible for this Policy: Vikki Kennedy
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1. Introduction

At Usworth Colliery Primary School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, and everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play.

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- **Protect children** from harm and promote their welfare, as children who feel safe can achieve more.
- Provide **governors, staff, children, and their families** with the overarching principles and our approach to keeping children safe.
- Support our understanding and implementation of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)** and other statutory guidance like **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**.

We are clear that the welfare of all children is paramount regardless of age, gender, culture, language, race, ability, sexual identity, or religion. We are committed to ensuring all our practices are **child-centred**, which means we always act in the best interests of our children.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of the school, including commissioned services, peripatetic and supply staff, and student placements.

We take our responsibility to keep children safe seriously.

Safeguarding Priorities: Based on our local context, including the socio-economic difficulties faced by our community and the higher-than-average number of children on the SEN

register, Usworth Colliery Primary School has identified the following safeguarding priorities for this academic year:

1. **Improving online safety awareness** among pupils, staff, and parents to better manage risks associated with the digital environment, with a particular focus on children with additional needs who may be more vulnerable to online exploitation, cyberbullying, or inappropriate content.
2. **Addressing mental health concerns** in children by providing access to appropriate support services, promoting mental well-being, and recognising the added pressures that socio-economic challenges can place on families. We will tailor interventions to meet the needs of children with SEN, ensuring they receive the necessary emotional and mental health support.
3. **Enhancing early intervention strategies** for children at risk of exploitation, radicalisation, or other contextual safeguarding issues. This includes actively supporting children from disadvantaged backgrounds who may be more susceptible to these risks, as well as working closely with external agencies to provide targeted support for children with SEN.
4. **Supporting children and families facing socio-economic difficulties** by working with local services to provide holistic support, ensuring that financial hardship does not become a barrier to safety and well-being. We aim to build strong relationships with families to identify concerns early, provide guidance, and offer resources to help mitigate the impact of economic challenges on children's development and welfare.

These priorities guide our safeguarding approach and ensure that our practices are responsive to the specific needs and risks within our school community, particularly focusing on the most vulnerable groups.

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2. Statutory Framework

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, Usworth Colliery Primary School will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- **The Children Act 1989**
- **The Children Act 2004**
- **Children and Social Work Act 2017**
- **Education Act 2002 (Section 175/157):** Outlines that Local Authorities and School Governing Bodies have a responsibility to "ensure that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are its pupils."
- **Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual (Electronic)**

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2024)**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2023)**
- **The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005**
- **Section 26 of The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (PREVENT duty)**
- **Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (Section 74, Serious Crime Act 2015)**
- **The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014**
- **Serious Violence Duty (2022):** Reflecting changes brought about by the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, requiring specified authorities, including schools, to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence.
- **Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty)**
- **The Human Rights Act 1998**
- **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR:** Ensuring the lawful processing and protection of children's personal data.

3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

At Usworth Colliery Primary School, we have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), supported by a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and a wider safeguarding team.

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Alison Forster (Headteacher)
- **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL):** Victoria Moore (Deputy Headteacher)
- **Safeguarding Team:**
    - Assistant Headteacher
    - Family Liaison Officer

The **DSL** is responsible for:

- Ensuring all safeguarding policies and procedures are fully implemented and followed by all staff, in accordance with the latest statutory guidance.
- Acting as a source of advice, support, and expertise for staff on safeguarding matters.
- Referring cases of suspected abuse to Children's Social Care and ensuring prompt, appropriate action is taken.
- Liaising with the Headteacher to inform them of any issues and ongoing enquiries.
- Attending multi-agency child protection meetings, case conferences, and reviews.
- Ensuring the school's safeguarding training is up-to-date and that all staff receive regular safeguarding training in line with statutory requirements.
- Keeping detailed, accurate, and secure written records of concerns and referrals, ensuring compliance with Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

The **Deputy DSL** is responsible for:

- Supporting the DSL in all safeguarding matters.
- Acting as a lead when the DSL is unavailable.
- Being trained to the same level as the DSL to ensure continuity in safeguarding practices.

The **Safeguarding Team** is responsible for:

- Supporting both the DSL and Deputy DSL in their roles.
- Providing additional expertise and support for safeguarding cases.
- Helping to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to safeguarding across the school.

Supervision:

- The school provides **regular independent professional supervision** for the DSL and staff involved in managing child protection cases. This supervision process includes reviewing safeguarding concerns, offering support, and ensuring that staff members are equipped to handle their safeguarding responsibilities effectively. The DSL's supervision is conducted by a senior member of staff or an external safeguarding professional to maintain an objective perspective.

The DSL, DDSL, and Safeguarding Team have a vital role in ensuring safeguarding policies are kept up-to-date and that safeguarding and child protection are always a priority in our school. They are part of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure that safeguarding has a prominent place in the decision-making process.

4. The Management of Safeguarding (Governing Body, Proprietors, and Management Committees)

The Governing Body of Usworth Colliery Primary School has overall responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are in place and compliant with the relevant statutory frameworks. The Governing Body will ensure the school:

- **Complies** with its statutory safeguarding responsibilities, including ensuring policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated in line with current legislation.

- **Appoints a designated governor** responsible for safeguarding, who liaises with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and provides oversight of the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- **Has clear policies** in place to manage allegations against staff and handle low-level concerns, as outlined in "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024."
- **Ensures safer recruitment practices** are followed, including all necessary pre-employment checks on staff, particularly those involved in regular or unsupervised contact with children.
- **Monitors the effectiveness** of safeguarding policies and practices, including online safety, through regular audits and reviews.
- **Supports a culture of safeguarding** where children feel safe, and staff are confident in raising concerns.
- **Provides all staff with appropriate safeguarding training**, including online safety training, ensuring safeguarding remains a priority in all aspects of school life.

Working with External Organisations:

- When external organisations or groups use the school premises, they must provide evidence of their **safeguarding policies and procedures**, including DBS checks for staff and volunteers. The school will ensure that these organisations understand and comply with our safeguarding expectations.

The Governing Body also ensures the school:

- **Has systems in place** for children to share concerns and express their views.
- **Addresses the needs of vulnerable children**, such as those with special educational needs, children with a social worker, and children at risk of harm.

The **Chair of Governors** is responsible for overseeing the school's safeguarding practices, ensuring safeguarding is embedded in the school's ethos, and working with the DSL on safeguarding matters as needed.

5. When to Be Concerned

All staff at Usworth Colliery Primary School should be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm or in need of help. Staff must always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" and act accordingly. Staff should be concerned about a child if they notice any of the following:

- **Physical signs of abuse:** unexplained bruises, burns, bites, fractures, or other injuries.
- **Neglect:** poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, hunger, or poor school attendance.
- **Emotional abuse:** excessive withdrawal, fear, anxiety, or overly aggressive behaviour.

- **Sexual abuse:** age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour, sudden changes in behaviour, or physical symptoms such as bruising in genital areas.
- **Changes in behaviour:** extreme mood swings, withdrawal from activities, excessive clinginess, or unexplained aggressive or risk-taking behaviour.
- **Attendance and punctuality:** frequent absences or lateness, which may indicate underlying safeguarding issues.
- **Other indicators:** substance abuse, criminal behaviour, self-harm, or exploitation, including online exploitation.

All concerns, no matter how small, should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a member of the Safeguarding Team. Staff must share information with the DSL and not assume someone else will take action.

Staff should also be particularly alert to the following groups of children who may need additional help or protection:

- **Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).**
- **Children in care** or those who have previously been in care.
- **Children with a social worker.**
- **Children who are frequently absent** from school.
- **Children at risk of exploitation, radicalisation, or mental health issues.**

6. Dealing with a Disclosure

If a child discloses that they are being abused or neglected, it is essential that staff follow the correct procedures to ensure the child receives the support they need. The following steps should be followed:

When a child makes a disclosure, staff should:

- **Listen carefully** to the child without interrupting or expressing shock or disbelief.
- **Reassure the child** that they have done the right thing in speaking up and that the abuse is not their fault.
- **Avoid promising confidentiality**—explain that the information will be shared with the appropriate people to ensure their safety.
- **Ask open questions only** (Who? What? Where? When?) but avoid leading questions or probing for more information than the child is comfortable sharing.
- **Make a written record** of what the child has said as soon as possible, using the child's own words. Include the date, time, and who was present during the disclosure.
- **Sign and date the record**, ensuring it is kept confidential and handed directly to the DSL or a member of the Safeguarding Team.

Staff must not:

- **Investigate** or attempt to gather further evidence.
- **Ask the child to remove clothing** to show injuries.
- **Make promises they cannot keep**, such as "everything will be fine."

After the disclosure, staff should report the information immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or a member of the **Safeguarding Team**. The DSL will then take appropriate action, including referring the case to **Children's Social Care** if necessary.

7. Record Keeping

Accurate and timely record-keeping is essential in safeguarding and child protection. All concerns, discussions, decisions, and reasons for those decisions must be recorded in writing. At Usworth Colliery Primary School, we use the **CPOMS** system to log safeguarding concerns and incidents, ensuring a consistent and comprehensive approach.

To support staff in effectively documenting safeguarding issues, we have introduced the **C.A.R.E.** acronym:

- **Concern:** Observe and document the concern (e.g., "I noticed that J.D.'s clothes were dirty").
- **Act:** Record the action you took (e.g., "I helped J.D. change into clean clothes").
- **Report:** Inform the relevant staff member (e.g., "I informed Ms. Brown, the class teacher").
- **Enter:** Submit all information into CPOMS accurately (e.g., "Submit information in CPOMS or hand a worry note to Ms. Brown").

This approach ensures that:

- All relevant information is captured **clearly** and **professionally**, providing a **factual and accurate** record of events.
- Class teachers are kept informed of concerns, as staff are required to alert the class teacher in the CPOMS entry or worry note.

Key principles of record-keeping at Usworth Colliery Primary School:

- **Records must be factual,** describing observable behaviour or actions rather than assumptions or opinions. For example, instead of stating, "T.R. was sad and withdrawn today," a more accurate description would be: "T.R. did not participate in group activities and avoided eye contact with teachers and peers."

- **Staff and professionals' names** must be recorded in full, while children's names should always be documented using their **initials** for privacy and confidentiality. For example, use "Mrs. Skeen spoke to Mrs. Thompson about JP," rather than using initials for staff.
- **CPOMS entries** must include the specific actions taken and the relevant staff involved.

Safeguarding records must be:

- **Kept securely:** All written records should be stored in a secure system, accessible only by the **DSL**, **DDSL**, and the **Safeguarding Team**.
- **Confidential:** Safeguarding information should only be shared with those who need to know in order to protect the child, in accordance with **Data Protection Act 2018** and **UK GDPR** requirements.
- **Transferrable:** When a child leaves the school, their safeguarding records must be transferred securely to the new school as soon as possible, following statutory guidelines. This should be done **separately** from the child's general educational file, using a secure transfer method.

The use of the **C.A.R.E.** framework ensures that all safeguarding actions are consistently recorded, supporting both the protection of children and the school's ability to provide accurate documentation when required, such as in legal proceedings. It also ensures that our safeguarding records remain **clear, factual, and professional**.

The safeguarding and admin teams, who also use CPOMS to document meetings or upload documents, are **not expected to use the C.A.R.E. acronym** unless the submission is related to a concern about a child.

Records will be **audited regularly** by the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** to ensure they meet statutory requirements and are up-to-date, aligning with the latest safeguarding guidance.

Explanation of Adjustments

1. **Data Protection Compliance:** Included references to the **Data Protection Act 2018** and **UK GDPR** to highlight the importance of privacy and data security in record-keeping.
2. **Statutory Guidelines:** Emphasised the need for secure transfer of safeguarding records when a child leaves the school, reflecting current statutory requirements.
3. **Clearer Record-keeping Practices:** Reinforced the importance of factual and professional record-keeping and the use of full names for staff while protecting children's privacy using initials.
4. **Audit Emphasis:** Added emphasis on regular audits by the DSL to ensure records comply with statutory requirements.

8. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a crucial aspect of safeguarding and child protection. All staff at Usworth Colliery Primary School must understand that safeguarding and child protection concerns about children should **never be promised confidentiality**.

Key principles of confidentiality:

- **Information must be shared on a need-to-know basis only:** Safeguarding information should only be shared with those who are directly involved in safeguarding the child, such as the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy DSL**, and other relevant staff or agencies. This is in line with statutory guidance, which emphasises the importance of **information sharing** for the protection of children.
- **Do not promise confidentiality to the child:** It is important to be honest with the child about the fact that their concerns will need to be shared with the appropriate people in order to keep them safe. Explain that sharing the information is a necessary step to ensure their safety and well-being.
- **Information should be handled securely:** All written and electronic records relating to safeguarding must be stored securely, with access restricted to those with designated responsibility. This includes compliance with the **Data Protection Act 2018** and **UK GDPR**.
- **The child's welfare is paramount:** In cases where sharing information may risk further harm to a child, the DSL will make decisions about how and when to share information, following statutory guidance and professional judgment.

Staff should remember that **failure to pass on safeguarding concerns** could place a child at serious risk. Even if the child does not want their information shared, safeguarding concerns **must** be reported to the DSL or a member of the Safeguarding Team.

Procedures for information sharing:

- **Record details clearly and factually:** As outlined in the school's record-keeping procedures, all concerns should be documented factually using the **CPOMS** system.
- **Share information with appropriate staff:** Only those directly involved in the safeguarding process should be given access to sensitive information. This typically includes the class teacher, the DSL/DDSL, and, if necessary, external agencies such as **Children's Social Care**.
- **Seek guidance from the DSL when in doubt:** If a staff member is unsure whether certain information should be shared or kept confidential, they must consult the **DSL or Deputy DSL**.

Usworth Colliery Primary School is committed to ensuring that safeguarding records are managed appropriately to protect children, while also ensuring that key information is available to those who need it to take protective action.

9. School Procedures

All staff at Usworth Colliery Primary School have a responsibility to follow the school's safeguarding procedures in order to protect children from harm and promote their welfare. Staff should be familiar with the following steps to take when they have concerns about a child's safety or well-being:

Procedures for Raising Concerns:

1. **Observe and Record:**
   o If a staff member observes behaviour, physical signs, or anything that gives them concern for a child's safety, they must follow the C.A.R.E. framework:
     ▪ **Concern:** Identify and note what has been observed or disclosed.
     ▪ **Act:** Take immediate action if necessary to ensure the child's safety.
     ▪ **Report:** Inform the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)**.
     ▪ **Enter:** Record all information in the school's **CPOMS** system.

2. **Report to the DSL/DDSL:**
   o Concerns should be raised **directly** with the **DSL**, **DDSL**, or a member of the **Safeguarding Team**. Staff must not assume that someone else will take action.
   o In cases where the **DSL** is not available, the concern should be reported to the **Deputy DSL** or another member of the Safeguarding Team.

3. **Document the Concern:**
   o Staff must document the concern as **soon as possible** after the event using **CPOMS**. The documentation should be **factual**, detailing what was observed or disclosed, without adding personal opinions or assumptions.

4. **DSL Action:**
   o The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** will assess the concern and determine the next steps. This may include:
     ▪ Consulting with the child and their family (where appropriate and safe to do so).
     ▪ Referring the concern to **Children's Social Care** for further assessment.
     ▪ Liaising with external agencies (e.g., health services, the police) where necessary.
     ▪ Keeping a **detailed log** of all actions taken.

5. **Following Up:**
   o Staff should **follow up** with the **DSL** or **DDSL** if they have not received feedback or if they feel the concern has not been addressed adequately.

Children Missing from Education:

- Regular monitoring of pupil attendance is vital. In cases where a child is absent from school without explanation, the school will make **reasonable efforts** to contact parents or carers.

- The school will follow up on all absences, particularly those of children who are at greater risk of harm. If there is no response, the school may involve the **Local Authority Education Welfare Officer** and, in certain cases, the **police**.
- **Persistent unexplained absences** will be discussed with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** and may result in a referral to **Children's Social Care** if there are concerns about the child's welfare.

Emergency Situations:

- In cases where a child is in **immediate danger**, staff must take action by **contacting emergency services** (e.g., 999) without delay and then report the situation to the **DSL/DDSL**.

Early Help:

- For children who may need early intervention but are not at immediate risk, the school follows **Early Help** procedures to provide support at an earlier stage. The **DSL** will make a referral to the appropriate local agencies to engage with the family and provide necessary support.

Staff must be proactive in recognising and reporting concerns, ensuring that all children receive the appropriate care and protection at the right time.

10. Communication with Parents

At Usworth Colliery Primary School, we are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We understand the importance of clear, open, and honest communication between school staff and parents.

Key principles for communication with parents:

- **Transparency**: We aim to keep parents informed about any concerns we have regarding their child's safety or well-being, unless doing so would increase the risk of harm to the child.

- **Respect and Sensitivity**: Discussions with parents regarding concerns are handled with care, respect, and sensitivity. The child's best interests are always the priority.

- **Confidentiality**: Information shared with parents is confidential and only involves those directly responsible for the child's safety. Personal information about other children or staff members will not be shared.

- **Professionalism**: All conversations with parents regarding safeguarding concerns are documented factually, and records are kept securely.

When to involve parents:

- **Early Help**: If the school identifies that a child or family may benefit from early support services, parents will be informed and involved in any referrals made, unless there is a specific reason not to.

- **Safeguarding Concerns**: When there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)** will determine whether it is appropriate to inform the parents.

    o   In some cases, informing the parents may not be appropriate, especially if the child could be put at greater risk. In such situations, the DSL will follow statutory guidance and liaise with **Children's Social Care** before contacting the parents.

    o   If a referral is made to an external agency such as **Children's Social Care**, parents will typically be informed unless doing so could compromise the safety of the child.

Handling parental concerns:

- If parents have concerns about their child's safety or well-being, they are encouraged to contact the school and speak with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**, Deputy DSL, or a member of the **Safeguarding Team**.

- The school ensures that parents understand the safeguarding procedures and are aware that staff have a duty to share concerns with the appropriate agencies when necessary.

The school will always strive to build trusting and supportive relationships with parents, helping to maintain a shared responsibility for the protection and well-being of all children.

11. Allegations of Abuse Made Against Adults Who Work with Children and Young People

Usworth Colliery Primary School takes all allegations of abuse made against staff members, volunteers, and other adults working with children very seriously. The school will ensure that concerns about adults are dealt with promptly, fairly, and consistently, in accordance with statutory guidance.

Key principles for managing allegations:

- **Immediate Action:** Any allegation that an adult working with children has:
  - Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child.
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
  - Behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
  - Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behaviour outside of school that may suggest a risk to children).

Procedures for Managing Allegations:

1. **Report Immediately:**
   - Allegations must be reported to the **Headteacher (Alison Forster)** without delay. If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, the report should be made to the **Chair of Governors (Alison Logan)**.
   - Staff must **not speak to** the individual against whom the allegation has been made or discuss the allegation with anyone else.
2. **Initial Consideration:**
   - The **Headteacher (or Chair of Governors)** will consider the nature of the allegation and decide whether immediate action is necessary. If the allegation meets the criteria for referral, the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** will be contacted immediately to provide guidance and oversight.
3. **Referral to the LADO:**
   - The **LADO** will assess the allegation and decide whether a police investigation, Children's Social Care involvement, or internal disciplinary action is required.
   - The school will cooperate fully with external agencies, including the police and Children's Social Care, during the investigation.
4. **Suspension of Staff:**
   - Suspension is **not automatic** and will only be considered if there is a risk of harm to the child or to prevent interference with the investigation. The decision to suspend will be taken by the **Headteacher** or **Chair of Governors**, in consultation with the **LADO** and legal advisors if necessary.
5. **Confidentiality:**
   - The school will maintain **strict confidentiality** while an allegation is being investigated. Information will only be shared with those who need to know to protect the child or facilitate the investigation, in compliance with **Data Protection Act 2018** and **UK GDPR**.
6. **Outcomes:**
   - Following the investigation, appropriate action will be taken based on the outcome. This may range from disciplinary action to dismissal. In the case of criminal behaviour, the school will report to relevant authorities such as the **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**.

Low-Level Concerns:

- **Low-level concerns** that do not meet the threshold for formal investigation must still be reported and recorded. These may include actions or behaviours that do not align with the school's code of conduct but are not severe enough to warrant a referral to the **LADO**.
  - Staff should report low-level concerns to the **DSL** or the **Headteacher**.
  - The school will address low-level concerns promptly, providing support and feedback to ensure professional standards are maintained.

Usworth Colliery Primary School is committed to ensuring that all concerns and allegations are handled with the highest level of professionalism to safeguard children and maintain the integrity of the school's workforce.

12. Keeping Children Safe Online

At Usworth Colliery Primary School, we recognise that the online environment presents both opportunities and risks for children. It is essential that we promote safe online behaviour and take steps to protect children from the dangers they may face online, such as exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying, grooming, or exploitation.

Key principles for online safety:

- **Filtering and Monitoring:** The school uses appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to ensure that harmful content is blocked, while still allowing access to safe educational resources. These systems are regularly reviewed and updated to respond to emerging threats.
- **Online Safety Risks:** In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024*, the school identifies three key areas of risk for children online:
  - **Content:** Exposure to inappropriate, harmful, or misleading content, including online bullying, grooming, or radicalisation.
  - **Contact:** Being targeted by individuals or groups online, potentially leading to grooming, exploitation, or cyberbullying.
  - **Conduct:** Children's own behaviour online, such as sharing personal information, engaging with harmful content, or posting inappropriate material.

  The school also recognises the risks associated with children using their own internet-enabled devices (e.g., smartphones) with 3G/4G/5G access. We provide clear guidelines for mobile phone use on school premises to manage these risks effectively.

- **Education and Awareness:** Children are taught how to keep themselves safe online through the curriculum, including lessons on:
  - Safe internet use.
  - Recognising and reporting concerns, such as cyberbullying or inappropriate online behaviour.
  - Understanding the risks of sharing personal information online.
  - The importance of maintaining privacy settings and avoiding contact with strangers.
- **Staff Training:** All staff receive training on online safety, which includes understanding the risks children may face and knowing how to recognise and respond to concerns related to online behaviour. This training is updated regularly to reflect new risks and trends in online use.
- **Parental Engagement:** We work closely with parents to promote online safety at home. The school provides parents with resources and guidance on how to protect their children online, including information on privacy settings, parental controls, and how to spot the signs of online grooming or exploitation.

Staff Use of Devices and the Internet:

- **Personal Devices:** Staff are not permitted to connect personal devices to the school's internet during school hours. Personal mobile phones, tablets, or other internet-enabled devices should be kept in a secure location and should not be used during working hours in the presence of children, except in an emergency or with specific permission from the Headteacher.
- **Emails and School Devices:** Staff should not access personal email accounts or other personal online services on school devices, including laptops, tablets, or desktops. All internet activity on school devices is monitored, and staff should only use these devices for professional purposes, aligned with the school's policies.
- **School Emails and Professional Communication:** Staff must use school-provided email addresses and communication tools for all professional correspondence, ensuring that they maintain appropriate boundaries with pupils and colleagues. Personal email accounts should not be used for any school-related business.

Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in disciplinary action, as the use of personal devices and emails in school could compromise the school's safeguarding measures and online safety protocols.

Responding to Online Safety Concerns:

- **Reporting:** Any online safety concerns, whether they involve exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying, or online exploitation, must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a member of the Safeguarding Team.
- **Action:** The DSL will assess the concern and determine the appropriate course of action, which may include:
  - Supporting the child and ensuring their immediate safety.
  - Liaising with parents to address the concern and provide further guidance.

      o   Reporting the concern to external agencies, such as Children's Social Care or the Police, where necessary.

- **Recording:** All online safety concerns must be recorded in the CPOMS system, following the school's established procedures for record-keeping and reporting.

Mobile Devices:

- The school has clear policies regarding the use of mobile phones and other internet-enabled devices on school premises. Children are not allowed to use personal mobile devices during school hours without permission.
- Staff are required to follow the school's Staff Behaviour Policy regarding the use of mobile phones and electronic devices in school, ensuring that personal devices are not connected to the school's internet and that personal emails are not accessed on school devices.

We are committed to creating a safe online environment where children can benefit from digital resources while being protected from the potential dangers of the internet.

13. Children Who Harm Other Children (Child-on-Child Abuse)

At Usworth Colliery Primary School, we recognise that children can harm other children and that child-on-child abuse can take many forms. This type of abuse can occur both inside and outside of school, as well as online. It is essential that all incidents are taken seriously and managed in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Types of Child-on-Child Abuse:

- **Physical Abuse:** This includes hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment:** This includes non-consensual sexual activity, sexual violence, harassment, inappropriate touching, and sharing of explicit images.
- **Bullying:** Verbal, physical, or emotional bullying, including cyberbullying through social media, messaging platforms, and other online environments.
- **Upskirting:** Taking inappropriate images under a person's clothing without consent is a **criminal offence** and must be reported immediately.
- **Sexting (Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery):** Sharing nudes or semi-nude images via digital platforms.
- **Initiation/Hazing:** Rituals involving harassment, abuse, or humiliation can also be classified as child-on-child abuse.

Our Approach to Child-on-Child Abuse:

- **Zero Tolerance:** At Usworth Colliery Primary School, we have a **zero-tolerance** approach to child-on-child abuse. Such incidents are **never dismissed** as "banter" or "part of growing up" and are always dealt with seriously.
- **Preventative Education:** We take proactive steps to educate children about appropriate behaviour and relationships through assemblies, PSHE (Personal, Social, Health, and Economic) lessons, and external speakers. Our curriculum includes clear messaging about **consent, respect, online safety**, and the impact of bullying and harassment.
- **Early Identification:** Staff are trained to recognise the signs of child-on-child abuse and are encouraged to act early to prevent situations from escalating. Staff should be particularly alert to **vulnerable groups**, including children with special educational needs, children in care, and those from minority communities, who may be at higher risk.

Responding to Child-on-Child Abuse:

1. **Report Concerns Immediately:** All concerns about child-on-child abuse must be reported to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or a member of the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.
2. **Supporting the Victim:** The child who has been harmed will receive support from the school. This may involve:
   o Ensuring their **immediate safety**.
   o Offering **emotional support** and referring to external services, if necessary.
   o Reassuring the child that they did the right thing by reporting the incident and that they are **not at fault**.
3. **Managing the Alleged Perpetrator:** The school will address the behaviour of the alleged perpetrator in line with the school's **Behaviour Policy**, safeguarding procedures, and relevant legal frameworks. This may include:
   o Applying **disciplinary measures**, including exclusion, where appropriate.
   o Offering **support and education** to help the child understand the impact of their behaviour.
   o Liaising with parents and, where necessary, external agencies such as the **police** or **Children's Social Care**.
4. **Risk Assessments and Safety Plans:** For serious incidents, the school will develop a **Risk Assessment and Safety Plan** for the children involved. These plans will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain appropriate and effective.
5. **Recording the Incident:** All child-on-child abuse incidents must be recorded in **CPOMS**, following the school's safeguarding procedures for documentation.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment:

- The school follows the statutory guidance in **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)** for dealing with incidents of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children.
- If **sexual violence** has occurred, the school will make a referral to **Children's Social Care** and the **Police**, where necessary, in line with safeguarding procedures.

Our goal is to foster a culture where children feel **safe** and **supported** in reporting abuse. We are committed to ensuring that both the victims and the perpetrators receive the help they need in a **safe, supportive environment**.

14. Contextual Safeguarding

At Usworth Colliery Primary School, we are committed to adopting a **contextual safeguarding** approach. This means recognising that children's experiences of significant harm often extend beyond their families and can occur in a range of environments, such as within peer groups, online, and in the wider community.

Key principles of contextual safeguarding:

- **Understanding the Wider Context:** Safeguarding incidents and behaviours can occur in various contexts, not just at home. Peer-on-peer abuse, exploitation, gang involvement, and radicalisation can occur in environments such as schools, neighbourhoods, and online spaces.
- **Assessing Risk Outside the Family:** As part of the school's safeguarding responsibility, we assess risks posed to children in the **wider community** and address any concerns that may arise. This could include:
  - Children being groomed or exploited outside of school.
  - Children being drawn into **criminal activities** or gang-related behaviour.
  - Children exposed to **online risks**, such as cyberbullying or radicalisation.
- **Working with External Agencies:** To fully understand and address the risks facing children in the community, the school works closely with external agencies, including:
  - **Children's Social Care**
  - **The Police**
  - **Local community organisations**
  - **Health services**
- **Creating a Safe School Environment:** Usworth Colliery Primary School recognises its responsibility to foster a **safe school environment** where children feel supported and protected from risks within peer groups or the community. This includes providing:
  - Education on **staying safe** in different environments, including online.
  - Clear procedures for **reporting concerns** about incidents that occur outside the home.
  - Robust policies and interventions to **prevent and address bullying**, exploitation, and other forms of abuse that may take place in the community.

Prevent Duty and Radicalisation: At Usworth Colliery Primary School, we recognise the importance of safeguarding children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism. All staff are trained to identify potential signs of extremist behaviour and to report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The school has a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) responsible for assessing the risk of children being drawn into terrorism and extremist behaviour. We work closely with local partners, including the Local Authority and Police, to ensure effective referral to the Channel Panel when needed.

Staff Responsibilities:

- **Awareness:** All staff must remain aware that harm can occur **outside the home** and be vigilant in spotting the signs of contextual risks. This includes identifying children who may be involved in activities or relationships that put them at risk, such as **substance misuse, gang involvement**, or exploitation.
- **Reporting Concerns:** Any concerns about risks outside the family should be **reported immediately** to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or a member of the Safeguarding Team. Concerns could include unusual or concerning behaviour observed outside school, such as changes in friendship groups, fear of certain locations, or sudden absences linked to external factors.
- **Engaging with Parents and the Community:** The school engages with **parents and the wider community** to promote safeguarding beyond the school gates. This includes:
    - Educating parents about the **risks** their children may face in the wider community.
    - Offering support and advice to help families **protect their children** from external threats, including online exploitation, radicalisation, and peer pressure.
    - Collaborating with **local organisations** to improve community safety and support children who may be at risk.

Online Contextual Safeguarding:

- **Online Safety:** We recognise that **online environments** pose unique risks to children, including exposure to harmful content, grooming, and exploitation. As part of our online safety policy, children are taught how to **navigate the internet safely**, and staff are trained to recognise signs of online abuse.

Multi-Agency Support:

- **Multi-Agency Approach:** Contextual safeguarding requires a **multi-agency approach** to addressing risks that exist outside of the family home. The school works with **local safeguarding partners** to share information and coordinate interventions that protect children from harm in their wider environments.

15. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of the safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures at Usworth Colliery Primary School is **regularly monitored** and **reviewed** to ensure they remain fit for purpose and are responsive to new developments in safeguarding practice and statutory guidance.

- **Annual Review:** The **Governing Body** reviews this policy **annually**, or earlier if significant changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or local safeguarding arrangements occur. This ensures that the policy remains **up-to-date** and continues to reflect the **best practices** in safeguarding.
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is responsible for ensuring that all safeguarding practices are being **implemented correctly** and **consistently** across the school. This includes:
  - **Conducting regular audits** of safeguarding records to ensure compliance and accuracy.
  - Ensuring that **all staff** receive the necessary safeguarding training and updates in line with statutory requirements.
  - **Monitoring incidents, concerns, and referrals** to identify any patterns or areas for improvement, ensuring prompt action where necessary.

Feedback from staff, parents, and external agencies is considered during the review process to ensure that safeguarding remains a **high priority** and that policies are as effective as possible.

Explanation of Adjustments

1. **Compliance with Statutory Guidance:** Reinforced the annual and ongoing review process to align with "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024" requirements.
2. **Ongoing Monitoring:** Emphasised the DSL's role in **regular audits** and monitoring of incidents to ensure the consistent application of safeguarding practices.
3. **Incorporating Feedback:** Highlighted the importance of feedback from staff, parents, and external agencies to enhance the effectiveness of safeguarding policies.

16. Operation Encompass and Operation Endeavour

At Usworth Colliery Primary School, we participate in **Operation Encompass** and **Operation Endeavour**, two national initiatives designed to safeguard and support children who have been involved in or exposed to domestic abuse and other serious incidents.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is a police and education early intervention scheme that aims to support children who have been exposed to domestic abuse. The scheme facilitates the sharing of information between the police and schools, ensuring timely and appropriate support for children who may experience trauma or distress due to incidents at home.

- The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or their deputy will receive an alert from the police if an incident of domestic abuse has occurred where a child from our school was present.
- This information is treated **confidentially** and shared with staff on a need-to-know basis to provide the necessary support.
- The DSL will ensure the child is **monitored closely** and offered appropriate pastoral support, which may include counselling or access to other external support services.

Operation Endeavour

Operation Endeavour focuses on supporting children who go missing or are involved in other serious incidents. Similar to Operation Encompass, Operation Endeavour involves the timely sharing of information between the police and schools to help ensure that children receive the care and support they need.

- When a child is reported missing, the **DSL** or their deputy will be notified by the police through Operation Endeavour. This notification helps the school monitor the child's safety and well-being upon their return.
- The school works in partnership with the **police, social care, and other relevant agencies** to support the child effectively, ensuring that any underlying issues are addressed.

Our Commitment

- We are committed to supporting children through **Operation Encompass** and **Operation Endeavour** by working with families and external agencies to address the child's needs, focusing on their emotional well-being and safety.
- Staff are trained to understand the impact of domestic abuse, missing episodes, and other serious incidents on children, ensuring a sensitive and supportive response when identifying children who may be affected.

Operation Encompass and **Operation Endeavour** play critical roles in our safeguarding strategy, particularly given the socio-economic challenges some of our family's face, which can increase risks for children. By participating in these schemes, we aim to provide an environment where children feel safe, supported, and understood.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Link to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2024

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf

- Part One: Information for all school and college staff - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66ce094e8e33f28aae7e1f6d/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024_part_one.pdf

- Annex B: Further information is available on page 148 of KCSIE – 2024. This provides a variety of information, links and organisations that provide information, advice and guidance.

Appendix 2: Declaration for Staff

Staff are required to read and understand the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy as well as Part One of the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2024 document.

Staff must sign and date the declaration below to confirm that they have read and understood the document:

- **Name**: _____

- **Position**: _____

- **Signature**: _____

- **Date**: _____