Executive Summary: Policy Submission to Trust Board

Trust Board Meeting Date: 2 October 2025

Presented by: Andrew Williams

Policy name: Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy	
Policy type: Statutory policy	
Purpose of the policy: This policy outlines the Trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in line with statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023). It ensures that staff, governors, trustees, members, parents, and carers are aware of their roles and responsibilities in creating safe, inclusive learning environments across our schools.	
Summary and key changes: Updated statutory references to KCSIE 2025. Expanded categories of online risk to include misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories. AI-specific safeguarding measures: procedures for harmful AI content, AI-enabled bullying, and requirements for filtering/monitoring AI use. Replaced terminology: "autism spectrum disorder" with "autism"; "Google Bard" with "Google Gemini". Strengthened expectations around recruitment, terminology, and SEND safeguarding.	
Recommendation to Trustees: That the Board approves the updated Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (Version 4.0, Sept 2025), ensuring continued compliance with statutory guidance, incorporation of emerging safeguarding risks, and alignment with the Trust's strategic commitment to pupil welfare.	

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Date of issue:	September 2025
Responsible sub-committee:	Learner Experience Quality of Inclusion
Linked Policies:	School behaviour policy School bullying policy School searches and confiscation policies Disciplinary policy Data protection policy Data Retention policy Complaints policy Code of Conduct policy Whistleblowing policy Wellbeing policy Managing of Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy Recruitment policy Online Safety policy
Review Date:	October 2026 Annual review for any changes to KCSIE
Target audience:	All stakeholders (Parents/carers, pupils, staff, Governors, Trustees, Members)
Dissemination via:	School websites / SharePoint

Updates and amendments from July 2024 policy

Version	Section	Amendments	Date	Author role
4.0	Legislation and statutory guidance (page 7)	Updated link to KCSIE 2025	July 2025	Lynn Wood (Director of Safeguarding)
4.0	The 4 key categories of risk (page 26)	Under 'the 4 key categories of risk', updated 'content' to include: • Misinformation • Disinformation (including fake news) • Conspiracy theories	July 2025	Lynn Wood (Director of Safeguarding)
4.0	Artificial intelligence (page 27)	Changed 'Google Bard' to 'Google Gemini'. Added 'artificial intelligence' policy when considering which policies to refer to, when AI has been used to access harmful content or to bully pupils. Also added a prompt for schools to outline any further procedures in place for dealing with safeguarding concerns related to AI. Added: 'Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.'	July 2025	Lynn Wood (Director of Safeguarding)
4.0	Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (page 29)	Changed 'autism spectrum disorder' to 'autism'	July 2025	Lynn Wood (Director of Safeguarding)
4.0	Monitoring arrangements (page 32)	Added artificial intelligence policy to the list	July 2025	Lynn Wood (Director of Safeguarding)
4.0	Safeguarding/ Child Protection Form (page 34)	Under 'recruitment and selection process', changed date on the KCSIE reference	July 2025	Lynn Wood (Director of Safeguarding)

Contents

Important contacts

Please enter office landline number with extension and email address (no work mobile numbers)

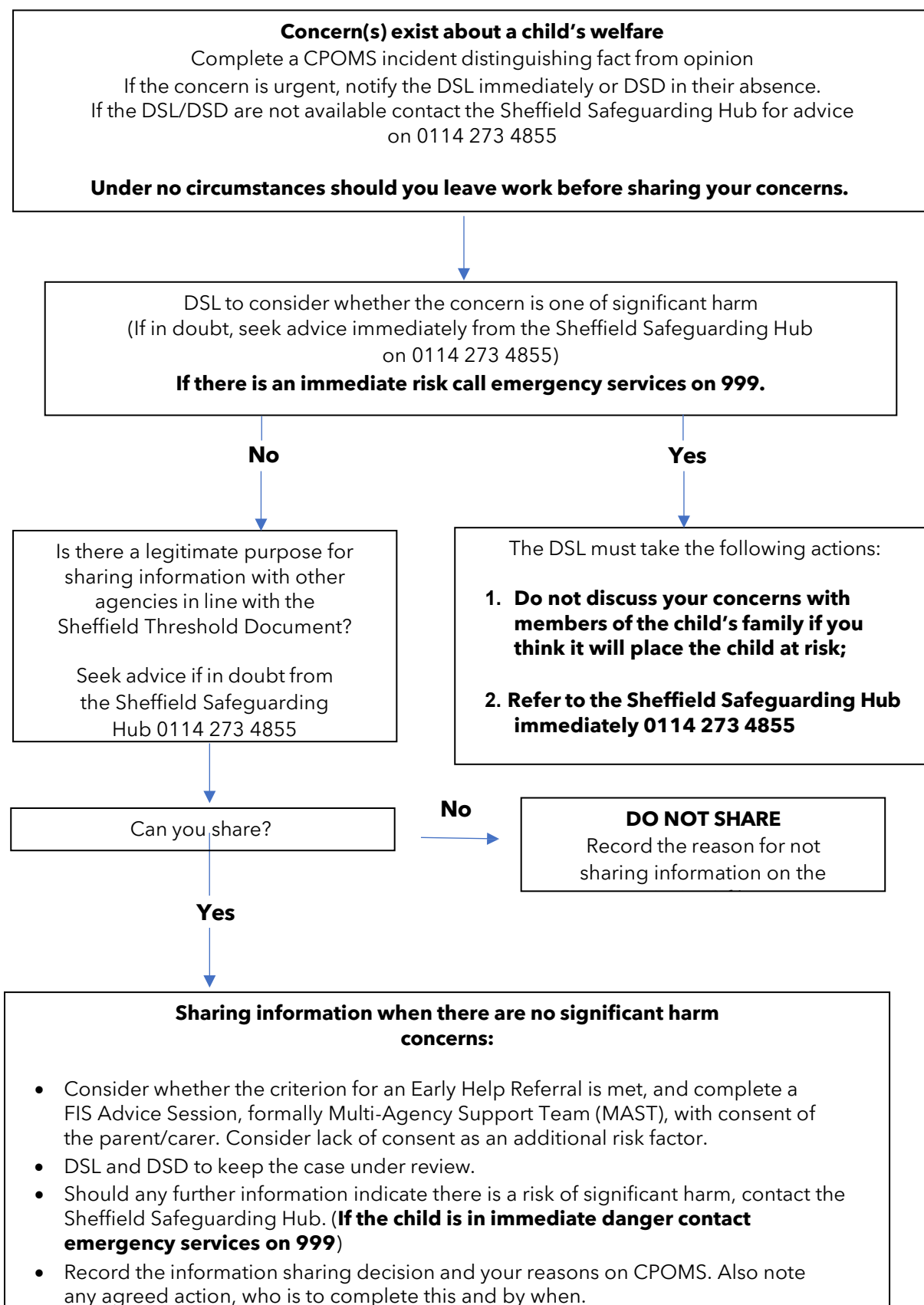| ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Headteacher	Claire Austin	0114 234 3304 headteacher@wisewood.sheffield.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Zena Bingham	0114 234 3304 zbingham@wisewood.sheffield.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Deputy (DSD)	Claire Austin Catherine Salvadori	Please add additional rows for your DSDs csalvadori@wisewood.sheffield.sch.uk
Designated Child Looked After Teacher	Claire Austin	0114 234 3304 headteacher@wisewood.sheffield.sch.uk
Special Educational Needs Coordinator	Sarah Wales	swales@wisewood.sheffield.sch.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Andrew Adedoyin / Sharon Haigh / Patricia Lewis	All LADO referrals are made via the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub 0114 273 4855
Chair of Governors Safeguarding Governor	Katie Eyre Katie Eyre	keyre@taptontrust.org keyre@taptontrust.org
Special Educational Needs Governor	Lisa Skipworth	lskipworth@taptontrust.org
Sheffield Safeguarding Hub		0114 273 4855
Family Intervention Service (FIS) formerly Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST)	Business Support Shortbrook Primary Site Westfield Northway Sheffield, S20 8FB	0114 2037485 fisbusinesssupport@sheffield.gov.uk Primary settings that have a Family Hub may want to detail contact information here
Channel helpline		020 7340 7264

Please be aware that during weekends and school holidays you will not be able to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Designated Safeguarding Deputies. If you have any concerns about the welfare of a child or young person during these times, please contact the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub on 0114 2734855 (24 - hour service).

If you think a child or a young person is in immediate danger, please call the police on 999 at any time.

If you are a child or young person and are worried or feel unsafe then you can get help from Childline a free, private and confidential service where you can be you. You can chat online or on the phone, 0800 1111, any time.

Figure 1: Procedure if you have any concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See ~~section~~ 'If you have concerns about a child' ~~7.4~~ for what to do.)

Concern(s) exist about a child's welfare
Complete a CPOMS incident distinguishing fact from opinion
If the concern is urgent, notify the DSL immediately or DSD in their absence.
If the DSL/DSD are not available contact the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub for advice on 0114 273 4855

Under no circumstances should you leave work before sharing your concerns.

DSL to consider whether the concern is one of significant harm
(If in doubt, seek advice immediately from the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub on 0114 273 4855)
If there is an immediate risk call emergency services on 999.

No

Yes

Is there a legitimate purpose for sharing information with other agencies in line with the Sheffield Threshold Document?

Seek advice if in doubt from the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub 0114 273 4855

The DSL must take the following actions:

1. **Do not discuss your concerns with members of the child's family if you think it will place the child at risk;**

2. **Refer to the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub immediately 0114 273 4855**

Can you share?

No

DO NOT SHARE
Record the reason for not sharing information on the

Yes

Sharing information when there are no significant harm concerns:

- Consider whether the criterion for an Early Help Referral is met, and complete a FIS Advice Session, formally Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST), with consent of the parent/carer. Consider lack of consent as an additional risk factor.
- DSL and DSD to keep the case under review.
- Should any further information indicate there is a risk of significant harm, contact the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub. (**If the child is in immediate danger contact emergency services on 999**)
- Record the information sharing decision and your reasons on CPOMS. Also note any agreed action, who is to complete this and by when.

Aims

The Trust aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare

- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding

- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), and the Academy trust governance guide. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

- Sheffield City Council
- South Yorkshire Police
- NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides 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, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism

- 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 disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making 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.

All schools with pupils aged under 8 add:

- The [Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children – for Pupils aged 8 and under

All early years' providers add:

- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early](#) [Years Foundation Stage](#)

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

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.

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

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- Sheffield City Council
- South Yorkshire Police
- NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

Equality statement

Further information can be obtained from the Equality and Human Right Commission and The Equality Act 2010.

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.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see 'Private Fostering'section 10)

- Are young carers

- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality

- Have English as an additional language

- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence

- Are at risk of female genital mutilation (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 'Pupils with a social worker'section 12)

- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions

- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Trustees, Members and governors in our schools and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour policy

- Pastoral support system

- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:

    o   Healthy and respectful relationships

    o   Boundaries and consent

    o   Stereotyping, prejudice and equality

    o   Body confidence and self-esteem

    o   How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)

    o   The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support

    o   What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

All staff

All staff will:

- Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually

- Headteacher, members of senior leadership, Governors and Trustees should read and understand the full version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance

- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)

- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their

concerns All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems that support safeguarding, including this policy and all linked policies outlined on page 1, the role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and [deputy/deputies], and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education

- The early help assessment process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) 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 school and online

- 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

- If a staff member has a low level concern, then they should discuss this with the Headteacher or the as soon as possible. The Headteacher or DSL will then support the staff member to follow the procedures set out in within the Trust's Management of Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy which gives guidance on low level concerns.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is detailed on page 7. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety, and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Out of hours contacts are on page 7.

When the DSL is absent, the deputy/deputies will act as cover and contact details are on page 7. The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school.
- Our DSL is our Prevent Lead and undertakes Prevent training and induction.

The DSL will also:

- Keep the headteacher informed of any issues
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

The full responsibilities of the DSL and any deputies are set out in their job description.

The Local Governing Board

The Local Governing Board will:
- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, 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 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 our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

- Appoint a safeguarding lead governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always 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 the safeguarding partners

- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes:
  - Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training
  - Reviewing the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards

- Make sure:
  - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
  - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
  - The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
  - The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors).
  - That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised

- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
  - Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
  - Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
  - Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

In the event of an allegation of abuse against the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Chair of Governors and to a member of the Trust Core Executive team. If the Chair of Governors and the Trust Core Executive Team are not available then it should be reported to LADO. The staff member should continue to seek to inform the Chair of Governors and a member of the Trust Core Executive Team. The Trust's Management of Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy provides further guidance.

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

'Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies' sSection 15 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
    - Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
    - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring appropriate procedures are followed in the event of an allegation of abuse against another member of staff, volunteer or contractor. The Trust's Management of Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy provides further guidance.
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.

Headteachers with early years provision are responsible for:

Early years providers and primary schools add:

- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable

Early years providers add:

- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones and cameras in the setting

Trustees

All Trustees maintain an overview of safeguarding practice across the Trust ensuring that policy is implemented.

Virtual school heads

Virtual school heads (VSHs) have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils with a social worker.

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

They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), social workers, mental health leads and others.

Confidentiality

The safety, wellbeing and protection of our children and young people is paramount in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between school staff is an essential element in ensuring the welfare and safety of our children and young people.

- 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, and protect the safety, of children
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR does not always prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Schools will refer to Data Protection Officers to seek guidance upon receipt of requests for information – this may include Court Orders, Police Requests, Subject access requests.

- 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: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or 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:
    - o 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
    - o The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
    - o 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:
    - o 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
    - o 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
    - o 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 7 '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)

- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in ~~section 16~~'Recording keeping'. The Trust's Management of Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy provides further guidance.

Recognising abuse and taking action

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue. Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean "the DSL (or DSD).

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

If a child is at imminent risk of significant harm/immediate danger you should consider calling the police on 999 in the first instance (for police or ambulance) and contacting children's social care by telephoning Sheffield Safeguarding Hub on 0114 273 4855 where you will be able to speak to a qualified social worker. Anyone, including parents, members of the public, schools and professionals can contact the Safeguarding Hub.

During evenings and bank holidays, calls will be responded to by the Emergency Duty Service at the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub.

On contacting the Safeguarding Hub you will be put through to a trained 'screening' social worker, who will:

- Take information from you.
- Offer advice and make a decision on how the concern will be dealt with.

- Tell you what will happen next.

- The Hub will update parents, carers and professionals of the outcome.

You must inform the DSL that a referral has been made if they have not been involved in the process to enable a comprehensive record to be made or if information needs be shared with other schools.

Full details on how to make a referral are available on the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures manual.

If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:
- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions

- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset

- Tell the child 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

- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it

- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 'If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger' section 7.1), 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

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

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

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".

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'.

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are outlined in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#).

Any teacher who either:

- 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.

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.

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.

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.

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out or discovers that a pupil **aged 18 or over** appears to have been a victim of FGM should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

Local safeguarding procedures are outlined in 'If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger' section 7.1 withinof this policy.

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

Figure 1 (page 8) illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare. Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' section below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

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.

We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.

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.

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means making support available as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child/young person's life.

Children and families may need support from a wide range of local agencies. Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency, the school will use the early help process to identify what help the child and family require to prevent their needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.

The school is committed to working in partnership with children, parents and other agencies to:
- Identify situations in which children and/or their families would benefit from early help;
- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help, using the early help process; and
- Provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family, developing an action plan that will focus on activity to improve the child's outcomes.

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

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs

- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)

- Is a young carer

- Is bereaved

- Is 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

- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home

- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation

- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited

- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online

- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse

- Is misusing drugs or alcohol

- Is suffering from mental ill health

- Has returned home to their family from care

- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage

- Is a privately fostered child

- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending

- Is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education

- Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been permanently excluded

If early help is appropriate, an advice session will be requested between the Family Intervention Service (FIS), family and school where a decision will be made about setting up an inter-agency assessment (including the completion of a family common assessment framework) as appropriate.

Staff other than those part of the safeguarding team may be required to support other agencies and professionals in undertaking an assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

We will discuss and agree with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.
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.

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 (see 'If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger' ~~section 7.1~~), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 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.
For more information, see the Sheffield Effective Challenge and Escalation Procedures

If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' section above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include the police or Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, 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.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 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

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.

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 by following the steps in ['If you have concerns about a child'.](#) ~~section 7.4~~.

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

The process illustrated in appendix 3 'Concerns for child/young person with mental health presentation' should be followed.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, follow the safeguarding procedures as illustrated in figure 1 (page 9 of this policy and subsequent actions for referral to social care or Early Help as above.

Further guidance can be found in the Department for Education on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#).

Safeguarding concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor

- If you have concerns about a member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer, or contractor, or an allegation is made about a member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer, or contractor, posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the Headteacher as soon as possible.

- The Headteacher will then follow the procedures set out in 'Responding to An Allegation' within the Trust's Management of Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy.

  It is expected that in most instances any concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer, or contractor) are reported to the Headteacher.

  If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, we will follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures. The appropriate person would then inform the LADO, as would be the case with any safeguarding allegation.

  Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff to the Headteacher, then please see below for alternative contacts, based on the members of staff's position.

  Early years providers, add:

  Where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale (see appendix 3 for more detail).

Headteacher

- If the concerns/allegations are about the Headteacher they must be reported to the Chair of Governors and to a member of the Trust Core Executive Team. If the Chair of Governors and the Trust Core Executive Team are not available then it should be reported to LADO. The staff member should continue to seek to inform the Chair of Governors and a member of the Trust Core Executive Team.

- If there is a belief of a conflict of interest, then the allegation should be reported to the LADO

A School Governor

- If the concerns/allegations are about a governor, they must be reported to a member of the Trust Core Executive Team or to LADO if a member of the Trust Core Executive Team is not available.
- The staff member should continue to seek to inform the Trust Core Executive Team.
- If there is a belief of a conflict of interest, then the allegation should be reported to LADO.

A Trust Executive Member

- A member of the Trust Core Executive Team or to LADO if a member of the Trust Core Executive Team is not available.
- The staff member should continue to seek to inform the Trust Core Executive Team.
- If there is a belief of a conflict of interest, then the allegation should be reported to LADO.

A Trust Core Executive Member

- The Trust CEO or if concern is about the CEO to the Chair of Trustees or to LADO if the Chair of Trustees is not available.
- The staff member should continue to seek to inform the Chair of Trustees Team.
- If there is a belief of a conflict of interest, then the allegation should be reported to LADO.

A Trustee

- A member of the Trust Core Executive Team or to LADO if a member of the Trust Core Executive Team is not available.
- The staff member should continue to seek to inform the Trust Core Executive Team.
- If there is a belief of a conflict of interest, then the allegation should be reported to LADO.

The Chair of Trustees

- The Trust CEO or LADO if the Trust CEO is not available.
- The staff member should continue to seek to inform the Trust CEO.
- If there is a belief of a conflict of interest, then the allegation should be reported to LADO.

Further procedures and guidance for staff members are located in the Trust's Management of Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy provides further guidance.

Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

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.

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk

- Is violent

- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol

- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, up-skirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

See Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 for more information about child-on-child abuse.

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

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:
- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it

- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice. In addition to this the police should be contacted if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence by calling 101 or 999 if there is a risk of significant harm or risk to life.

- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)

- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

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.

 Schools to adapt or remove if process different

When incidents occur in school, we collect pupil voice and pupils record details in writing on an incident form. This enables us to have accurate information, removes any potential misinterpretation and enables accurate record keeping.

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

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

To achieve this, we will:
- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images

- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys

- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent

- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in 'Reporting systems for our pupils' section 7.10 below)

- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously

- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners

- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed

- Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment

- Ensure staff are trained to understand:

  o How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports

  o That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"

  o 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

  o That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation

  o That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

  o The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it

  o That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns

  o That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side

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

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

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children's social care to determine this

- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')

This is the approach school will follow based on <u>guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety</u> for all staff and for <u>DSLs and senior leaders.</u>

Your 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, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that

otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (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

- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)

- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers

- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people 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.

Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns.

This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s)

- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care

- If it is necessary to view the image(s) in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, images or videos should not be viewed)

- 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

- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment

- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual

- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents/carers should be involved)

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult

- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to SEN)

- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent

- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13

- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

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.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through reporting via the online police portal or dialling 101.

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 in section 16 page 21 (Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse) of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes in an age- appropriate way as part of our relationship's education / relationships and sex education and computing programmes.

Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:
- What it is

- How it is most likely to be encountered

- 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

- Issues of legality

- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:
- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images

- The receipt of such images

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

Teaching follows best practice in delivering safe and effective education, including:

- Putting safeguarding first
- Approaching from the perspective of the child
- Promoting dialogue and understanding
- Empowering and enabling children and young people
- Never frightening or scare-mongering
- Challenging victim-blaming attitudes

Reporting systems for our pupils

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

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

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

[Insert details here about:

• Your reporting systems for pupils, e.g. what it looks like for pupils in terms of who they should report concerns to

• How you make pupils aware of the reporting systems and processes, e.g. through discussion in your relationships/sex education curriculum

• How pupils will feel safe in submitting any concerns, e.g. reassurances provided following disclosures]

Online safety and the use of mobile technology

A note should be made here that Sheffield Online-Safety Coordinators must be a DSL/DSD. If your school has delegated responsibilities such as curriculum lead then these roles and responsibilities should be explicit in your policy.

KCSIE outlines that your policies on online safety and the use of mobile and smart technology should be reflected in your child protection and safeguarding policy. Among other things, this should include filtering and monitoring on school devices and the school network.

You can find an example approach to this below, which assumes your school has standalone policies on online safety and mobile phone use that explain your processes and systems in more detail. If you don't yet have standalone policies, you can use and adapt our model policies on online safety and mobile phones. You'll need to add to or amend this section according to your school's approach.

A note to early years providers: in your child protection and safeguarding policy, you must cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in your setting (as per paragraph 3.4 of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage), so add more specific detail on this below.

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.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors

- Protect and educate the whole school 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 as outlined by the school setting

- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

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; and

- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

- To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will: Adapt as necessary
    - Educate 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 sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras as set out in our acceptable use policy

- 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 school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology

- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones

- 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 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems. **[Note: filtering and monitoring requirements also apply to your use of generative AI – see 'Artificial intelligence (AI)'below]. [See INOVA Online Safety Policy)**
  - Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community
  - 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 child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For full details about our school's policies in these areas, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policies which can be found on our website

Early years providers – as noted above, you must cover the use of mobile phones and cameras within this policy, rather than/as well as linking out to a separate policy on mobile phone use. This means you'll need to adapt the final paragraph above.]

Artificial intelligence (AI)

- 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 ~~Bard~~Gemini.

- 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 and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

- We will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our [Behaviour/relationships] policy.

- Staff are expected to comply with Trust Acceptable Use policy relating to the use of AI tools.

- Personal and sensitive data should not be entered into AI tools. Any data should not be identifiable and staff should act in accordance with the Trust Data Protection policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools while they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school. Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education. Add any additional procedures you may have in place for dealing with safeguarding concerns related to AI – for example where indecent images have been shared that are AI-generated.

Notifying parents or carers

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 a suspicion or disclosure.

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

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.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):
> Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed

> Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

Private Fostering & Host Families

The Children Act 1989 requires parents, professionals and anyone proposing to privately foster a child under 16, to notify the local authority immediately or within 6 weeks.

Private fostering is when a child under 16 (18 if disabled) is cared for by someone other than a parent, a person with parental responsibility or a close relative, for 28 days or more (including occasional short breaks).

For more information and resources please see the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership's Private Fostering and Host Families publication.

Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse 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 disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content

and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so

We offer extra pastoral support for these pupils as well as the support to help pupils overcome any communication barriers they face.

Any abuse involving pupils with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputy) and the SENCO

Pupils with a social worker

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.

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

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

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe. In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about the legal status of children looked after, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads

We have appointed a designated teacher (see contact details on page 7)

who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the

role. 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
- Work with virtual school heads 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

Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children. See our behaviour policy/relationships policy for more detail on how we prevent bullying based on gender or sexuality.

We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL. Add details of the pastoral support you offer these pupils, such as appointing an LGBTQ+ pastoral lead.

When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning pupils, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-

pubertal children.

When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism ~~spectrum disorder (ASD)~~ and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures which are outlined in the Trust's Management of Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy.

Other complaints

All other complaints should be dealt with in accordance with the Trust's complaint's policy which is available on the school website.

Whistleblowing

The Trust' has its own whistle blowing policy which provides staff with information and guidance in relation to concerns about the way our school safeguards pupils, including poor or unsafe practice, or potential failures can be reported.

Record-keeping

All safeguarding files are managed using a secure electronic case management system called CPOMS.
We will hold records in line with our Data Protection Policy, Retention Policy and the SCSP Guidance – Secure Storage of Safeguarding Files & Access Requests

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.

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

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.

Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained in line with our retention policy.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, 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 school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:
- **5 days** for an in-year transfer, or within
- **The first 5 days** of the start of a new term

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 school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.
In addition:
- The Trust`s Recruitment Policy sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-appointment checks
- The Trusts Management of Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

Training

All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle- blowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:
- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning
- Be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners
- Include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
  - Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
  - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings). Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

The DSL and deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training on an annual basis.

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).

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

Governors and Trustees

All governors and Trustees receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:
- Have the knowledge and information needed 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 school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding

Recruitment – interview panels

At least one person conducting any interview for any post will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

Staff who have contact with pupils and families

All staff who have contact with children and families will have supervisions which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues. This would initially be via line manager who may refer onto other internal or external support required.

Monitoring arrangements

Multi-Academy Trusts and schools are expected to have their safeguarding policies, including monitoring arrangements ~~This policy will be~~ reviewed at least annually by Trustees and ~~the DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the~~ local governing board~~s~~, with a review also required following any serious incidents. This annual review ensures the policy remains effective and responsive to any changes in law, guidance, or emerging patterns of concern within the organisation.

The following appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Appendix 1: types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by 1 definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

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

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person

- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate

- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction

- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another

- Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

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

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing

- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

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

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

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)

- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger

- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)

- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

Appendix 2: Safeguarding/Child Protection Form

Please read the school's Child Protection & Safeguarding policy and procedures. A copy of the policy is located on school website.
This form should be used if you do not have a CPOMS account or the CPOMS system is unavailable.

Enter appropriate names for DSL & DSDs

DSL: **DSD:**

Name of pupil:	**Year:**

What are you concerned about? Why do you have these concerns?

Initial action taken - include details of all conversations and who they are with.

In what capacity have you had any contact with the child/young person?
Notification to Safeguarding Team:
Date:
Time:
Name of person making report:_____

Signature of person making report:
Position in school:

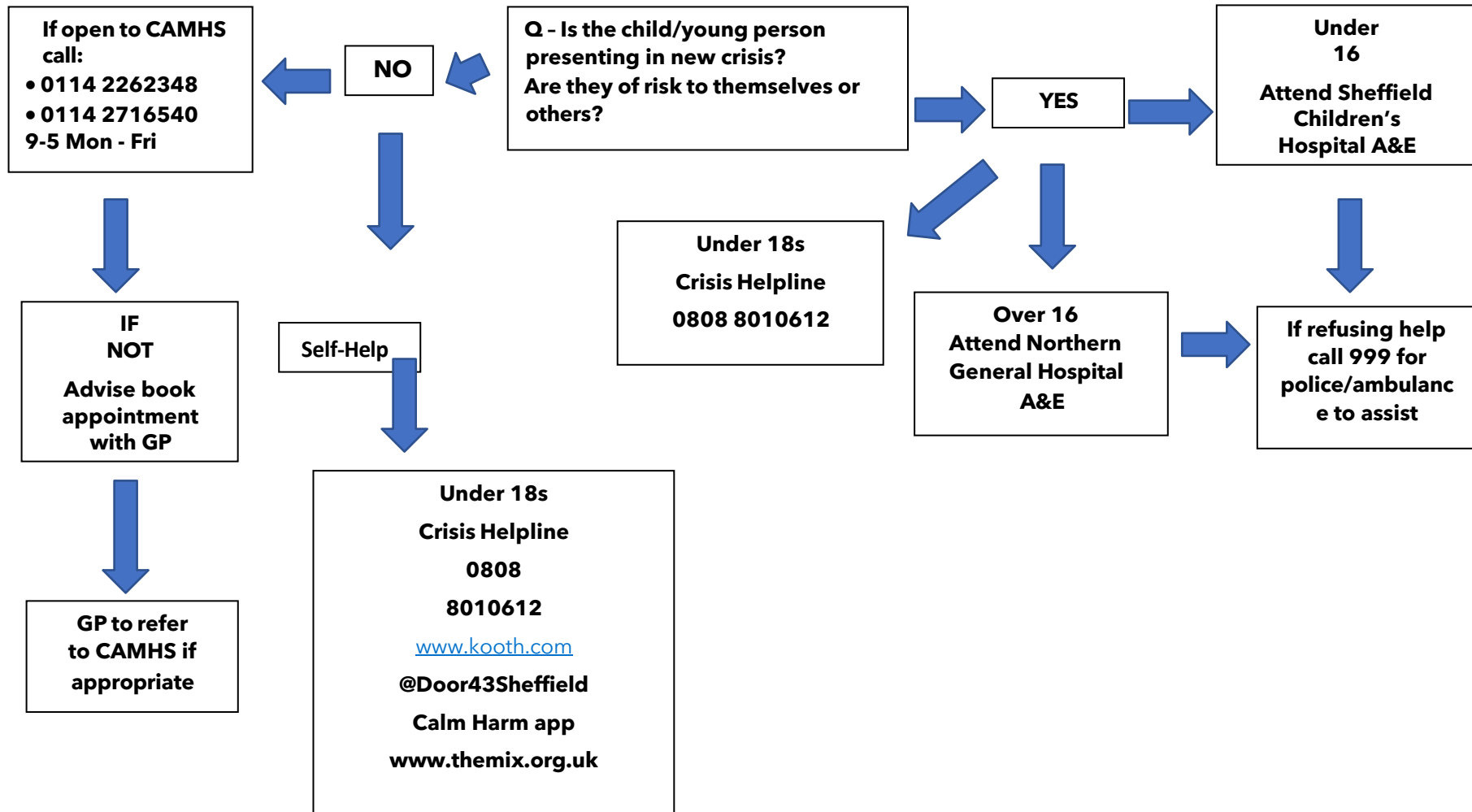**Are other children at risk or aware of this disclosure/allegation? Give details**

Any additional information/comments:

Do you know of any other agencies that have worked/are working with the pupil? – E.g. Social Care, contact names?

Summary of action taken by the Safeguarding Manager	Yes	No
DSL contacted?		
Parents/carers contacted? *		
Police/Social Services contacted?		
Additional School procedure followed? (Specify below)		

Appendix 3

If you have concerns for a young person presenting with mental health:

Q – Is the child/young person presenting in new crisis? Are they of risk to themselves or others?

NO

YES

If open to CAMHS call:
- **0114 2262348**
- **0114 2716540**
9-5 Mon - Fri

Under 16

Attend Sheffield Children's Hospital A&E

IF NOT

Advise book appointment with GP

Self-Help

Under 18s

Crisis Helpline

0808 8010612

Over 16 Attend Northern General Hospital A&E

If refusing help call 999 for police/ambulance to assist

GP to refer to CAMHS if appropriate

Under 18s

Crisis Helpline

0808

8010612

www.kooth.com

@Door43Sheffield

Calm Harm app

www.themix.org.uk

This appendix is mostly based on the advice in Keeping Children Safe in Education, in particular annex B – you'll need to adapt it to reflect your context and any locally agreed procedures.

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

Annex B also includes information on further issues to be aware of, including child abduction and community safety incidents, children's involvement in the court system, children with family members in prison, county lines, modern slavery and cybercrime. If you wish to cover these in the policy, consider including:

•   An explanation of what the issue is and how your school approaches it (e.g. any preventative measures in place, training you provide for staff)

•   What staff should be aware of and actions they should take

•   How your school works with external agencies, where relevant

You should also make sure your policy reflects any locally agreed procedures put in place by the 3 safeguarding partners.

Assessing adult-involved nude and semi-nude sharing incidents

This section is based on annex A of the UK Council of Internet Safety's [advice for education settings](#).

All adult-involved nude and semi-nude image sharing incidents are child sexual abuse offences and must immediately be referred to police/social care. However, as adult-involved incidents can present as child-on-child nude/semi-nude sharing, it may be difficult to initially assess adult involvement.

There are two types of common adult-involved incidents: sexually motivated incidents and financially motivated incidents.

Sexually motivated incidents

In this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nude and semi-nudes directly from a child or young person using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present as themselves or use a false identity on the platform, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender often grooms the child or young person on social media, in chatrooms or on gaming platforms, and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made. To encourage the child or young person to create and share nude or semi-nude, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material (images of other young people), including AI-generated material.

Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, an offender may blackmail the child or young person into sending more images by threatening to release them online and/or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

• Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person

• Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images

• Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform

• Coerced/pressured into doing sexual things, including creating nudes and semi-nudes

• Offered something of value such as money or gaming credits

• Threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing the image or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person to extort 'real' images.

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often known as 'sextortion') is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender (or offenders) threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else to benefit them.

Unlike other adult-involved incidents, financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by offenders working in sophisticated organised crime groups (OCGs) overseas and are only motivated by profit. Adults are usually targeted by these groups too.

Offenders will often use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or hack another young person's account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- Groom or coerce the child or young person into sending nudes or semi-nudes and financially blackmail them

- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person taken through hacking their account

- Use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child or young person

The offender may demand payment or the use of the victim's bank account for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person. They may be contacted by a hacked account of a child or young person

- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing an image first

- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform

- Pressured into taking nudes or semi-nudes

- Told they have been hacked and they have access to their images, personal information and contacts

- Blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated images of the child or young person

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 or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

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

- Are at risk of harm or neglect

- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM

- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families

- Come from the families of service personnel

- Go missing or run away from home or care

- Are supervised by the youth justice system

- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, 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 school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

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

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

Child criminal exploitation

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 school or education
- Not taking part in education

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

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity. 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 school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the two.
Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are there 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)

- Up-skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing,

and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in 'Recognising abuse and taking action'~~section 7~~ within~~of~~ this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and
7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and will offer them appropriate support.

Domestic abuse

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

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

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

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

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

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This procedure is called Operation Encompass.

The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

Homelessness

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

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

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

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

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

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

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the

possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

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

'If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM' section within ~~Section 7.3 of~~ this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
    - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
    - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
    - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
    - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
    - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
    - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
    - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
    - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
    - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
    - Talking about pain or discomfort between her

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

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
    - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
    - Having limited level of integration within UK society
    - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
    - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
    - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
    - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)

- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

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

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 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.

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

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

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school 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; or
  - Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
  - 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; or
  - Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system

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

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL, or designated Prevent lead, will undertake in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies. They'll make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify

children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school 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 school and at home.

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

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website Educate Against Hate and charity 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 Facebook or Twitter

- Possessing extremist literature

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

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

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in 'If you have concerns about extremism'
~~section 7.5~~ of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.
Further information on the school's measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in other school policies and procedures, including [list any relevant policies here – for example, you may cover this in your curriculum policy, behaviour policy, online/e-safety policy, and/or others].

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between two children of any age and sex

- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children

- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

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

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

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

When supporting victims, staff will:

- Reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them

- Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt

- Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns

- Consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again

- Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTQ+) 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 set out in 'Recognising abuse and taking action' section 7 within of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, 'Allegations of abuse made against other pupils'section 7.8 and 'Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')'7.9 sections set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

Serious violence

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

- Increased absence from school

- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups

- Significant decline in performance

- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing

- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries

- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above))

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

- Being male

- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school

- Having experienced child maltreatment

- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery

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

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

Adapt this section to reflect procedures in your setting.

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

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

Visitors are expected to sign in at reception and will be given the appropriate colour visitor's lanyard to be worn at all times on site.

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

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or

- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate)

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

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will:
Set out the school procedures here or refer to a separate policy/procedure for this if you have one. Your procedure should include information on contacting parents/carers, who will look after the child and how the incident will be recorded

Missing pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will:
Set out the school procedures here or refer to a separate policy/procedure for this if you have one. Your procedure should include information on contacting parents/carers, who will look after the child and how the incident will be recorded.