




Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

2025 – 2026

 **Our Vision:** *A culture rooted in safety, where people feel seen, heard, included, and connected through authentic relationships.*

 **Our Mission:** *To create a safe and nurturing environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging, is empowered in their growth and learning, and is encouraged to embrace who they are and who they aspire to become.*

 **Our Values:** *At Emerge School, our values are the foundation of who we are, how we work, and what we believe in. They shape how we support young people and how we support each other.*

We are proud to uphold these four core values:



Voice: *empowering every voice to speak, shape and be heard*



Connection: *rooted in relationships, thriving through authenticity*



Growth: *evolving with purpose, innovating with heart*



Inclusion: *where every story begins, and every person matters*

Excel & Emerge Care was created to give children and young people with complex needs a safe, supportive place to grow and heal. Through residential care, education, and therapeutic support, we build stability, trust, and a future where children and young people can truly flourish

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Statement of intent

Emerge School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental and emotional welfare of every pupil, both inside and outside of the school premises. We implement a whole-school preventative approach to managing safeguarding concerns, ensuring that the wellbeing of pupils is at the forefront of all action taken.

This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. It will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that members of the proprietor board, headteacher and staff understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, are alert to the signs of child abuse, and know to refer concerns to the DSL.
- Teaching pupils how to keep safe and recognise behaviour that is unacceptable.
- Identifying and making provision for any pupil that has been subject to, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Creating a culture of safer recruitment by adopting procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children.
- All staff are required to have an enhanced DBS and a section 128 as a deeper measure
- Ensuring that the headteacher and any new staff and volunteers are only appointed when all the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.

The DSL is Sarah Mason. In the absence of the DSL, child protection matters will be dealt with by the Deputy DSL (Cath Lawton)

Acronyms

This policy contains a number of acronyms used in the Education sector. These acronyms are listed below alongside their descriptions.

Acronym	Long form	Description
CCE	Child criminal exploitation	A form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, for the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
CSCS	Children's social care services	The branch of the local authority that deals with children's social care.
CSE	Child sexual exploitation	A form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, for the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
DBS	Disclosure and barring service	The service that performs the statutory check of criminal records for anyone working or volunteering in a school.
DfE	Department for Education	The national government body with responsibility for children's services, policy and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.
DPO	Data protection officer	The appointed person in school with responsibility for overseeing data protection strategy and implementation to ensure compliance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act.
DSL	Designated safeguarding lead	A member of the Senior Leadership team who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection throughout the school.
EEA	European Economic Area	The Member States of the European Union (EU) and three countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; excluding Switzerland).
EHC plan	Education, health and care plan	A funded intervention plan which coordinates the educational, health and care needs for pupils who have significant needs that impact on their learning and access to education. The plan identifies any additional support needs or interventions and the intended impact they will have for the pupil.

ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency	An agency sponsored by the Department for Education with accountability for funding education and skills training for children, young people and adults.
FGM	Female genital mutilation	All procedures involving the 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.
UK GDPR	UK General Data Protection Regulation	Legislative provision designed to strengthen the safety and security of all data held within an organisation and ensure that procedures relating to personal data are fair and consistent.
HBA	'Honour-based' abuse	So-called 'honour-based' abuse involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community.
HMCTS	HM Courts and Tribunals Service	HM Courts and Tribunals Service is responsible for the administration of criminal, civil and family courts and tribunals in England and Wales. HMCTS is an executive agency, sponsored by the Ministry of Justice.
IICSA	Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse	The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse is analysing case files from the Disclosure and Barring Service to learn more about the behaviours of perpetrators who have sexually abused children in institutions, and to understand institutional responses to these behaviours.
KCSIE	Keeping children safe in education	Statutory guidance setting out schools and colleges' duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
LA	Local authority	A local government agency responsible for the provision of a range of services in a specified local area, including education.
LAC	Looked-after children	Children who have been placed in local authority care or where children's services have looked after children for more than a period of 24 hours.
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer plus	Term relating to a community of people, protected by the Equality Act 2010, who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, or other protected sexual or gender identities.
MAT	Multi-academy trust	A trust established to undertake strategic collaboration and provide education across a number of schools
NPCC	The National Police Chiefs' Council	The National Police Chiefs' Council is a national coordination body for law enforcement in the United Kingdom and the representative body for British police chief officers.
PLAC	Previously looked-after children	Children who were previously in local authority care or were looked after by children's services for more than a

		period of 24 hours. PLAC are also known as care leavers.
PSHE	Personal, social and health education	A non-statutory subject in which pupils learn about themselves, other people, rights, responsibilities and relationships.
RSHE	Relationships, sex and health education	A compulsory subject from Year 7 for all pupils. Includes the teaching of sexual health, reproduction and sexuality, as well as promoting positive relationships.
SCR	Single central record	A statutory secure record of recruitment and identity checks for all permanent and temporary staff, proprietors, contractors, external coaches and instructors, and volunteers who attend the school in a non-visitor capacity.
SENCO	Special educational needs coordinator	A statutory role within all schools maintaining oversight and coordinating the implementation of the school's special educational needs policy and provision of education to pupils with special educational needs.
SLT	Senior leadership team	Staff members who have been delegated leadership responsibilities in a school.
TRA	Teaching Regulation Agency	An executive agency of the DfE with responsibility for the regulation of the teaching profession.
VSH	Virtual school head	Virtual school heads are in charge of promoting the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the local authority they work for, and all children who currently have, or previously had, a social worker.

Definitions

The terms “**children**” and “**child**” refer to anyone under the age of 18.

For the purposes of this policy, “**safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children**” is defined as:

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

For the purposes of this policy, “**consent**” is defined as having the freedom and capacity to choose to engage in sexual activity. Consent may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another and can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. A person only consents to a sexual activity if they agree by choice to that activity and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Children under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity. The age of consent is 16.

For the purposes of this policy, “**sexual violence**” refers to the following offences as defined under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

- **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with their penis, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Assault by penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of their body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if they intentionally cause another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.

For the purposes of this policy, “**sexual harassment**” refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline, inside or outside of school. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a pupil’s dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence. Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to:

- Sexual comments, such as sexual stories, lewd comments, sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and sexualised name-calling.
- Sexual “jokes” and taunting.

- Physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes, and displaying images of a sexual nature.
- Online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. This includes:
 - The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
 - Sharing unwanted explicit content.
 - Upskirting.
 - Sexualised online bullying.
 - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media.
 - Sexual exploitation, coercion, and threats.

For the purposes of this policy, “**upskirting**” refers to the act, as identified the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, of taking a picture or video under another person's clothing, without their knowledge or consent, with the intention of viewing that person's genitals or buttocks, with or without clothing, to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Upskirting is a criminal offence. Anyone, including pupils and staff, of any gender can be a victim of upskirting.

For the purposes of this policy, the “**consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos**”, colloquially known as “**sexting**”, is defined as the sharing between pupils of sexually explicit content, including indecent imagery. For the purposes of this policy, “**indecent imagery**” is defined as an image which meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Nude or semi-nude sexual posing.
- A child touching themselves in a sexual way.
- Any sexual activity involving a child.
- Someone hurting a child sexually.
- Sexual activity that involves animals.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018 which supports the UK GDPR
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent duty'
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government (2021) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2022) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage'

Non-statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'
- DfE (2018) 'Information sharing'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2022) 'Recruit teachers from overseas'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Children Missing Education Policy
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Policy
- Prevent Duty Policy

- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data protection Policy
- LAC Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Consider, at all times, what is in the best interest of the pupil.
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- Provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn.
- Be prepared to identify pupils who may benefit from an Early Help.
- Be aware of the school's systems which support safeguarding, including any policies, procedures, information and training provided upon induction.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSL.
- Undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training, during their induction – this will be regularly updated.
- Receive and understand child protection and safeguarding (including online safety) updates, e.g. via email, as required, and at least annually.
- To understand the expectations in relation to filtering and monitoring to ensure pupils are not accessing harmful or illegal contents on school technology devices
- Be aware of the local Early Help process and understand their role in it.
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to CSCS, as well as for making statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 and their role in these assessments.
- Make a referral to CSCS and/or the police immediately, if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.
- Support social workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the DSL.
- Be aware of and understand the procedure to follow if a child confides they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Be aware that a pupil may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.
- Speak to the DSL if they are unsure about how to handle safeguarding matters or Deputy DSL in her absence.
- Be aware of safeguarding issues that can put pupils at risk of harm.

- Be aware of behaviours that could potentially be a sign that a pupil may be at risk of harm.

Teachers, including the headteacher, have a responsibility to:

- To understand the expectations in relation to filtering and monitoring to ensure pupils are not accessing harmful or illegal contents on school technology devices
- Safeguard pupils' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties, as outlined in the 'Teachers' Standards'.

The Chairman of the Proprietary Board has a duty to:

- Take strategic leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that the school complies with its duties under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation.
- Guarantee that the policies, procedures and training opportunities in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times and all staff receive regular up-dates on Safeguarding and child protection (including on-line safety)
- Guarantee that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.
- Confirm that the school's safeguarding arrangements consider the procedures and practices of the LA as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures.
- Understand the local criteria for action and the local protocol for assessment, and ensure these are reflected in the school's policies and procedures.
- Comply with its obligations under section 14B of the Children Act 2004 to supply the local safeguarding arrangements with information to fulfil its functions.
- Ensure that staff working directly with children read at least Part one of KCSIE.
- Ensure that staff who do not work directly with children read Part one, two, three, four and five of KCSIE September 2025. **NB:** Individual schools assess which guidance will be most effective for their staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities regarding safeguarding children.
- Ensure a member of the Senior Leadership Team takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements
- Appoint a member of staff from the SLT to the role of DSL as an explicit part of the role-holder's job description
- Appoint one or more deputy DSLs to provide support to the DSL, and ensure that they are trained to the same standard as the DSL and that the role is explicit in their job descriptions
- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding; this includes ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, ensure the child's wishes and feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Ensure systems are in place, children can confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously, and they can safely express their views and give feedback; these systems will be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible.

- Ensure that staff have due regard to relevant data protection principles that allow them to share and withhold personal information.
- Ensure that the Chairman of the Proprietary Board is nominated to liaise with the LA and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the headteacher or another governor.
- Guarantee that there are effective and appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Ensure all relevant persons are aware of the school's local safeguarding arrangements, including the Chairman of the Proprietary Board itself, the SLT and DSL (Safeguarding flow chart in place throughout the school)
- Make sure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including protection against dangers online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Adhere to statutory responsibilities by conducting pre-employment checks on staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained to support pupils to be themselves at school, e.g. if they are LGBTQ+.
- Ensure the school has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in pupils, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Guarantee that volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- Make sure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training updates, e.g. emails, as required, but at least annually to safeguard children effectively.
- Ensure that all proprietors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training upon their induction and that this training is updated regularly, at least yearly.
- To understand the expectations in relation to filtering and monitoring to ensure pupils are not accessing harmful or illegal contents on school technology devices
- Certify that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Confirm that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the DBS and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), where appropriate, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- Guarantee that there are procedures in place to handle pupils' allegations against other pupils.
- Ensure that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as policies pertaining to the behaviour of pupils and staff.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including those in relation to child-on-child abuse.
- Guarantee that there are systems in place for pupils to express their views and give feedback.
- Establish an Early help procedure and ensure all staff understand the procedure and their role in it.

- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of LAC and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training. (Sarah Mason PP Lead)
- Ensure that the designated teacher works with the VSH to discuss how the pupil premium funding can best be used to support LAC. The statutory role of the VSH now extends to promoting the educational achievement of children in kinship care, and the designated teacher/DSL will liaise with the VSH to support these children.
- Introduce mechanisms to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities.
- Make sure that staff members have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep LAC safe, particularly regarding the pupil's legal status, contact details and care arrangements.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and prevent the risk of their disappearance in future.
- Ensure that the Chairman of the Proprietary Board has been subject to an enhanced DBS check and section 128
- Create a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

The Headteacher has a duty to:

- Ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the proprietary board, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation are followed by staff.
- Provide staff with the appropriate policies and information upon induction.
- Update relevant policies in accordance with new legislation.

The DSL has a duty to:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety.
- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding 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, and/or support other staff to do so.
- During term time, be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. **NB:** Individual schools, working with the DSL, define what "available" means and whether, in exceptional circumstances, availability via phone, videocall, or other media is an acceptable substitution for in-person availability. In the absence of the DSL, the Deputy DSL's will be available daily
- Arrange, alongside the school, adequate and appropriate cover for any activities outside of school hours or terms.
- Refer cases:

- To CSCS where abuse, neglect and exploitation are suspected, and support staff who make referrals to CSCS.
- To the Channel programme where radicalisation concerns arise, and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
- To the DBS where a person is dismissed or has left due to harm, or risk of harm, to a child.
- To the police where a crime may have been committed, in line with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) guidance.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners.
- Liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of issues, especially regarding ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Liaise with the case manager and the LA designated officers (LADOs) for child protection concerns in cases concerning staff.
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare, including online and digital safety.
- Liaise with staff when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Work with the Headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on their attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes:
 - Ensuring that the school knows which pupils have or had a social worker.
 - Understanding the academic progress and attainment of these pupils.
 - Maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these pupils.
 - Supporting teachers to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these pupils reach their potential.
 - Helping to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues these pupils are experiencing with teachers and the SLT.
- Ensure that child protection files are kept up-to-date and only accessed by those who need to do so.
- Ensure that a pupil's child protection file is transferred as soon as possible, and within five days, when transferring to a new school, and consider any additional information that should be shared.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures – this will be discussed during the staff induction process.
- Work with the Chairman of the Proprietary board to ensure the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly.

- Ensure the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy are available publicly, and parents are aware that the school may make referrals for suspected cases of abuse, neglect or exploitation, as well as the role the school plays in these referrals.
- Link with safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure that staff are aware of the training opportunities available and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Undergo training and update this training at least once a year.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- To understand the expectations in relation to filtering and monitoring to ensure pupils are not accessing harmful or illegal contents on school technology devices and take responsibility and action any concerns with ARC ICT support- seek training throughout the school as identified.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings; this includes understanding the difficulties pupils may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and considering how to build trusted relationships that facilitate communication.
- Support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters specifically, to ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes; and to support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, including within school, with other schools, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- Keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals, and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

The designated teacher has a responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC, and for children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

3. Multi-agency working

The school contributes to multi-agency working as part of its statutory duty. The school is aware of and will follow the local safeguarding arrangements.

The school will be fully engaged, involved, and included in local safeguarding arrangements. Once the school is named as a relevant agency by local safeguarding partners, it will follow its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies. The school will act in accordance with the safeguarding arrangements.

The school will work with CSCS, the police, health services and other services to protect the welfare of its pupils, through the early help process and by contributing to multi-agency plans to provide additional support.

Where a need for Early help is identified, the school will allow access for CSCS from the host LA and, where appropriate, a placing LA, for that LA to conduct (or consider whether to conduct) a section 17 or 47 assessment.

The school also recognises the particular importance of inter-agency working in identifying and preventing CSE.

Information sharing

The school recognises the importance of proactive information sharing between professionals and local agencies to effectively meet pupils' needs and identify any need for early help.

Considering the above, staff will be aware that whilst the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 place a duty on schools to process personal information fairly and lawfully, they also allow for information to be stored and shared for safeguarding purposes – data protection regulations do not act as a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would result in the pupil being placed at risk of harm.

Staff members will ensure that fear of sharing information does not stand in the way of their responsibility to promote the welfare and safety of pupils. If staff members are in doubt about sharing information, they will speak to the DSL or deputy DSLs.

4. Early help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Any pupil may benefit from early help, but in particular, staff will be alert to the potential need for early help for pupils who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs.
- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan.
- Have mental health needs.
- Are young carers.
- Show signs of being drawn into antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home.
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation.
- Are at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Have family members in prison or are affected by parental offending.
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse.
- Misuse drugs or alcohol.
- Have returned home to their family from care.
- Are at risk of HBA, such as FGM or forced marriage.
- Are privately fostered.
- Are persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
- Attendance will be treated as a safeguarding matter under statutory guidance ('Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024'). Patterns of absence will be closely monitored as potential safeguarding concerns.
- Show early signs of abuse, exploitation and/or neglect in other ways.

The DSL or Deputy DSL's will take the lead where early help is appropriate. This includes liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. The local early help process will be followed as required.

Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to CSCS for assessment for statutory services if the pupil's situation is not improving or is worsening.

See Stoke On Trent Early Help Process in Appendices

5. Abuse and neglect

For the purposes of this policy, **“abuse”** is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child which involves inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others – this can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family, institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others, e.g. via the internet. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by one or multiple adults or other children.

For the purposes of this policy, **“physical abuse”** is defined as a form of abuse which may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs of Physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruise marks consistent with either straps or slaps • Undue fear of adults- Fear of going to parents or carers • Aggression towards others • Unexplained injuries or burns-particularly if they are recurrent and especially in non-mobile babies • Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them • Injuries that occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough play • Reluctant to change for, or participate in PE or swimming • Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc... which do not have an accidental or satisfactory explanation • Cuts/scratches or substance abuse • Hitting (with an instrument or hand) smacking, punching, kicking, slapping, twisting <p>Or pulling of ears, hair or fingers, holding or squeezing with a tight grip</p>
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For the purposes of this policy, **“emotional abuse”** is defined as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development, this may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, such as interactions that are beyond

their developmental capability, overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, including cyberbullying, causing the child to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, but it may also occur alone.

Signs of Emotional abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes or regression in mood or behaviours, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes attached more than usual • Depression, aggressive or expresses extreme anxiety • Nervousness, frozen watchfulness • Obsessive behaviours • Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration • Inappropriate relationships with peers or adults • Attention seeking behaviours • Persistent tiredness • Running away/stealing/lying • Humiliating, taunting or threatening a child, whether in front of others or alone • Persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise
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For the purposes of this policy, “**sexual abuse**” is defined as abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age.

Signs of sexual abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and drawing inappropriate images for their age • Regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play • Sexual knowledge for their age • Wariness on being approached • Soreness in the genital area or unexplained rashes or marks in the genital area • Pain in urinating • Difficulty walking or sitting • Stained or bloody underwear • Recurrent tummy pains or headaches • Bruises on the inner thigh or buttocks • Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse • Sexual activity through words, play or drawing • Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults • Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home • Severe sleep disturbance with fears, vivid dreams or nightmares with overt or veiled sexual connotations • Eating disorder-anorexia, bulimia • Unaccounted sum of money
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telling you about being asked to 'keep a secret' or dropping hints or clues without directly disclosure <p>Remember: if in doubt-report it!</p>
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For the purposes of this policy, “**neglect**” is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child’s health or development, this may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision (including through the use of inappropriate caregivers); or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. All staff will be aware that abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific label, and multiple issues often overlap one another; therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL. All staff, especially the DSL, will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that pupils can at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms). All staff will be aware of the appropriate action to take following a pupil being identified as at potential risk of abuse and, in all cases, will speak to the DSL if they are unsure and in her absence the Deputy DSL’s.

Signs of neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under nourished, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging foods, untreated illnesses, inadequate care Injuries that have not received medical attention Inadequate or inappropriate clothing Constant hunger Poor standard of hygiene Persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise
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All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

6. Specific safeguarding issues

There are certain specific safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm – staff will be aware of these issues.

Appendix A of this policy sets out details about specific safeguarding issues that pupils may experience and outlines specific actions that would be taken in relation to individual issues.

7. Child-on-child abuse

For the purposes of this policy, “**child-on-child abuse**” is defined as abuse between children.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse, as confirmed in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy’s statement of intent.

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. All staff will speak to the DSL or deputy DSL in her absence if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

All staff will understand the importance of challenging and inappropriate behaviour between peers and will not tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

Child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers – sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- An act in which a person sexually touches another person without that person’s consent or coerces or physically forces a person to engage in a sexual act against their will.
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can make you feel embarrassed, offended, intimidated or unsafe and should not be ignored

- Sexual harassment can take place anywhere, including school, home, or in a public place, so it is important to recognise the different types of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment can include:

- Telling sexual jokes.
- Demanding hugs or uncomfortable touching.
- Using language that puts someone down.
- Spreading of sexual rumour (including on-line)
- Inappropriate sharing.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting.
- Initiation- and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can 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.

If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused. Any concerns or disclosures regarding peer-on-peer abuse should be treated in the same way as other safeguarding matters through following this policy.

A factual record should be made of the allegation and the DSL informed. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a referral where appropriate. If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offense has taken place, the police will be informed. Parents of both the pupil/s being complained about and the alleged victim/s, will be informed and kept up to date on the progress of the allegation/referral. The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a secure copy (CPOMS). If the allegation highlights a potential risk to the school and pupil/s, the DSL will follow the school's behaviour policy and procedures and take appropriate action. In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment will be prepared along with preventative, supervision plan. The plan will be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

8. Online safety and personal electronic devices

The school will always adhere to the Online Safety Policy. Staff will be aware of the risks posed by online misinformation, disinformation (including so-called 'fake news'), and conspiracy theories, recognising these as safeguarding harms. The school will also have due regard to DfE guidance on cyber security and generative AI, using tools such as the 'Plan technology for your school' service to strengthen filtering, monitoring, and cyber resilience.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all pupils will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online.

Through training, all staff members will be made aware of:

- Pupil attitudes and behaviours which may indicate they are at risk of potential harm online.
- The procedure to follow when they have a concern regarding a pupil's online activity.
- Staff and pupils will also be made aware of new national support services, including the Lucy Faithfull Foundation's 'Shore Space' – a confidential online chat service providing advice and support to children affected by harmful sexual behaviour.
- The potential risks associated with generative AI, including the creation and sharing of inappropriate or unsafe content, manipulation of information, and impacts on pupils' wellbeing.
- How to guide pupils in the safe and responsible use of AI tools, including recognising misinformation generated by AI and maintaining digital privacy.
- Procedures for reporting AI-related incidents or concerns, including misuse by pupils or external sources.

The school will ensure that suitable filtering systems are in place on ICT equipment to prevent children accessing inappropriate material, in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025' (SAPHOS). The school will, however, ensure that the use of filtering and monitoring systems does not cause "over blocking", which may lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what pupils can be taught online.

Staff will be aware of the filtering systems in place and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified.

Further information regarding the school's approach to online safety can be found in the Online Safety Policy.

Communicating with parents

As part of the usual communication with parents, the school will reinforce the importance of pupils being safe online and inform parents that they will find it helpful to understand what systems the school uses to filter and monitor online use.

The school will also make it clear to parents what their children are being asked to do online for school.

Reviewing online safety

The school will carry out an annual review of its approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by pupils.

- To understand the expectations in relation to filtering and monitoring to ensure pupils are not accessing harmful or illegal contents on school technology devices

Personal electronic devices

The use of personal electronic devices, including mobile phones and cameras, by staff and pupils is closely monitored by the school, in accordance with the Staff ICT and Electronic Devices Policy and Pupils' Personal Electronic Devices Policy.

Photographs and videos of pupils will be carefully planned before any activity with particular regard to consent and adhering to the school's Data Protection Policy and Photography Policy. The DPO will oversee the planning of any events where photographs and videos will be taken.

Where photographs and videos will involve pupils who are LAC, adopted pupils, or pupils for whom there are security concerns, the Headteacher and Deputy Head, will liaise with the DSL to determine the steps involved. The DSL will, in known cases of pupils who are LAC or who have been adopted, liaise with the pupils' social workers, carers or adoptive parents to assess the needs and risks associated with the pupils.

Staff will report any concerns about pupils' or other staff members' use of personal electronic devices to the DSL, following the appropriate procedures.

Upskirting

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, it is an offence to operate equipment for the purpose of upskirting. "**Operating equipment**" includes enabling, or securing, activation by another person without that person's knowledge, e.g. a motion-activated camera.

Upskirting will not be tolerated by the school. Any incidents of upskirting will be reported to the DSL, who will then decide on the next steps to take, which may include police involvement.

9. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of indecent images and videos

The school will ensure that staff are aware to treat the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual images) as a safeguarding concern.

Staff will receive appropriate training regarding child sexual development and will understand the difference between sexual behaviour that is considered normal and expected for the age of the pupil, and sexual behaviour that is inappropriate and harmful. Staff will receive appropriate training around how to deal with instances of sharing nudes and semi-nudes in the school community, including understanding motivations, assessing risks posed to pupils depicted in the images, and how and when to report instances of this behaviour.

Staff will be aware that creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of children is a criminal offence, regardless of whether the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed by the individual depicted; however, staff will ensure that pupils are not unnecessarily criminalised.

When a member of staff becomes aware of an incidence of sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes, they will refer this to the DSL or Deputy DSL in her absence as soon as possible.

The school's full response to incidents of consensual and non-consensual sharing of indecent images and videos can be found in the Youth-produced Sexual Imagery Policy.

10. Context of safeguarding incidents

Safeguarding incidents can occur outside of school and can be associated with outside factors. All staff, particularly the DSL, Deputy DSL and SLT, will always consider the context of safeguarding incidents. Assessment of pupils' behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The school will provide as much contextual information as possible when making referrals to CSCS.

11. Pupils potentially at greater risk of harm

The school recognises that some groups of pupils can face additional safeguarding challenges and understands that further barriers may exist when determining abuse, exploitation and neglect in these groups of pupils. Additional considerations for managing safeguarding concerns and incidents amongst these groups are outlined below.

Pupils who need social workers

Pupils may need social workers due to safeguarding or welfare needs. These needs can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm and educational disadvantage.

As a matter of routine, the DSL will hold and use information from the LA about whether a pupil has a social worker in order to make decisions in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.

Where a pupil needs a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to unauthorised absence, and promoting welfare, e.g. considering the provision of pastoral or academic support.

Home-educated children

Parents may choose elective home education (EHE) for their children. In some cases, EHE can mean that children are less visible to the services needed to safeguard and support them.

In line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the school will inform the LA of all deletions from the admissions register when a pupil is taken off roll.

Where a parent has expressed their intention to remove a pupil from school for EHE, the school, in collaboration with the LA and other key professionals, will coordinate a meeting with the parent, where possible, before the final decision has been made, particularly if the pupil has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

LAC and PLAC

Children most commonly become looked after because of abuse, exploitation and/or neglect. Because of this, they can be at potentially greater risk in relation to safeguarding. PLAC, also known as care leavers, can also remain vulnerable after leaving care.

The Chairman of the Proprietary Board will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and PLAC safe. This includes ensuring that the appropriate staff have the information they need, such as:

- Looked after legal status, i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order.
- Contact arrangements with parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the pupil.

The DSL and Deputy will be provided with the necessary details of pupils' social workers and the VSH, and, for PLAC, personal advisers.

Further details of safeguarding procedures for LAC and PLAC are outlined in the school's LAC Policy.

When managing safeguarding in relation to pupils with SEND, staff will be aware of the following:

- The vulnerability of pupils with SEND (high risk)
- Childhood trauma and experiences
- Individual needs
- Non-verbal pupils, how do they get their voice heard?
- Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the pupil's disability without further exploration; however, it should never be assumed that a pupil's indicators relate only to their disability

- Pupils with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- In line with KCSIE 2025, outdated medicalised language such as ‘spectrum’ or ‘disorder’ will be avoided. The school aligns its safeguarding policy with the SEND Code of Practice, ensuring inclusive and respectful terminology.
- Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers

When reporting concerns or making referrals for pupils with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration. When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a pupil with SEND, the DSL will liaise with the school’s SENCO (Cath Lawton), as well as the pupil’s parents where appropriate, to ensure that the pupil’s needs are met effectively, take in to account the needs and the support pupils may need in these circumstances.

LGBTQ+ pupils

The fact that a pupil may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm; however, staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ pupils can be targeted by other individuals. Staff will also be aware that, in some cases, a pupil who is perceived by others to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as pupils who identify as LGBTQ+.

Staff will also be aware that the risks to these pupils can be compounded when they do not have a trusted adult with whom they can speak openly with. Staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by these pupils and provide a safe space for them to speak out and share any concerns they have.

Pupils requiring mental health support

All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a pupil has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation. School to offer ‘Therapeutic’ support in-house.

12. Use of the school premises for non-school activities

Where the Chairman of the Proprietary Board hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe.

Where the Chairman of the Proprietary Board provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply. Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, the governing board will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The Chairman of the Proprietary Board will also ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The Chairman of the Proprietary Board will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of

the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

In the event of an allegation during this time, school should follow their Safeguarding policy and procedures.

Extracurricular activities and clubs

All staff or volunteers to have an up-to-date DBS Check

External bodies that host extracurricular activities and clubs at the school, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the school to effectively safeguard pupils and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements.

Staff and volunteers running extracurricular activities and clubs are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of pupils. Paid and volunteer staff understand how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to CSCS or the police, if necessary.

13. Alternative provision

The school will remain responsible for a pupil's welfare during their time at an alternative provider. In addition, the school will carry out at least half-termly reviews of any pupil placed in alternative provision to ensure safeguarding, attendance, and progress are monitored. Written confirmation will be obtained from the provider regarding safer recruitment checks and safeguarding arrangements. When placing a pupil with an alternative provider, the school will obtain written confirmation that the provider has conducted all relevant safeguarding checks on staff, including section 128.

14. Work experience

When a pupil is sent on work experience, the school will ensure that the provider has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Where the school has pupils conduct work experience at the school, an enhanced DBS check will be obtained if the pupil is over the age of 16.

15. Homestay exchange visits

School-arranged homestays in UK

Where the school is arranging for a visiting child to be provided with care and accommodation in the UK in the home of a family to which the child is not related, the responsible adults are considered to be in regulated activity for the period of the stay. In such cases, the school is the regulated activity provider; therefore, the school will obtain all the necessary information required, including a DBS enhanced certificate with barred list information as well as a section 128, to inform its assessment of the suitability of the responsible adults.

Where criminal record information is disclosed, the school will consider, alongside all other information, whether the adult is a suitable host. In addition to the responsible adults, the

school will consider whether a DBS enhanced certificate should be obtained for anyone else aged over 16 in the household.

School-arranged homestays abroad

The school will liaise with partner schools to discuss and agree the arrangements in place for the visit. The school will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether to contact the relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question to ascertain what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside of the UK. The school will use its professional judgement to assess whether the arrangements are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard every child involved in the exchange. Pupils will be provided with emergency contact details to use where an emergency occurs, or a situation arises that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Privately arranged homestays

Where a parent or pupil arranges their own homestay, this is a private arrangement, and the school is not the regulated activity provider.

Private fostering

Where a period of UK homestay lasts 28 days or more for a child aged under 16, or under 18 for a child with SEND, this may amount to private fostering under the Children Act 1989. Where the school becomes aware of a pupil being privately fostered, they will notify the LA as soon as possible to allow the LA to conduct any necessary checks.

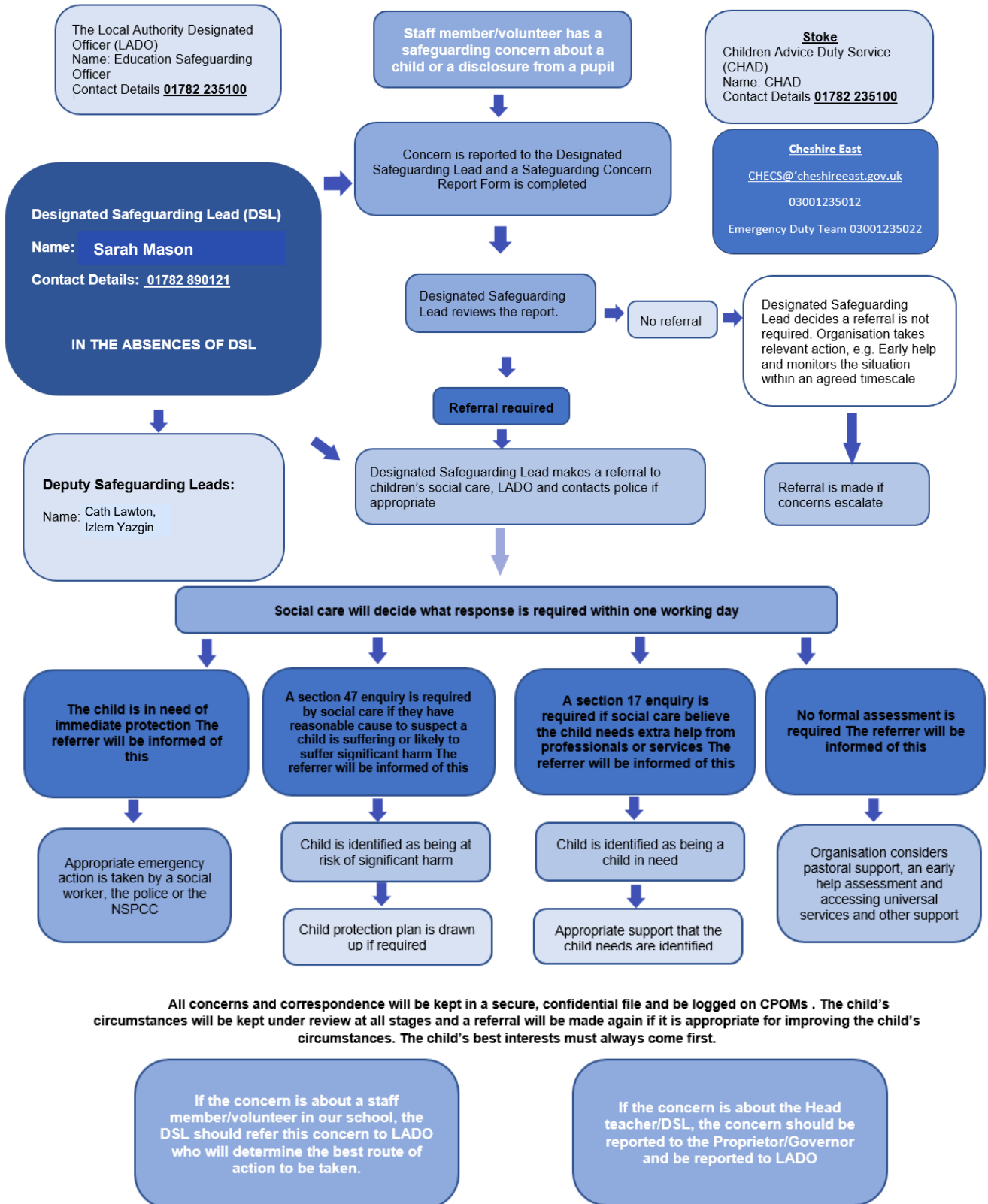
16. Concerns about pupils

If a member of staff has any concern about a pupil's welfare, or a pupil has reported a safeguarding concern in relation to themselves or a peer, they will act on them immediately by speaking to the DSL (Sarah Mason) or deputy DSL (Cath Lawton)

Staff will be aware that pupils may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Staff will be aware that this must not prevent them from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL (Sarah Mason) or deputy DSL (Cath Lawton), if they have a concern about a pupil.

All staff members are aware of the procedure for reporting concerns and understand their responsibilities in relation to confidentiality and information sharing, as outlined in the Communication and Confidentiality section of this policy.

Flow chart for reporting Safeguarding concerns



Where the DSL is not available to discuss the concern with, staff members will contact the Deputy DSL (Cath Lawton. Izlem Yazgin) with the matter. If a referral is made about a pupil by anyone other than the DSL, the Deputy DSL will be informed as soon as possible.

The LA will make a decision regarding what action is required within one working day of the referral being made and will notify the referrer. Staff are required to monitor a referral if they do not receive information from the LA regarding what action is necessary for the pupil. If the situation does not improve after a referral, the DSL will ask for reconsideration to ensure that their concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the pupil.

If Early help is appropriate, the case will be kept under constant review. If the pupil's situation does not improve, a referral will be considered. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, as well as the reasons for making those decisions, will be recorded in writing by the DSL and kept securely in the Head of school's office.

If a pupil is in immediate danger, a referral will be made to CSCS and/or the police immediately. If a pupil has committed a crime, such as sexual violence, the police will be notified without delay.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, the school will ensure that the pupil's wishes are always considered, and that there are systems available for pupils to provide feedback and express their views. When responding to safeguarding concerns, staff members will act calmly and supportively, ensuring that the pupil feels like they are being listened to and believed.

An inter-agency assessment will be undertaken where a child and their family could benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency, these assessments will identify what help the child and family require in preventing needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed.

17. Managing referrals

The reporting and referral process outlined in the Reporting Safeguarding Concerns Process Flowchart will be followed accordingly.

All staff members, in particular the DSL and Deputy DSL, will be aware of the LA's arrangements in place for managing referrals. The DSL will provide staff members with clarity and support where needed. When making a referral to CSCS or other external agencies, information will be shared in line with confidentiality requirements and will only be shared where necessary to do so.

The DSL and Deputy DSL's will work alongside external agencies, maintaining continuous liaison, including multi-agency liaison where appropriate, to ensure the wellbeing of the pupils involved. The DSL will work closely with the police to ensure the school does not jeopardise any criminal proceedings, and to obtain help and support as necessary.

Where a pupil has been harmed or is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the referrer will be notified of the action that will be taken within one working day of a referral being made. Where this information is not forthcoming, the referrer will contact the assigned social worker for more information.

The school will not wait for the start or outcome of an investigation before protecting the victim and other pupils: this applies to criminal investigations as well as those made by CSCS. Where CSCS decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate, the school will consider referring the incident again if it is believed that the pupil is at risk of harm. Where CSCS decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate and the school agrees with this decision, the school will consider the use of other support mechanisms, such as early help and pastoral support.

At all stages of the reporting and referral process, the pupil will be informed of the decisions made, actions taken and reasons for doing so. Discussions of concerns with parents will only take place where this would not put the pupil or others at potential risk of harm. The school will work closely with parents to ensure that the pupil, as well as their family, understands the arrangements in place, such as in-school interventions, is effectively supported, and knows where they can access additional support.

18. Concerns about school safeguarding practices

Any concerns regarding the safeguarding practices at the school will be raised with the SLT, and the necessary whistleblowing procedures will be followed, as outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the SLT, they should access other whistleblowing channels such as the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285).

19. Safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse against staff

Children can be victims of abuse by those who work with them in any setting. All allegations of abuse of children carried out by any staff member or volunteer is therefore taken seriously. Staff have a professional duty to report concerns about the conduct of other adults working in the school if there are indicators that a child or children could be at risk of harm. Adults working at Emerge are encouraged to raise any concern/s about conduct or practice so that this can be addressed appropriately and that the child/children are safe.

Allegations of abuse made against adults working at Emerge, whether current or historical, should be reported to the DSL or the DDSL in her absence. It is important that you do not share your concerns with anyone else unless they are both unavailable and you are asked to by a member of SLT. If the allegation is against the Headteacher, it should be reported to the DSL overarch to of the Chairman of the Proprietary body or Billie-Jo Kelsey as Responsible Individual, it is important that you do not share your concerns with anyone else, unless requested to do so by the Chairman of the Proprietary body.

Adults working at Emerge Online School are also able to follow the 'Whistle Blowing Policy,' if they feel unable to follow standard procedures relating to an allegation against staff. In line with government guidance and SSCB procedures, the Headteacher/ DSL, Chairman of the of the Proprietary body will contact the Local authority Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss the allegation/s if the concerns are that an adult in a position of trust has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children (Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against teachers and other staff-DFE statutory guidance 2012)

This initial discussion will establish the validity of any allegation under SSCB procedures (www.staffssscb.org.uk) procedure 4A and if a Child Protection safeguarding referral is required due to a child having suffered or being at risk of suffering 'significant harm'. If this is the case, a referral will be raised with relevant Safeguarding team and a section 47, Child Protection strategy meeting will be convened that the Headteacher/DSL/Chair should attend.

If an individual child is not identified but there are concerns about the behaviour of a person in a position of trust which requires consideration by other agencies or organisations, the LADO will convene a Joint Evaluation Meeting (JEM) to consider the issues and any action required.

The decision of the strategy/Joint evaluation Meeting could be:

- Investigated by children's social care.
- Police investigation if there is any criminal element to the allegation.
- Single agency investigation completed by school which should involve Senior HR advisor for the school.

If the matter does not meet the threshold for intervention by other agencies, but concerns remain about the conduct of a person in position of trust working with children, the school will take appropriate investigatory and, if appropriate, disciplinary action.

Referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be made by the school when appropriate, in line with current guidance. The fact that a member of staff offers to resign will not prevent the allegation procedure and any necessary disciplinary action reaching a conclusion. All staff are referred to SCB website link below for latest guidance on managing allegations against staff and volunteer:

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/safeguarding-children/professionals-folder/procedure-manuals/d---cyps-specific-circumstances.en>

Please note: This guidance should be referred to, and followed as required, via the link above. Please do not download a copy, as it is regularly refreshed and updated.

Managing Allegations

All staff are directed to the SCB website link below for the latest guidance on managing allegations against staff or volunteers

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/content/safeguarding-children/professionals-folder/procedure-manuals/d---cyps-specific-circumstances.en>

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (**Sarah Mason**)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (**Cath Lawton, Izlem Yazgin**)

The Designated LADO Manager for Stoke On Trent is **Linda Hancock**

Contact for LADO: The Safeguarding Referral Team (SRT) **01782 235100** (Monday to Thursday 8.30am-5pm & Friday 8.30am -4.30pm)

In an emergency out of hours, telephone **01782 234234**. **If parents have any concerns they should be addressed to the Headteacher, DSL Sarah Mason), DDSL (Cath Lawton, Izlem Yazgin)**

Please see additional Safeguarding and KCSIE flow chart above

20. Communication and confidentiality

All child protection and safeguarding concerns will be treated in the strictest of confidence in accordance with the school data protection policies.

Where there is an allegation or incident of sexual abuse or sexual violence, the victim is entitled to anonymity by law; therefore, the school will consult its policy and agree on what information will be disclosed to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator and their parents. Where a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, the school will do all it can to protect the anonymity of the pupils involved in the case.

Concerns will only be reported to those necessary for its progression and reports will only be shared amongst staff members and with external agencies on a need-to-know basis. During the disclosure of a concern by a pupil, staff members will not promise the pupil confidentiality and will ensure that they are aware of what information will be shared, with whom and why.

Where it is in the public interest, and protects pupils from harm, information can be lawfully shared without the victim's consent, e.g. if doing so would assist the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime. Before doing so, the DSL will weigh the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and others. Where a referral is made against the victim's wishes, it is done so carefully with the reasons for the referral explained to the victim and specialist support offered.

Depending on the nature of a concern, the DSL will discuss the concern with the parents of the pupils involved. Discussions with parents will not take place where they could potentially put a pupil at risk of harm. Discussion with the victim's parents will relate to the arrangements being put in place to safeguard the victim, with the aim of understanding their wishes in terms of support arrangements and the progression of the report. Discussion with the alleged perpetrator's parents will be held in regards to the arrangements that will impact their child, such as moving classes, with the reasons behind decisions being explained and the available support discussed. External agencies will be invited to these discussions where necessary.

Where confidentiality or anonymity has been breached, the school will implement the appropriate disciplinary procedures as necessary and will analyse how damage can be minimised and future breaches be prevented.

Where a pupil is leaving the school, the DSL will consider whether it is appropriate to share any information with the pupil's new provider, in addition to the child protection file, that will allow the new provider to support the pupil and arrange appropriate support for their arrival.

21. Safer recruitment

The school's full policy and procedures for safer recruitment are outlined in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

An enhanced DBS check with barred list information and section 128, will be undertaken for all staff members engaged in regulated activity. A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if, as a result of their work, they:

- Are responsible on a daily basis for the care or supervision of children.
- Regularly work in the school at times when children are on the premises.
- Regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age.

The DfE's DBS Workforce Guides will be consulted when determining whether a position fits the child workforce criteria.

The Chairman of the Proprietary Board will conduct the appropriate pre-employment checks for all prospective employees, including internal candidates and candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK, this will include online searches during the short listing of potential candidates (All candidates will be informed of this prior). Outdated references (e.g. TRA Employer Access) are replaced with direct GOV.UK links for prohibition and suitability checks, consistent with statutory guidance.

The appropriate DBS and suitability checks will be carried out for all Proprietors, volunteers, and contractors, considering Health & safety aspects e.g Hot works permit...

Staff suitability

All staff members are required to sign the Staff Disqualification Declaration Form confirming that they are not disqualified from working in a schooling environment. A disqualified person will not be permitted to continue working at the school, unless they apply for and are granted a waiver from Ofsted. The school will provide support with this process.

Ongoing suitability

Following appointment, consideration will be given to staff and volunteers' ongoing suitability – to prevent the opportunity for harm to children or placing children at risk.

Referral to the DBS

The school will refer to DBS anyone who has harmed a child or poses a risk of harm to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed an offence and has been removed from working in regulated activity. The duty will also apply in circumstances where an individual is deployed to another area of work that is not in regulated activity or they are suspended.

22. Single central record (SCR)

The school keeps an SCR which records all staff, including agency and third-party supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes, who work at the school. We use an **on-line Single Central Register provider (on-line SCR)**

The Chairman of the proprietor body are also recorded on the SCR.

The following information is recorded on the SCR:

- An identity check.
- Next of Kin.
- A barred list check.
- An enhanced DBS check.
- A prohibition from teaching check.
- A check of professional qualifications, where required.
- A check to determine the individual's right to work in the UK.
- Additional checks for those who have lived or worked outside of the UK.
- A section 128 check for all staff.

For agency and third-party supply staff, the school will also record whether written confirmation from the employment business supplying the member of staff has been received which indicates that all the necessary checks have been conducted and the date that confirmation was received.

If any checks have been conducted for volunteers, this will also be recorded on the SCR. If risk assessments are conducted to assess whether a volunteer should be subject to an enhanced DBS check, the risk assessment will be recorded.

Written confirmation that supply agencies have completed all relevant checks will also be included.

The school is free to record any other information it deems relevant.

The details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work at the school.

23. Training

Staff members will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which will be updated regularly and at least annually, or whenever there is a change in legislation or statutory guidance.

The induction training will cover:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding KCSIE Policy, including any updates.
- The Child-on-child Abuse Policy and procedures.
- The Staff Code of Conduct.
- Part one, two, three, four, and five of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE September 2024).
- The Behaviour Policy.
- The Children Missing Education Policy, including the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- Appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, including online safety training.

- Information about the role and identity of the DSL, Deputy DSL, and SLT team involvement.
- Updated statutory guidance: The school notes that revised guidance on Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) and supporting gender-questioning children is expected in summer 2025. Once published, this policy and training content will be updated to reflect any new requirements.

All staff members will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually. Training will cover, at a minimum:

- The issues surrounding sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Contextual safeguarding.
- How to keep LAC and PLAC safe.
- CCE and the need to refer cases to the National Referral Mechanism.
- Filtering and monitoring of technology to keep children safe and from harm.
- Updated online safety training.

Staff will receive opportunities to contribute towards and inform the safeguarding arrangements in the school.

The DSL, Deputy DSL and SLT team will undergo child protection and safeguarding training and update this training at least every two years. The DSL, Deputy DSL and SLT team will also obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses, ensuring they keep up to date with any developments relevant to their role. This will include training to understand:

- The assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and CSCS referral arrangements.
- How LAs conduct child protection case conferences and child protection review conferences, to enable the DSL and Deputy DSL to attend and contribute to these effectively when required.
- The importance of providing information and support to CSCS.
- The lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have.
- How to be alert to the specific needs of children in need, pupils with SEND and/or relevant health conditions, and young carers.
- The importance of internal and external information sharing.
- The Prevent duty.
- The risks associated with online safety, including the additional risks faced online by pupils with SEND.

24. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed at least annually by the DSL/ Headteacher, Deputy Head, who are both Deputy DSL. This policy will be updated as needed to ensure it is up to date with safeguarding legislation and issues as they emerge and evolve, including any lessons learnt.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff. All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in

this policy as part of their induction programme. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2026.

25. Parental Communication

Parents to be informed of any incidents or disclosure face to face in the first instance with the class teacher



If the disclosure or concern is escalated a formal meeting to take place between DSL , DDSL and the class teacher



If all parties agree an Early Help to be offered to support the family

Appendix

Specific safeguarding issues

This appendix sets out details about specific safeguarding issues that pupils may experience and outlines specific actions that would be taken in relation to individual issues.

Here are the issues covered:

1. Domestic abuse
2. Homelessness
3. Children missing from education
4. Child abduction and community safety incidents
5. Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
6. Cyber-crime
7. Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
8. Modern slavery
9. FGM
10. Forced marriage
11. Radicalisation
12. Pupils with family members in prison
13. Pupils required to give evidence in court
14. Mental health
15. Serious violence

16. Taking Action
17. Disclosure, Talking to the Listening to Children
18. Early Help

1.Domestic abuse

For the purposes of this policy, and in line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, “**domestic abuse**” is defined as abusive behaviour of a person towards another person (including conduct directed at someone else, e.g. the person’s child) where both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. “**Abusive behaviour**” includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or another form of abuse. “**Personally connected**” includes people who:

- Are, have been, or have agreed to be married to each other.
- Are, have been, or have agreed to be in a civil partnership with each other.
- Are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other.
- Each has, or had, a parental relationship towards the same child.
- Are relatives.

The school will recognise the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

2. Homelessness

The DSL and Deputy DSL's will be aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that concerns over homelessness can be raised as early as possible.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- Household debt.
- Rent arrears.
- Domestic abuse.
- Anti-social behaviour.
- Any mention of a family moving home because "they have to".

Referrals to the Local Housing Authority do not replace referrals to CSCS where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm. For 16- and 17-year-olds, homelessness may not be family-based and referrals to CSCS will be made as necessary where concerns are raised.

3. Missing from education

A child going missing from school is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and, as such, these children are increasingly at risk of being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. Staff will monitor pupils that go missing from the school, particularly on repeat occasions, and report them to the DSL and DSL's following normal safeguarding procedures, in accordance with the Children Missing Education Policy. The school will inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

There is a clear define between CME and persistent absence.

Admissions register

Pupils are placed on the admissions register at the beginning of the first day that is agreed by the school, or when the school has been notified that the pupil will first be attending. The school will notify the LA within 5 days of when a pupil's name is added to the admissions register.

The school will ensure that the admissions register is kept up-to-date and accurate at all times and will inform parents when any changes occur. Two emergency contacts will be held for each pupil where possible. Staff will monitor pupils who do not attend the school on the agreed date and will notify the LA at the earliest opportunity.

If a parent notifies the school that their child will live at a different address, the school will record the following information on the admissions register:

- The full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live.
- The new address.
- The date from when the pupil will live at that address.

If a parent notifies the school that their child will be attending a different school, or is already registered at a different school, the following information will be recorded on the admissions register:

- The name of the new school.
- The date on which the pupil first attended, or is due to attend, that school.

Where a pupil moves to a new school, the school will use a secure internet system to securely transfer pupils' data.

To ensure accurate data is collected to allow effective safeguarding, the school will inform the LA of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended), where they:

- Have been taken out of the school by their parents, and are being educated outside the national education system, e.g. home education.
- Have ceased to attend the school and no longer live within a reasonable distance of the premises.
- Have been certified by the school's medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and their parent has not indicated the intention to the pupil continuing to attend school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Have been in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.

The school will also remove a pupil from the admissions register where the school and LA have been unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts after making reasonable enquiries into their attendance.

If a pupil is to be removed from the admissions register, the school will provide the LA with the following information:

- The full name of the pupil.
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives.
- At least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives.
- The full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date that the pupil will start living there, if applicable.
- The name of the pupil's new school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable.
- The grounds for removal from the admissions register under regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

The school will work with the LA to establish methods of making returns for pupils back into the school. The school will highlight to the LA where they have been unable to obtain necessary information from parents, e.g. where an address is unknown. The school will also highlight any other necessary contextual information, including safeguarding concerns.

4. Child abduction and community safety incidents

For the purposes of this policy, “**child abduction**” is defined as the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents and other relatives, other people known to the victim, and strangers.

All staff will be alert to community safety incidents taking place in the vicinity of the school that may raise concerns regarding child abduction, e.g. people loitering nearby or unknown adults conversing with pupils.

Pupils will be provided with practical advice and lessons to ensure they can keep themselves safe outdoors.

5. National Crime Agency’s CEOP Safety Centre

For the purposes of this policy, “**National Crime Agency’s CEOP Safety Centre**” is defined as a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- For the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or the threat of violence.

Specific forms of NCASC can include:

- Being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.
- Working in cannabis factories.
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- Committing vehicle crime.
- Committing, or threatening to commit, serious violence to others.

The school will recognise that pupils involved in NCASC are victims themselves, regardless of whether they have committed crimes, and even if the criminal activity appears consensual. The school will also recognise that pupils of any gender are at risk of NCASC

School staff will be aware of the indicators that a pupil is the victim of NCASC, including:

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

County lines

For the purposes of this policy, “**county lines**” refers to gangs and organised criminal networks exploiting children to move, store or sell drugs and money into one or more areas, locally and/or across the UK.

As well as the general indicators for NCASC, school staff will be aware of the specific indicators that a pupil may be involved in county lines, including:

- Going missing and subsequently being found in areas away from their home.
- Having been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence, e.g. knife crime.
- Receiving requests for drugs via a phone line.
- Moving drugs.
- Handing over and collecting money for drugs.
- Being exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection.
- Being found in accommodation they have no connection with or a hotel room where there is drug activity.
- Owning a 'debt bond' to their exploiters.
- Having their bank account used to facilitate drug dealing.

Staff will be made aware of pupils with missing episodes who may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. Staff members who suspect a pupil may be vulnerable to, or involved in, county lines activity will immediately report all concerns to the DSL.

The DSL will consider referral to the National Referral Mechanism on a case-by-case basis and consider involving local services and providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

6. Cyber-crime

For the purposes of this policy, "**cyber-crime**" is defined as criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. This includes 'cyber-enabled' crimes, i.e. crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online, and 'cyber-dependent' crimes, i.e. crimes that can be committed only by using a computer. Crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers, known as 'hacking'.
- Denial of Service attacks, known as 'booting'.
- Making, supplying or obtaining malicious software, or 'malware', e.g. viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence.

All staff will be aware of the signs of cyber-crime and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise. This may include the DSL referring pupils to the National Crime Agency's Cyber Choices programme.

7. Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

For the purposes of this policy, "**child sexual exploitation**" is defined as a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, for any of the following reasons:

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants.
- For the financial advantage, increased status or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- Through violence or the threat of violence.

The school will recognise that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the pupil's immediate knowledge, e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. The school will recognise that CSE can affect any pupil who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities, even if the activity appears consensual; this includes pupils aged 16 and above who can legally consent to sexual activity. The school will also recognise that pupils may not realise they are being exploited, e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

School staff will be aware of the key indicators that a pupil is the victim of CSE, including:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions.
- Associating with other children involved in exploitation.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late.
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part.
- Having older partners.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections.
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development.
- Becoming pregnant.

All concerns related to CSE will be managed in line with the school's Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Policy.

Where CSE, or the risk of it, is suspected, staff will discuss the case with the DSL or the Deputy DSL's. If after discussion a concern remains, local safeguarding procedures will be triggered, including referral to the LA. The LA and all other necessary authorities will then handle the matter to conclusion. The school will cooperate as needed.

8. Modern slavery

For the purposes of this policy, "**modern slavery**" encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE, and other forms of exploitation.

All staff will be aware of and alert to the signs that a pupil may be the victim of modern slavery. Staff will also be aware of the support available to victims of modern slavery and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism.

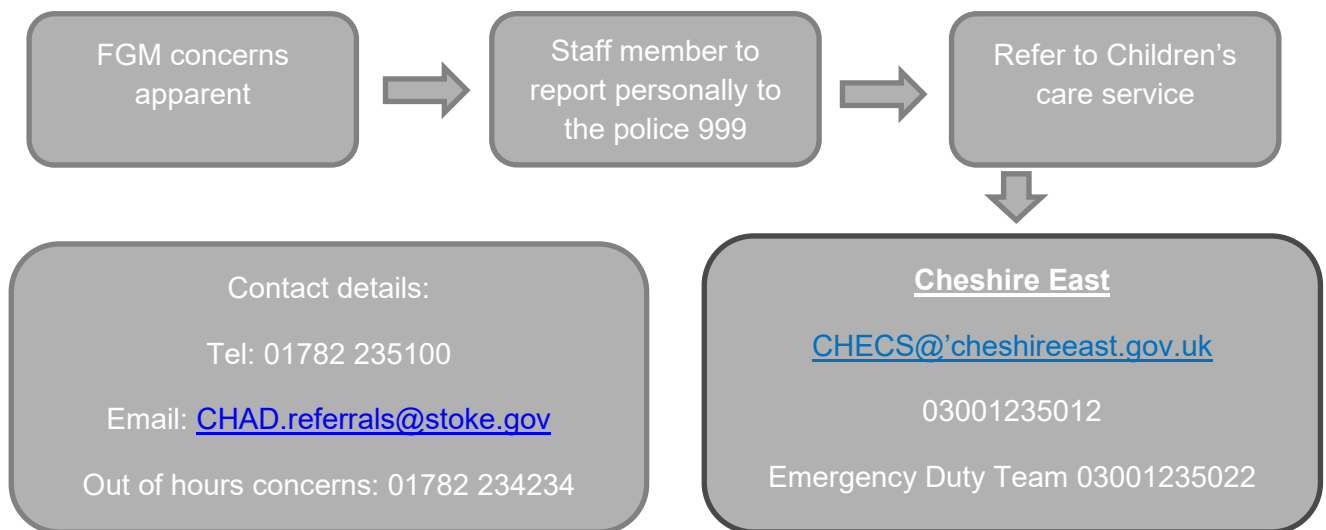
9. FGM

For the purposes of this policy, "**FGM**" is defined as all procedures involving the 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.

All staff will be alert to the possibility of a pupil being at risk of FGM or already having suffered FGM. If staff are worried about someone who is at risk of FGM or who has been a victim of FGM, they are required to share this information with CSCS and the police. The school's procedures relating to managing cases of FGM and protecting pupils will reflect multi-agency working arrangements.

As outlined in Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015), teachers are **legally required** to report to the police any discovery, whether through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence, of FGM on a pupil under the age of 18. Teachers failing to report such cases may face disciplinary action. Teachers will not examine pupils, and so it is rare that they will see any visual evidence, but they must personally report to the police where an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also consider and discuss any such case with the DSL or Deputy DSL'S in her absence and involve CSCS as appropriate. **NB:** This does not apply to any suspected or at-risk cases, nor if the individual is over the age of 18. In such cases, local safeguarding procedures will be followed.

If a staff member observes any signs of FGM, please follow the reporting process:



All staff will be aware of the indicators that pupils may be at risk of FGM. While some individual indicators may not indicate risk, the presence of two or more indicators could signal a risk to the pupil. It is important to note that the pupil may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so staff will be sensitive when broaching the subject.

Indicators that a pupil may be at heightened risk of undergoing FGM include:

- The socio-economic position of the family and their level of integration into UK society.
- The pupil coming from a community known to adopt FGM.
- Any girl with a mother or sister who has been subjected to FGM.
- Any girl withdrawn from PSHE.

Indicators that FGM may take place soon include:

- When a female family elder is visiting from a country of origin.
- A girl confiding that she is to have a 'special procedure' or a ceremony to 'become a woman'.
- A girl requesting help from a teacher if she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk.
- A girl, or her family member, talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where FGM is prevalent.

All staff will be vigilant to the signs that FGM has already taken place so that help can be offered, enquiries can be made to protect others, and criminal investigations can begin. Indicators that FGM may have already taken place include the pupil:

- Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet.
- Spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- Having prolonged or repeated absences from school, followed by withdrawal or depression.
- Being reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations.
- Asking for help but not being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

FGM is included in the definition of “‘**honour-based’ abuse (HBA)**”, which involves crimes that have been committed to defend the honour of the family and/or community. All forms of HBA are forms of abuse and will be treated and escalated as such. Staff will be alert to the signs of HBA, including concerns that a child is at risk of HBA, or has already suffered from HBA, and will consult with the DSL or Deputy DSL’S in their absence who will activate local safeguarding procedures if concerns arise

10. Forced marriage

Forced marriage is a marriage where one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Force can be physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent, e.g. due to some forms of SEND. Where an individual lacks the capacity to consent to marriage, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.

It became law in February 2023 that it is also a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, 153 Section 5B(6) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 states teachers need not report a case to the police if they have reason to believe that another teacher has already reported the case. 156 threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages.

All staff will be alert to the indicators that a pupil is at risk of, or has undergone, forced marriage, including, but not limited to, the pupil:

- Being absent from school – particularly where this is persistent.
- Requesting for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to the country of origin.
- Being fearful about forthcoming school holidays.
- Being subjected to surveillance by siblings or cousins at school.
- Demonstrating a decline in behaviour, engagement, performance, exam results or punctuality.
- Being withdrawn from school by their parents.
- Being removed from a day centre when they have a physical or learning disability.
- Not being allowed to attend extracurricular activities.

- Suddenly announcing that they are engaged to a stranger, e.g. to friends or on social media.
- Having a family history of forced marriage, e.g. their older siblings have been forced to marry.
- Being prevented from going on to further or higher education.
- Showing signs of mental health disorders and behaviours, e.g. depression, self-harm, anorexia.
- Displaying a sudden decline in their educational performance, aspirations or motivation.

Staff who have any concerns regarding a pupil who may have undergone, is currently undergoing, or is at risk of forced marriage will speak to the DSL or Deputy DSL's in her absence and local safeguarding procedures will be followed – this could include referral to CSCS, the police or the Forced Marriage Unit. The DSL or Deputy DSL's will ensure the pupil is spoken to privately about these concerns and further action taken as appropriate. Pupils will always be listened to and their comments taken seriously.

It will be made clear to staff members that they should not approach the pupil's family or those with influence in the community, without the express consent of the pupil, as this will alert them to the concerns and may place the pupil in further danger.

Advice will be sought from the Forced Marriage Unit following any suspicion of forced marriage among pupils.

If a pupil is being forced to marry, or is fearful of being forced to, the school will be especially vigilant for signs of mental health disorders and self-harm. The pupil will be supported by the DSL and senior mental health lead, and referrals will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Staff members will make themselves aware of how they can support victims of forced marriage in order to respond to the victim's needs at an early stage and be aware of the practical help they can offer, e.g. referral to social services and local and national support groups.

Local child safeguarding procedures will be activated following concerns regarding forced marriage – the school will use existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

The school will support any victims to seek help by:

- Making them aware of their rights and choices to seek legal advice and representation.
- Recording injuries and making referrals for medical examination where necessary.
- Providing personal safety advice.
- Developing a safety plan in case they are seen, e.g. by preparing another reason for why the victim is seeking help.

The school will establish where possible whether pupils at risk of forced marriage have a dual nationality or two passports.

The school will aim to create an open environment where pupils feel comfortable and safe to discuss the problems they are facing – this means creating an environment where forced marriage is discussed openly within the curriculum and support and counselling are provided routinely.

The school will take a whole school approach towards educating on forced marriage in the school curriculum and environment – in particular, the school's RSHE curriculum will incorporate teaching about the signs of forced marriage and how to obtain help. Appropriate materials and sources of further support will be signposted to pupils. Pupils will be encouraged to access appropriate advice, information and support.

Teachers and other staff members will be educated through robust CPD training about the issues surrounding forced marriage and the signs to look out for.

11. Radicalisation

For the purposes of this policy, “**radicalisation**” refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

For the purposes of this policy, “**extremism**” refers to the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Extremism also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

For the purposes of this policy, “**terrorism**” refers to an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people, serious damage to property, or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat of these actions must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public and be made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Protecting pupils from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's wider safeguarding duties. The school will actively assess the risk of pupils being radicalised and drawn into extremism and/or terrorism. Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff will use their professional judgement to identify pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation and act appropriately, which may include contacting the DSL/Deputy DSL's or making a Prevent referral. The school will work with local safeguarding arrangements as appropriate.

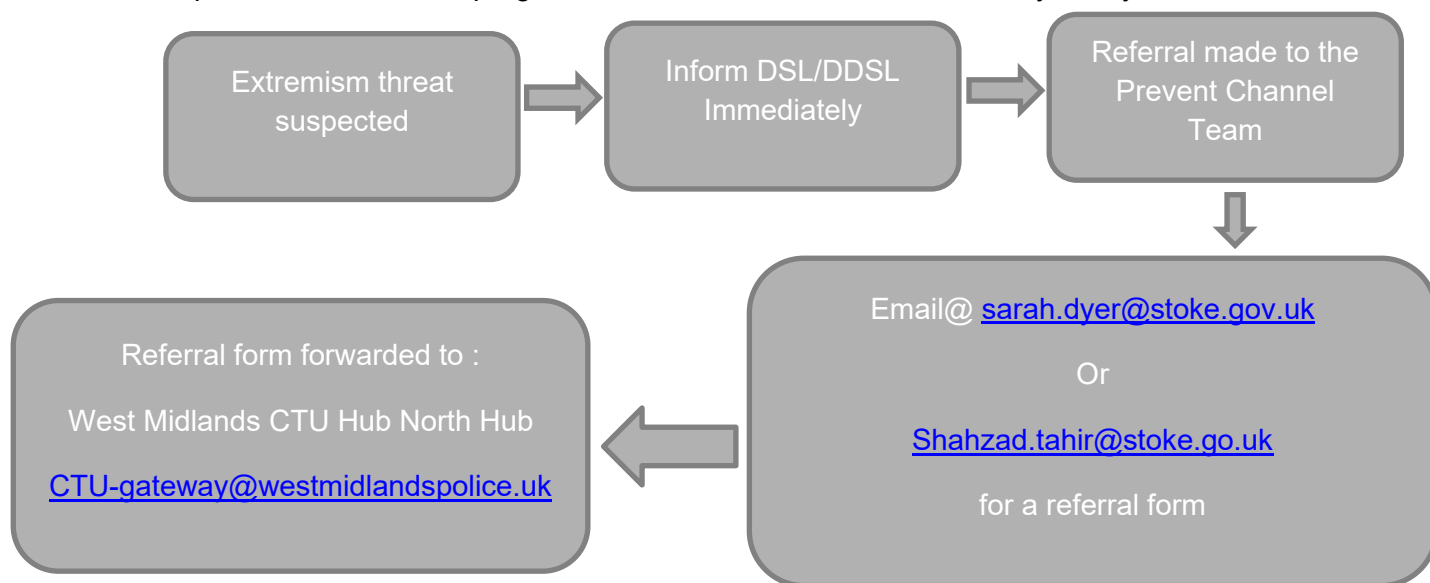
The school will ensure that they engage with parents and families, as they are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation. In doing so, the school will assist and advise family members who raise concerns and provide information for support mechanisms. Any concerns over radicalisation will be discussed with the pupil's parents, unless the school has reason to believe that the child would be placed at risk as a result.

The DSL/Deputy DSL's will undertake Prevent awareness training to be able to provide advice and support to other staff on how to protect pupils against the risk of radicalisation. The DSL will hold formal training sessions with all members of staff to ensure they are aware of the risk indicators and their duties regarding preventing radicalisation.

The Prevent duty

Under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, all schools are subject to a duty to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”, known as “**the Prevent duty**”. The Prevent duty will form part of the school's wider safeguarding obligations.

The school's procedures for carrying out the Prevent duty, including how it will engage and implement the Channel programme, are outlined in the Prevent Duty Policy.



12. Pupils with family members in prison

Pupils with a family member in prison will be offered pastoral support as necessary. They will receive a copy of 'Are you a young person with a family member in prison?' from Action for Prisoners' Families where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

13. Pupils required to give evidence in court

Pupils required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or crimes they have witnessed, will be offered appropriate pastoral support.

Pupils will be provided with the booklet 'Going to Court' from HMCTS where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns at primary age.

Pupils will be provided with the booklet 'Going to Court and being a witness' from HMCTS where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns at secondary age.

14. Mental health

All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a pupil has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff will not attempt to make a diagnosis of mental health problems – the school will ensure this is done by a trained mental health professional. Staff will, however, be encouraged to identify pupils whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or may be at risk of developing one. Staff will also be aware of how pupils' experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Staff who have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern will act in line with this policy and speak to the DSL or Deputy DSL's.

The school will access a range of advice to help them identify pupils in need of additional mental health support, including working with external agencies.

In all cases of mental health difficulties, the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy will be always consulted and adhered to.

15. Serious violence

Through training, all staff will be made aware of the indicators which may signal a pupil is at risk from, or is involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Increased absence from school.
- A change in friendships.
- Relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in academic performance.
- Signs of self-harm.
- A significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

Staff will be made aware of some of the most significant risk factors that could increase a pupil's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violence. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

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

Staff members who suspect a pupil may be vulnerable to, or involved in, serious violent crime will immediately report their concerns to the DSL (Sarah Mason) or in her absence to Deputy DSL (Cath Lawton, Izlem Yazgin)

16. Taking Action

Expectations of Staff and Volunteers regarding Safeguarding, and the procedures and processes that should be followed, including the support provided to children:

PROCEDURE FOR ALL STAFF TO FOLLOW

The Three "E" s When trying to decide whether the concerns are sufficient to require action, judgements should be based on:

Evidence – what have I seen or heard? (Write it down verbatim)

Experience – what does my past involvement with Child Protection and with this child /family tell me?

Empathy – what non-verbal / intuitive cues am I aware of?

N.B. It is not the school's job to decide whether the child has been abused or by whom. If necessary, the designated person(s) responsible will consult the SRT team (Safeguarding Referral Team)

Tel: 01782 235100

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/portal/>

However, if unsure as to whether a referral into SRT is required, then the designated person(s) responsible should contact a social worker from the Locality Team to discuss concerns and ascertain whether the concerns meet the threshold for safeguarding.

When the concerns do meet the threshold for a safeguarding referral, SRT should be contacted and a Transitional (Multi-Agency) Referral Form (MARF) must be completed and submitted as directed. Where the concerns do not meet the threshold for safeguarding, discussions with a Social Worker from the Locality Team can take place regarding what support can be offered and what action needs to be taken to address concerns.

If staff have any safeguarding concerns about a child, they are required to report them initially, and swiftly, using the Record of Concern Form to document and pass this to the Designated Safeguarding Leader(s) who will then decide if outside agencies responsible for investigation and Child Protection need to be contacted. This is to then be uploaded onto CPOMS to begin a chronology of reporting.

Do not delay in reporting. If it is not possible to immediately log the record of concern, please ensure that you have spoken to the DSL or deputy DSL – to ensure swift action can be taken- the 'golden hour'

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Leader. In exceptional circumstances, such as in emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can speak directly to children's social care.

Staff must record any and all concerns using the RECORD OF CONCERN form pro forma in the staffroom. Please ensure the level of detail required and ensure factual recording of information only. Attempts will also be made by the DSL to discuss significant concerns with the family prior to making a referral to Social Services unless there are legitimate concerns that such discussions may increase the likelihood of risk to the child.

School staff should not carry out investigations nor decide whether children have been abused. This is a matter for the specialist agencies.

All staff should be familiar with the procedures for keeping a confidential written record of any incidents. The school will seek advice from the SRT Team or the Police if unsure how to proceed.

If any child is injured accidentally, parents will be informed immediately, and all accidental injuries will be recorded in line with the school's accident reporting system.

17. **Disclosures** – Talking to and listening to children

Should a child make a disclosure or allegation of abuse to a member of staff, they must take into consideration the following ways to respond.

Receive

LISTEN to the child, if you are shocked at what they say to you try not to show it. Take what they say to you seriously, children rarely lie about abuse and if they are not believed it adds to the traumatic nature of disclosure. They may retract what they have said if they meet with revulsion or disbelief

ACCEPT what they say, be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking “why didn’t you tell me before?”

Reassure

STAY CALM, reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you. Be honest with the child, do not make any promises that you are unable to keep, like “I’ll stay with you”, or “Everything will be all right now’

DO NOT promise confidentiality, you have a duty under s47 Children Act 1989 to refer a child who is at risk.

TRY to alleviate any feelings of guilt that the child displays, i.e. “You are not alone; you are not the only one this sort of thing has happened to”

ACKNOWLEDGE how hard it must have been for the child to tell you what has happened.

EMPATHISE with the child, don’t tell them what they should be feeling.

React

- **REACT** to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer the matter.
- **DO NOT** interrogate the child or make investigations with third parties to establish any of the facts.
- **DO NOT** examine marks/ injuries solely to assess whether they may have been caused by abuse (there may be a need to give appropriate first aid) **DO NOT** take photographs of injuries.
- **AVOID** asking leading questions, i.e. “did he touch you?” You need to be careful about what you ask the child, you may taint any evidence being put before a court.
- **USE** open questions, such as “anything else you would like to tell me?” “When did it happen?” **USE** ‘TED’ tell me, explain, describe.
- **DO NOT** criticise the perpetrator, the child may love him/her and reconciliation may be possible.
- **DO NOT** ask the child to repeat what has been said to another member of staff.
- **EXPLAIN** what you must do next and to whom you have to talk to.
- **INFORM** the designated lead for Child Protection.

Record

- AS SOON as it reasonably practical make notes on what has happened and add them, or work with the DSL to add them to CPOMS
- DO NOT destroy these notes, they should be retained in a safe place. The court in any legal process may require them.
- Record Place, Date, Time and the details of the child involved. Record any noticeable non-verbal behaviour of the child. If the child uses their own words to describe sexual organs/acts, record those words spoken do not translate them into proper words.
- If you have identified any injuries draw a diagram to indicate positioning. This can then be added to the body map on CPOMS
- Be objective in your recording include statements made, observational things, rather than assumptions or interpretations.
- Rely on FACT, a fact is any event that can be perceived by one of the five senses.
- DO NOT ask a child to sign a written copy of the disclosure or a 'statement'
- DO NOT discuss this with anyone other than the DSL

For children with communication difficulties or who use alternative/augmented communication systems, you may need to take extra care to ensure that signs of abuse and neglect are identified and interpreted correctly, but concerns should be reported in exactly the same manner as for other children.

All action will be taken with the child's wishes and best interests as central for them to feel safe, listened to and supported.

Child protection File

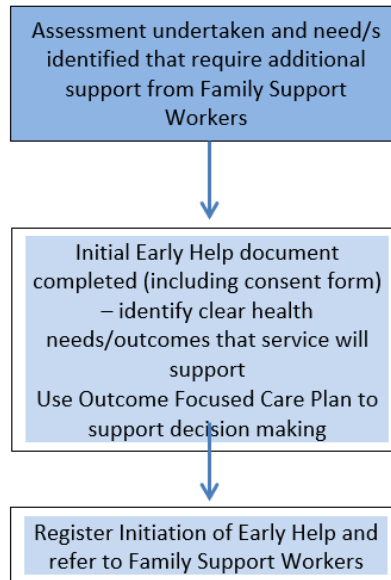
Where children leave the school ensure their Child Protection file is transferred to the new provision, whether it be school, college or any other as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Availability

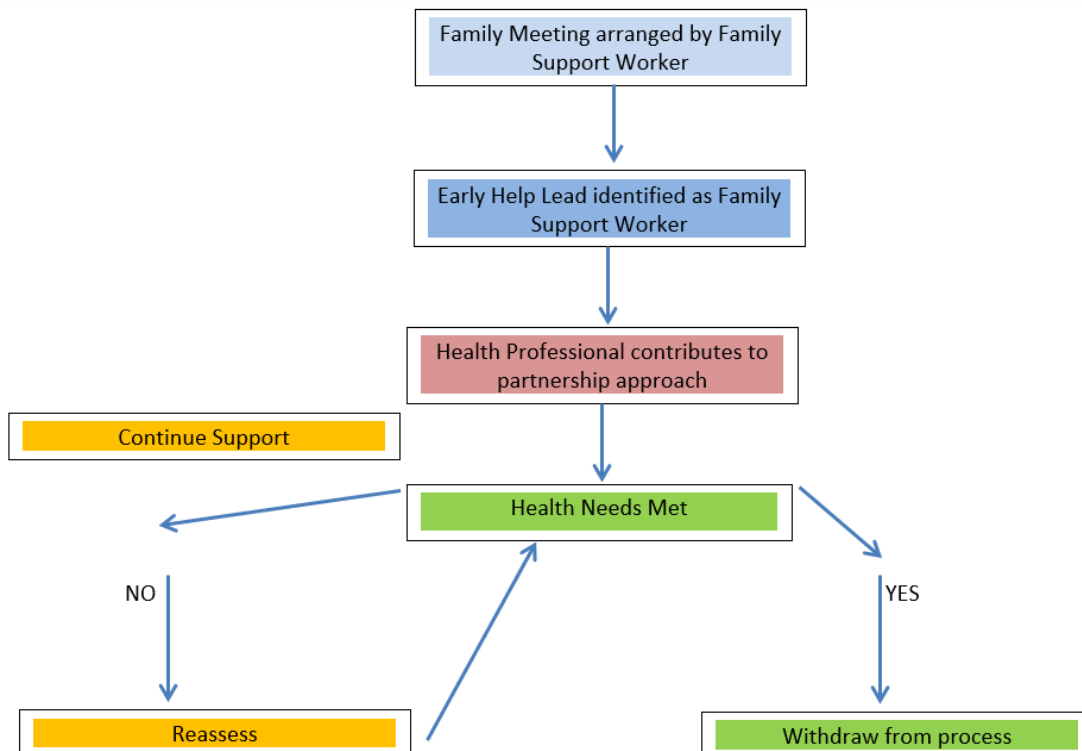
During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking, the DSL or DDSL would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools, working with DSL, to define what 'available' means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone, teams or other media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and the DSL to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

18. Early Help

Early Help and Referral to Stoke-on-Trent Family Support Workers (Local Authority)

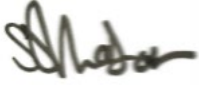


Click on this link to register your [Early Help Assessment](#) or call 01782 232200.



Date	September 2025
Reviewed By	Andy Gould
Next Review	January 2026
Summary of Changes	<p>First Edition July 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>KCSIE Part 1- Roles & Responsibilities regarding safeguarding, filtering and monitoring of technology</i> • <i>KCSIE Part 2- Filtering and monitoring of school equipment DSL has chief responsibility</i> • <i>KCSIE Part 3-Safer recruitment, all short listed candidates to be informed of on-line searches prior to appointed</i> • <i>KCSIE Part 4- Incidents of outside agencies-concerns to follow the safeguarding policy and procedures</i> • <i>KCSIE Part 5- Change of title in 'Child Exploitation' to 'National Crime Agency's CEOP Safety Centre'</i> • <i>Appendix-Forced marriage law February 2023</i> <p>September 2024 – inclusion of 'exploitation' alongside abuse and neglect</p> <p>February 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>DSL details updated</i> • <i>Deputy Headteacher details updated</i> <p>September 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Headteacher details updated (Sept 2025)</i> • <i>2: VSH role extended to children in kinship care</i> • <i>4: Attendance recognised as a safeguarding matter</i> • <i>8: Online risks – misinformation, conspiracy theories, cyber security and AI</i> • <i>11: Inclusive safeguarding language (SEND Code of Practice, KCSIE 2025)</i> • <i>13: Half-termly reviews of pupils in alternative provision</i> • <i>21: Updated GOV.UK links for safer recruitment and checks</i> • <i>23: Anticipated RSHE and gender-questioning children guidance (summer 2025)</i> <p>January 2026 – Approved by Headteacher- Sarah Mason</p>
Next review	January 2026

Approved by:



Head Teacher:
Sarah Mason

Date: 06.01.2026