



# **Falkner House Child Protection, Safeguarding and Welfare Policy and Procedure incl. KCSIE Part One and Annexes A and C**

**Available for parents to access on the school website and on request. Nursery – Year 6 including EYFS**



<b>1. Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads - Internal</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Safeguarding and Child Protection Contacts – External</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Policy Statement</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. Aims</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5. Concerns About a Child</b>	<b>9</b>
5.1 Definitions of safeguarding and types and signs of abuse	10
<b>6. Procedures for Dealing with Concerns About a Child</b>	<b>10</b>
6.1 Contextual Safeguarding	12
6.2 Early Help (as defined in paragraph 18 of KCSIE - set out in Appendix 2)	12
6.3 What the School does if there are concerns about a child	12
6.4 What the School does if a child is in danger or at risk of harm	13
6.5 What the School does if a child is seen as at risk of radicalisation	14
6.6 What the School does if a child has unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education (please also see the Attendance Policy)	15
6.7 What the School does if a child requires mental health support	16
6.8 What staff should do if they have concerns that children are at risk of sexual harassment	17
6.9 What staff should do if they have safeguarding concerns about another staff member	18
6.10 What staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices at Falkner House	18
<b>7. Arrangements for Dealing with Child on Child Allegations including Bullying (see also the Behaviour (including Exclusion) and Anti-Bullying Policy)</b>	<b>18</b>
7.1 Steps to minimise the risk of child on child abuse	19
7.2 Procedures to be followed in the event of child on child abuse	20
7.3 Reflecting on patterns	21
7.4 False, unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious reports	21
<b>8. Arrangements for Dealing with Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations of Abuse Regarding Teachers Including Supply Staff and Other Staff (Including the Headteachers, LLP Members, DSL, Volunteers and Contractors)</b>	<b>21</b>
8.1 Reporting to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)	23
<b>9. Arrangements for dealing with Low-Level Concerns or Allegations (ie. that do not meet the harms test) About Teachers and Other Staff (Including the Headteacher, LLP Member, Supply Staff, Volunteers and Contractors)</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>10. Management of Safeguarding</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>11. Training</b>	<b>26</b>
11.1 All Staff (including EYFS)	26
11.2 DSL Team (DSL, DDSL, Board Level Lead)	27
11.3 Oversight of Safeguarding, Including Arrangements for Reviewing Policies and Procedures	27



<b>12. Arrangements to Fulfil Other Safeguarding Responsibilities</b>	<b>28</b>
12.1 Teaching Children How to Keep Safe	28
12.2 Online Safety including Filtering and Monitoring	29
12.3 Staff Interaction with Pupils and Use of Technology Including Cameras (Including EYFS)	30
12.4 Arrangements for Health & Safety, Extended School Activities and Educational Visits	31
12.5 Legal Concerns:	32
<b>APPENDIX 1 - SIGNS AND TYPES OF ABUSE</b>	<b>35</b>
Child on Child Abuse	36
Domestic Abuse	37
Emotional abuse	37
Neglect	38
Physical Abuse	38
Sexual abuse	38
Sexual Violence and Harassment Between Children	39
Child Sexual Exploitation	40
Child Criminal Exploitation: County Lines	41
Specific safeguarding issues	42
Children and the Court System and Children with Family Members in Prison	42
Serious Violence	42
So Called Honour Based Violence (HBV) including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.	43
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	43
Forced Marriage	43
Homelessness	44
<b>APPENDIX 2 -KCSIE Definition of Early Help (Para 18)</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3 - KCSIE Annex C: Role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)</b>	<b>46</b>



## 1. Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads - Internal

<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</b> <i>covering both sites but based at Penywern Road and including EYFS</i>	<b>Mrs Vanessa Woodward</b> Deputy Head 020 7373 2340 vwoodward@falknerhouse.co.uk
<b>Board level lead on safeguarding</b> <i>covering both sites and liaison between the two and including EYFS</i>	<b>Mrs Anita Griggs</b> Principal (member of the LLP <sup>1</sup> ) 020 7373 4501 /2340 <a href="mailto:office20PR@falknerhouse.co.uk">office20PR@falknerhouse.co.uk</a> office@falknerhouse.co.uk
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)</b> <i>covering both sites but based at Brechin Place and including EYFS</i>	<b>Miss Lisa Day</b> Head of Lower School 020 7373 4501 lday@falknerhouse.co.uk
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)</b> <i>covering both sites but based at Brechin Place and including EYFS</i>	<b>Mr Roy Hanning</b> Head of Maths 020 7373 4501 rhanning@falknerhouse.co.uk
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)</b> <i>covering both sites but based at Penywern Road and including EYFS</i>	<b>Mr Alun Roberts</b> Head of Science 020 7373 2340 aroberts@falknerhouse.co.uk
<b>Designated Teacher for Looked After Children</b> <i>covering both sites but based at Penywern Road</i>	<b>Mrs Vanessa Woodward</b> (contact details as above)

<sup>1</sup> The LLP is composed of the following members: Roy Griggs, Anita Griggs, Flavia Rogers, Eleanor Dixon, Cordelia Colec, Marina Wood.



## 2. Safeguarding and Child Protection Contacts – External

**Bi - Borough** (Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) and Westminster)

**Tri-Borough** (RBKC, Westminster and Hammersmith & Fulham (LBH&F))

### **Bi - Borough - Safeguarding and Child Protection Training, Consultation and Advice:**

Hilary Shaw	07817365 519	
Elaine Campbell	07712 236 508	<a href="mailto:elaine.campbell@rbkc.gov.uk">elaine.campbell@rbkc.gov.uk</a>
Di Donaldson	07890 397 061	<a href="mailto:di.donaldson@rbkc.gov.uk">di.donaldson@rbkc.gov.uk</a>
Marissa Asli	07739 315 432	<a href="mailto:marissa.aslibangura@rbkc.gov.uk">marissa.aslibangura@rbkc.gov.uk</a>
Glen Peach Director of Family Service	07792 597 187	<a href="mailto:Glen.Peache@rbkc.gov.uk">Glen.Peache@rbkc.gov.uk</a>

### **Consultation & Advice about a child/young person resident in:**

<b>RBKC</b>	020 7361 3013	<a href="mailto:socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk">socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Westminster</b>	020 7641 4000	<a href="mailto:accesstochildrensservices@westminster.gov.uk">accesstochildrensservices@westminster.gov.uk</a>
<b>LBH&amp;F</b>	020 8753 6600	
	020 8748 8588	<a href="mailto:familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk">familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk</a>

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** for referral and management of allegations against staff. LADO referrals are to be made to the following phone numbers/emails depending on the borough where the incident took place or where the employing agency is. The referral form to complete is embedded below. Referrals are dealt with by Child Protection Advisors who hold delegated LADO powers across the boroughs.

<b>RBKC</b>	020 7361 2120	<a href="mailto:kclado.enquiries@rbkc.gov.uk">kclado.enquiries@rbkc.gov.uk</a>
<b>LBH&amp;F</b>	020 8753 5125	<a href="mailto:LADO@lbhf.gov.uk">LADO@lbhf.gov.uk</a>
<b>Westminster:</b>	020 7641 7668	<a href="mailto:LADO@westminster.gov.uk">LADO@westminster.gov.uk</a>



# Falkner House Safeguarding Reporting Summary

## Suspect a child is at risk of harm at home?

### Option 1: Call Office

FHB 0207 373 2340

FHG 020 7373 4501



### Designated Safeguarding Lead

Vanessa Woodward

[vwoodward@falknerhouse.co.uk](mailto:vwoodward@falknerhouse.co.uk)

↓ DSL unavailable?  
↓ Call office number above for:



### FHB DDSL

Alun Roberts

[aroberts@falknerhouse.co.uk](mailto:aroberts@falknerhouse.co.uk)



### FHG DDSL

Lisa Day

[lday@falknerhouse.co.uk](mailto:lday@falknerhouse.co.uk)



### FHG DDSL

Roy Hanning

[rhanning@falknerhouse.co.uk](mailto:rhanning@falknerhouse.co.uk)



### If neither DDSL available, contact Board Level Safeguarding Lead:

Anita Griggs

[office@falknerhouse.co.uk](mailto:office@falknerhouse.co.uk)

↓ DSL and DDSL unavailable and  
↓ child is at immediate risk?

Call the relevant borough depending on the child's address. RBKC - 020 7361 3013, Westminster -020 7641 4000, Hammersmith & Fulham - 020 8753 6600

## Concerned about the behaviour of staff?

### Option 1: Call FHB/FHG office for relevant Headteacher



### Headteacher FHG

Flavia Rogers

[office@falknerhouse.co.uk](mailto:office@falknerhouse.co.uk)

0207 373 4501



### Headteacher FHB

Eleanor Dixon

[office20pr@falknerhouse.co.uk](mailto:office20pr@falknerhouse.co.uk)

0207 373 2340

↓ Headteacher unavailable?  
↓ (or the person of concern is an LLP member)

Any concern about any of the LLP members should be reported to the LADO on:

0207 361 2120

or

out of hours email:

[kclado.enquiries@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:kclado.enquiries@rbkc.gov.uk)

without informing Heads or LLP Members



### 3. Policy Statement

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) July 2025
- Working Together to Safeguard Children December 2023 (WTSC)
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (December 2023)
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (2014) as amended
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – advice for practitioners (March 2015)
- Safeguarding children and young people (October 2018)
- Disqualification Under the Childcare Act (August 2018)
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (January 2024)
- Children Missing Education (September 2016)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (2025)
- The Equality Act (2010)
- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- EYFS framework (updated 2025)
- Child Sexual Exploitation, February 2017
- Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges (2018)
- LSCP (Kensington and Chelsea – K&C)
- UKCCIS Guidance on Sexting in schools (2017)
- Use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015)

**Please also see the following Falkner House Policies:**

- Behaviour (including Exclusion) and Anti-Bullying Policy
- PHSEE Policy and Curriculum
- Staff Code of Conduct (including the Internet and Data Privacy Code of Practice)
- Internet Policy
- Pupil i-pad code of conduct

All references to “the School” refer to Falkner House.





## 4. Aims

**Falkner House is committed to safeguarding.** Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. The safeguarding and welfare requirements are designed to help Falkner House create high quality settings which are welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

### **Our prime aims are to:**

- Look after the children in school
- Be alert and act appropriately to issues that may negatively impact on pupils that occur outside school
- Ensure that all staff act appropriately towards each other and the children
- Act always in the best interests of the children

### **Thus we:**

1. Safeguard and promote the best interests of all of the children at the school.
2. Ensure that the children's wellbeing and welfare is at the heart of our approach to safeguarding.
3. Ensure that the school's welfare and safeguarding policy and its implementation is in line with recent legislation and guidance (listed above) and that it is regularly updated and monitored by the proprietors
4. Ensure that any concern a pupil may have will be dealt with in a friendly and supportive manner.
5. Actively address and support appropriate language and attitudes in school so as to avoid a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
6. Ensure that any weaknesses or deficiencies in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay.
7. Teach pupils how to keep themselves safe and reduce risks online, at home, with their peers and with adults.
8. Ensure that each pupil will develop the understanding that staff can be trusted to help in any situation.
9. Provide a secure environment for pupils to talk to adults who can give help if and when required.
10. Ensure safe recruitment procedures (please see Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy)
11. Create a culture of fairness, non-discrimination, vigilance in terms of all the pupils and staff at the school.





12. Create an environment and ethos where staff can raise concerns and are supported in any safeguarding role.
13. Train relevant staff in safer recruitment.
14. Deal with concerns about a child without delay and in accordance with local authority inter agency procedures and to give early help to children who may benefit from this by every means possible in and out of the classroom an atmosphere and teaching that promotes physical health (including oral hygiene) and mental health and wellbeing for both pupils and staff

## **5. Concerns About a Child**

Falkner House has a duty to consider at all times the best interests of the pupil and take action to enable all pupils to achieve the best outcomes. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. The School adopts a 'whole school' approach to safeguarding, ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.

Every person over the age of 16, with parental responsibilities, charge or care of a child under 16, has responsibilities with regard to the child's welfare, and can be held liable for failure to meet them. Action can be taken for failing to act upon the child's disclosure or upon justified concerns which had been expressed to a teacher or for encouraging, or turning a blind eye to, or failing to protect a child from abuse. The LLP members, headteachers and staff fall within the definition of those having "charge" or "care" of a child. Criminal liability arises if the adult: "wilfully assaults, ill-treats, neglects, abandons, or exposes him in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to health." This includes mental as well as physical health and applies whether or not harm actually occurred. It is sufficient that it was "likely" to occur.

Parents are encouraged to raise any concerns directly with Falkner House, if necessary, using this safeguarding policy for concerns about the safety and/or welfare of children. Parents may contact the ISI directly if they wish.

Falkner House has arrangements for listening to children and providing early help. Situations may arise when the School may need to share information with children's social care without parental consent, for example, where notifying parents could increase the risk to the pupil.



Note: If an allegation involves a member of staff then the pupil's parents should only be informed with the LADO's consent.

## **5.1 Definitions of safeguarding and types and signs of abuse**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

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

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

Abuse can be:

- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- sexual abuse; and/or
- neglect.

Please refer to Appendix 1 of this policy for further detail of the types of abuse and possible signs of abuse.

## **6. Procedures for Dealing with Concerns About a Child**

If staff suspect or hear any allegation or complaint of abuse, exploitation, or neglect from a child or any third party, they must act immediately and follow the relevant procedure below. Staff should not



assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

All staff should:

- listen and observe carefully and without judgment
- avoid asking leading questions or showing signs of disquiet, disbelief, anxiety or shock
- reassure the individual that the allegation/complaint will be taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- ensure that the individual is not made to feel ashamed for making the report or given the impression that they are creating a problem by making the report
- not guarantee absolute confidentiality (as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child) and explain that the information needs to be passed to the appropriate person who will ensure that the correct action is taken.

All concerns, discussions, and decisions (together with reasons) made under these procedures should be recorded in writing. The record should include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken, the decision reached and the outcome. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and detail of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence and signed by the person making it. The information should be kept confidential and stored securely, ensuring that the file is only accessible to those who need to see it, and is shared in accordance with the guidance set out in KCSIE.

Where the allegation relates to harmful sexual behaviours, if possible, the disclosure should be managed with two members of staff present (preferably one of them being the DSL or a DDSL).

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the School will ensure the pupil's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide (although these may well be overridden by the school's duty to refer). This is particularly important in the context of harmful behaviours, such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. The School manages this by ensuring that there are systems in place, that are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback. The School is also aware of the support, advice, and information available in the HSB toolkit developed by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation. The School operates its processes with the best interests of the pupil/s at heart.



## **6.1 Contextual Safeguarding**

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the DSL and DDSLs should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors (which could include SEND) are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that we provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

## **6.2 Early Help (as defined in paragraph 18 of KCSIE - set out in Appendix 2)**

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. In the first instance, staff who consider that a pupil may benefit from early help should discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will consider the appropriate action to take in accordance with the Tri-Borough Local Assessment Protocol threshold document. The DSL will support staff in liaising with external agencies and professionals in an inter-agency assessment, as appropriate. If early help is appropriate, the matter will be kept under review and consideration given to a referral to children's social care if the pupil's situation does not appear to be improving.

Note, early help includes those who go frequently missing from education, home or care and those who have received multiple suspensions or are at risk of permanent exclusion

## **6.3 What the School does if there are concerns about a child**

If staff (including LLP members, supply staff, and volunteers) have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger), they should, where possible, speak with the DSL to agree a course of action. As set out above, staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe, and any pupil may approach any member of staff and seek advice or help. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible that a referral has been made. If a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL should press children's social care for reconsideration. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL and children's social care as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing.



#### **6.4 What the School does if a child is in danger or at risk of harm**

Staff must be observant so as to recognise variations in pupil behaviour which may indicate emotional and physical concerns of abuse, as children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused. All staff are to listen to children, to respond and act without delay when a child tells about concerns, or wishes to talk about a private problem. If there are any such concerns about a child, staff must liaise promptly, ideally with the DSL in the first instance.

Any individual teacher may also report directly and without delay to Social Services to discuss either the case itself or how best to proceed or refer. Staff may refer immediately to children's social care, a child who is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm (contact details below). Staff must report to the Police if a crime may have been committed.

Decisions to seek support for a child in need, or about whom there are concerns relating to radicalisation, are normally taken in consultation with parents and pupils. Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm were parents to be involved at this stage, a referral will be made without consulting parents. Further discussions with parents will follow recommendations of the Social Services.

If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible that a referral has been made. The local authority social worker should acknowledge receipt to the referrer within 24 hours and make a decision about the next steps and type of response required. Staff should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the DSL and children's social care as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. Staff should consider the immediate arrangements in place for the pupil's safety including whether or not the pupil is safe to return home at the end of the school day. Advice should be sought from Children's Social Care if there is any doubt.

Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment, including all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation or other so-called honour-based violence, and extra-familial threats like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.



## **6.5 What the School does if a child is seen as at risk of radicalisation**

Although the risk of extremism/radicalisation is assessed as low (for the reasons detailed below) the school is still highly aware of the dangers and actions that must be taken as part of Prevent duties. The DSL is responsible for Prevent and thus for identifying and protecting individual children who may be at risk of any form of radicalisation or being drawn into terrorism or extremist activity.

Any concerns whatsoever of the DSL will be noted on the Log and referred immediately to the Bi Borough Prevent Officer (details in external contacts above). The DSL oversees and coordinates Falkner House's implementation of the Prevent duty. The DSL has been trained in Prevent and provides suitable support and training to all members of staff. The DSL has made enquiries from the Bi Borough Prevent Officer as to WRAP and will follow their guidance.

The DSL is aware that a child missing from school could be being drawn into terrorism or extremist activity. By virtue of the young age of our pupils this would always be with the knowledge/encouragement of their family. If the DSL has any such concerns the Bi Borough Prevent Officer would be contacted promptly.

The general level of risk has been assessed as low (as discussed with our Bi Borough Prevent Officer). This conclusion has been reached on account of the:

1. young age of the pupils
2. fact that there is a strong whistleblowing culture and all staff are fully aware of and endorse every aspect of the Prevent strategy and are well aware of the appropriate mechanisms to raise concerns;
3. fact that we would not tolerate any member of staff, visiting speaker or agency worker displaying extreme or divisive views/behaviours;
4. fact that no extremist or terrorist material has ever or would ever be displayed on school premises; which would never be made available to organisations supportive of terrorism etc.
5. school's close links with RBKC and comfort with sharing extremism related concerns externally
6. the moderation and conservatism of Falkner House families. Parents will have chosen Falkner House in part because we clearly endorse fundamental British values: democracy, free speech, tolerance, nonviolence etc.
7. the fact that children are taught to be alert to the risks associated with extremism and they are made aware, in an age appropriate fashion, of the dangers of social media and grooming in this context.
8. the strength of our IT policy

The Falkner House internet policy ensures that there is no access through the internet to terrorist or extremist activity in school. Home use of the Falkner House i-pads (Years 4, 5 and 6), including web

Document reviewed on 11th September 2025. Date of next review - no later than 11th September 2026



sites visited, is carefully monitored. The Falkner House Computing and PSHE policies cover the dangers of on-line grooming for radicalisation and children are taught how to stay safe on-line both in school and at home. Staff and children are thus made aware of the risks posed by the on-line activity of extremist and terrorist groups.

Proposals for visiting speakers are discussed with the DSL who follows the Visiting Speaker Policy to ensure they are both suitable and supervised at all times when on site. In practice all speakers will be well known to the school.

### **6.6 What the School does if a child has unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education (please also see the Attendance Policy)**

Children who go missing or are absent from education, particularly persistently, can be a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and/or criminal exploitation. It is therefore important that the School's response to such absence supports identifying such abuse and helps prevent the risk of them going missing in the future.

Falkner House asks all parents for at least two emergency contacts for their child. In the first instance, if a child is noted as absent in the register without prior authorisation, the school office will immediately contact the parents (by phone and then by email) to confirm the reasons for absence. They will then be given the appropriate code in the register. Patterns of absence are noted and parents contacted if necessary. Falkner House takes seriously the need for children to be at school.

The DSL would inform Social Services of any child who:

1. went missing from education or
2. fails to attend school regularly, or
3. has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or
4. misses a total of 15 school days (whether or not consecutive) over the school year for illness.

All “starters and leavers” aged over five years old at Falkner House at non-standard ‘in year’ transition points, are notified to the relevant Admissions Team at RBK&C via the s2s website.

The team will be informed by the Bursar immediately when:

- The school is about to delete a pupil's name from the admission register. Details will be given to the team of the pupil's residence, the name of the person with whom they reside,





the date from which they will reside there, and then name of the destination school (if this information can reasonably be obtained and new home address if the pupil is moving to a new school).

- The school is registering a new pupil. Details will be given to the team of the pupil's address and previous school (where they can reasonably obtain this information).
- A child has not arrived at the school as expected (the school having already carried out our own checks).

## **6.7 What the School does if a child requires mental health support**

Warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues should always be taken seriously and raised with the DSL in the first instance. Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm or injuries that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Panic Attacks
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Lateness to or absence from school

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non judgemental. Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

Staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should not attempt to make a diagnosis but are well placed to observe behaviour that suggests a child is experiencing a mental health problem which could be augmented by SEND.

Falkner House has a culture of open discussion so every adult in the building will be aware of any relevant issues before they might reach more formal channels. Indeed, there are many opportunities for staff to share concerns about a child's mental health, including using the weekly briefing notes, or flagging at weekly staff meetings.



Issues that have materialised up until now at Falkner House have generally been family related e.g. a child feeling under excess pressure as a result of external exams or suffering from family bereavement or family emotional problems. All staff are asked to be alert and acute to possible signs of pupil mental health issues (such as but not limited to: depression, anxiety, anorexia, body image, self-harm, suicidal thoughts) and to take immediate action in line with this policy.

From time to time, as necessary, the School will provide training sessions to staff to promote learning or understanding about specific whole school issues related to mental health. Mrs Rogers is the Mental Health lead at Brechin Place and Mrs Dixon at Penywern Road. The School will always look to work with parents to manage the wellbeing of their children, and may wish to meet the parents at an early stage to discuss the possible options eg. whether external treatment such as therapy would be useful.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the headteacher who would inform the DSL or DDSL. The headteacher would consider whether consulting an external expert such as CYPMHS might be appropriate/helpful.

## **6.8 What staff should do if they have concerns that children are at risk of sexual harassment**

Staff are aware of the importance of:

1. making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
2. not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
3. challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.

A staff member would never dismiss or tolerate such behaviours, as it risks normalising them and can be seen as being the first step on a slippery slope. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

Despite the above, staff are trained to explain to children that the law is there to protect rather than criminalise them.



If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should speak to the DSL/DDSL, and record the report in writing on the Log.

### **6.9 What staff should do if they have safeguarding concerns about another staff member**

If staff have safeguarding concerns about another staff member (including supply staff, agency staff, volunteers and contractors), then this should be referred to the Headteacher. Where there are concerns about the Headteacher or any member of the LLP, this should be referred directly to the LADO (in accordance with the procedures below regarding managing allegations of abuse against staff (including supply staff, agency staff, volunteers, and contractors).

### **6.10 What staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices at Falkner House**

Where staff have concerns about poor or unsafe practices and potential failures in the School's safeguarding systems, these should be raised in accordance with the School's Whistleblowing Policy. There will be no disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith.

If staff and volunteers feel unable to raise an issue with the School or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may use other whistleblowing channels, such as the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line. Contact details for the NSPCC helpline can be found on the External Contacts page at the start of this policy.



## **7. Arrangements for Dealing with Child on Child Allegations including Bullying (see also the Behaviour (including Exclusion) and Anti-Bullying Policy)**

Child on child abuse is abuse by one or more children against another child. It can be standalone or as part of wider abuse. Abuse is defined as being when a young person is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age (everyone directly involved in child on child abuse is under the age of 18). It can be entirely online. It can occur in school or out of school and can also be hidden so staff must be vigilant and report concerns.

Abuse is generally motivated by prejudice or perceived vulnerability e.g., on grounds of age, appearance, race, religion, colour, culture, sex, gender, homophobia, special educational needs (SEND) and disability, or because a child is adopted or is a carer or because they are new to the school or seem to be either shy or with no friends. Falkner House staff know that children with SEN or disabilities or with protected characteristics or who identify as LGBTQ+ must not be unlawfully discriminated against and indeed can face additional challenges e.g. communication difficulties and may be more at risk from harm or bullying and may need additional support, safe spaces and reasonable adjustments made for them.

Falkner House has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it can never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children. Respect and kindness are central Falkner House school values which underpin the very ethos of the school. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

For further information surrounding Falkner House’s approach to child on child abuse, including sanctions, please see the Falkner House Behaviour (including Exclusion) and Anti-Bullying Policy, which details the school’s disciplinary policy and procedures that apply. Clearly there is a range of “bad behaviour”: incidents are dealt with by staff and noted in the individual pupil notes while more serious episodes of bad behaviour are also noted in the school Log<sup>2</sup>. In the case of suspected child on child abuse a member of the DSL team should be informed. All staff are trained in how to manage child on child abuse. Both the perpetrator and the victim should be treated as being at risk but equally the victim will always be closely and sympathetically supported by the school staff. As necessary, the DSL

---

<sup>2</sup> The Log details every incident of notable behaviour including bullying, recording the date, what happened, pupils involved, sanctions, rationale, and any other relevant information.



will inform social services and the parents of the victim and the alleged perpetrator. The DSL may wish to discuss with the victim and their parents whether there should be police involvement.

The School recognises that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to child on child group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children, without outwardly showing any signs.

### **7.1 Steps to minimise the risk of child on child abuse**

- Careful supervision of the children at all times minimises the risk of child on child abuse. The school recognises that even if there are no reported cases of child on child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported, but again, the culture of careful supervision of the children is designed to minimise this risk wherever possible.
- All staff and pupils are educated about this issue. This includes:
  - regular training on the nature, prevalence and effect of child on child abuse, and how to prevent, identify and respond to it.
  - Educating children about the nature and prevalence of child on child abuse via PSHE and the wider curriculum. Pupils understand what to do if they witness or experience such abuse, the effect that it can have on those who experience it and the possible reasons for it, including vulnerability of those who inflict such abuse. Pupils are regularly informed about the School's approach to such issues, including its zero tolerance policy towards all forms of child-on-child abuse.
- Ensuring that all child on child abuse issues are fed back to the headteacher so that they can identify and address any concerning trends and pupils who may be in need of additional support (eg. adapting break times, playground play partners or bus partners when the children go offsite).
- Challenging the attitudes that underlie such abuse (both inside and outside the classroom).
- Creating conditions in which our pupils can aspire to and realise safe and healthy relationships
- Fostering a culture of openness and communication to encourage children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously no matter to whom they report the matter. Pupils have many avenues to report worries or concerns, such as anonymous notes on teachers' desks, there are assemblies addressing who to talk to if you have a concern or worry, PSHE lessons and teacher/child diaries.
- Monitoring: staff on duty in the playground are equipped with accident/incident report forms so that they may record any notable incidents. Reports are collated on a weekly basis so that patterns can be established.



## **7.2 Procedures to be followed in the event of child on child abuse**

Staff should follow the procedures set out in the Falkner House Behaviour (including Exclusion) and Anti-Bullying Policy.

If a member of staff has concerns regarding child on child abuse they must inform the headteacher / class teacher. The headteacher and /or class teacher may then discuss the matter with the children concerned in order to have all possible details. The adult reporting the concerns will promptly record the details on the relevant children's pupil notes. Significant incidents will be reported to parents and their views sought. In serious cases the headteacher will liaise with the DSL and consider whether it is appropriate to also record the matter on the Log, and whether the DSL should contact Social Services and or the police.

Where an issue of pupil behaviour or bullying gives 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm', staff should follow the procedures above.

## **7.3 Reflecting on patterns**

The School will reflect on reported concerns, including the decisions made and actions taken, in order to identify any patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour which may indicate an unacceptable culture, or any weaknesses in the School's safeguarding system which may require additional training or amendments to relevant policies. Where a pattern is identified the School will decide on an appropriate course of action.

## **7.4 False, unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious reports**

In the event that a report is proven to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Headteacher will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it in accordance with the School's Behaviour policy.



## 8. Arrangements for Dealing with Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations of Abuse Regarding Teachers Including Supply Staff and Other Staff (Including the Headteachers, LLP Members, DSL, Volunteers and Contractors)

The School's procedures for managing allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) who are currently working in the School whether in a paid or unpaid capacity follows DfE statutory guidance and applies when staff (including volunteers) have (or are alleged to have):

- behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or adult at risk;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or adult at risk;
- behaved towards a child or children or adult/s at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults at risk;
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children or adults at risk (this behaviour includes inside and outside of the workplace)

Allegations that **do not** meet the above harms test should be dealt with using the School's procedure for handling low level concerns set out at section 10 of this policy.

When dealing with allegations about a staff member the School will apply common sense and judgment, deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently and will support the person subject to the allegation.

1. Concerns including allegations which appear to meet the above reporting criteria are to be reported straight away to the Headteacher, or in her absence the board member in charge of safeguarding. Where the Headteacher or member of the LLP is the subject of the allegation or concern, the Headteacher **must not** be informed of the allegation prior to contact with the LADO. However, staff may consider discussing any concerns with the DSL (who is independent of the LLP) and may make any referral via them.
2. The Headteacher will take the matter seriously and report to the LADO without delay. The school will not undertake any investigations of an allegation without prior consultation with the LADO, or in the most serious cases the police, so as not to jeopardise statutory investigations. A course of action must be agreed upon with the LADO. In a case of serious harm, the police are to be informed from the outset and in this situation, the LADO should also be informed within one working day. Discussions should be recorded in writing and





communication with both the individual and the parents of the relevant child / children agreed.

3. Careful consideration, with due weight given to the LADO's views must be given as to whether suspension is warranted. Every effort must be made to maintain confidentiality and to avoid unwanted publicity. These restrictions apply up to the point where the accused person is charged with an offence or the DfE / Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) publish information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.
4. In the event of enquiries being made by other parents, they should be told only that an allegation of misconduct has been made against a member of staff and that it is being investigated. No further information is to be given without legal advice. If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, then the LADO will be involved to help determine any possible improvements to policy or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. Where an allegation is made against a supply teacher, the headteacher will take the lead and immediately contact both the agency concerned and the LADO. The school will continue to support any investigation that is required.
5. Any such allegations against Members of the LLP (which include the principal and two headteachers) must be immediately reported to the LADO within one working day (contact details below). The LADO will then advise how to proceed.
6. All concerns, including what might seem to be low level concerns, (see below) about adults working with children need to be taken seriously with consultation with the LADO if there is doubt as to the seriousness of the issue. In the case of supply staff/ contractors low level concerns should be reported to their employers. Such concerns must be shared with the headteacher or principal who must record, deal and take appropriate action. All staff should be clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and be prepared to report them.

### **8.1 Reporting to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)**

The school will report promptly (offering as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible) any person (employed, contracted, volunteer or student) to the DBS whose services are no longer used for regulated activity when DBS referral criteria are met – i.e. who has harmed or posed risk of harm to a child and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) with children, or would have been removed had he or she not left earlier. Compromise agreements cannot be used to prevent a referral to the DBS when such a referral is legally required. The school will also consider making a referral to the TRA where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate.



## **9. Arrangements for dealing with Low-Level Concerns or Allegations (ie. that do not meet the harms test) About Teachers and Other Staff (Including the Headteacher, LLP Member, Supply Staff, Volunteers and Contractors)**

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with Falkner House’s staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. The term ‘low level’ concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the adult’s behaviour towards a child or adult at risk does not meet the harm threshold.

Concerns could include staff being over-friendly with children, having favourites, taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, engaging with children on a 1:1 basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, humiliating children or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Low Level Concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources including suspicion, complaint, or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation.

Falkner House encourages a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school’s values and expected behaviour (as set out in the Staff Code of Conduct) are lived, monitored and reinforced every day.

Staff must share all concerns with the Headteacher without delay so they can be recorded and dealt with appropriately, sensitively and in a timely manner. The nature of the school means that staff know that they would be supported and assisted emotionally and practically through the process. Where a low-level concern is raised about the Headteacher or any LLP member, it should be referred to the LADO directly.

The Headteacher may choose to collaborate with the DSL regarding next steps, depending on the nature of the low-level concern (bearing in mind the ownership structure of Falkner House). If the headteacher / DSL is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern meets the threshold or an allegation of harm, they would consult with the LADO and seek their advice.

Staff (and self referral is an important possibility) do not need to be able to determine whether their concern is a low-level concern, or if it should be referred to the local authority, or indeed whether it meets the threshold of an allegation. Once the concern has been shared, the determination about

Document reviewed on 11th September 2025. Date of next review - no later than 11th September 2026



thresholds and appropriate action will be made by the headteacher who will follow the appropriate procedures in line with that decision.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking directly to the person who raised the concern, (unless it has been raised anonymously) and to the individual involved and any witnesses. The information collected will help them to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may be required. Reports of Low Level Concerns about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

All reported Low Level Concerns are noted by the headteacher in the school Log with dates, details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, rationale and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns is noted and if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible. The Log is regularly reviewed by the Headteacher and the board so that patterns of inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour can be identified, and managed so as to avoid recurrences.

It is always important to consider whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that have enabled the behaviour to occur in which case appropriate policies might need to be revised, or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again. Lessons can and should be learnt from all cases and concerns even those that are found to be unsubstantiated. There is provision for mediation and dispute resolution where necessary as well as transparency and accountability in relation to how concerns are received and handled.

## **10. Management of Safeguarding**

The DSL and DDSLs' contact details can be found on the Internal Contacts page at the start of this policy. The DDSLs are the people to whom reports should be made in the absence of the DSL, ensuring there is the required cover for the role at all times. Neither DDSL nor the DSL is a member of the LLP.

The DSL's role is to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters in the School (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). This is explicit in the role holder's job description and Mrs Woodward has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post. The DSL's responsibility is to maintain an overview of safeguarding within the School (with due regard to KCSIE Part 1 and Annexes A, B and C, enduring all duties are included), to open channels of communication with local



statutory agencies, refer incidents to third parties (including the local authority children's services, the DBS, and the police) where appropriate, to support staff in carrying out their safeguarding duties and to monitor the effectiveness of the School's policies and procedures in practice. The DSL must meet responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The DSL works with the members of the LLP to review and update the School's safeguarding policy. The role of DSL carries a significant level of responsibility, and she is given additional time, funding, training, resources and support so as to carry out the role effectively.

The DSL regularly reviews the School's and their own practices and concerns about welfare and safeguarding matters. This includes the personal and professional duty of all staff to report welfare and safeguarding concerns to the DSL, or in the absence of action, directly to local children's services. The DSL ensures that (if relevant) any external centres etc. used by the school have safe recruitment practices and safeguarding procedures in place

During term time, the DSL and/or a DDSL will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the School to discuss any safeguarding concerns. For out of hours/out of term activities, staff and pupils should contact the Board Level Lead, Mrs Anita Griggs, who is a member of the LLP and has specific responsibility overseeing safeguarding and Child Protection.

Full details of the DSL's role can be found at Annex C of KCSIE (copied in full below in Appendix 3).

## **11. Training**

### **11.1 All Staff (including EYFS)**

All new staff are provided with induction training that includes:

- Falkner House Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures (including the policy and procedures to deal with child on child abuse)
- Information about the identity and roles of the DSL and DDSLs
- Falkner House Behaviour (including Exclusion) and Anti-Bullying Policy (including measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Falkner House Staff Code of Conduct which includes online safety and the School's Whistleblowing procedure
- The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education;



- Falkner House Internet Policy (including roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring)
- Health and safety issues (including mental health)
- and a copy of Part 1 of KCSIE and Annexes A&B
- Information about emergency evacuation procedures

All staff (including the headteachers who are not DDSLs) are also required to:

- Read, be aware of and comply with the Falkner House Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures (includes Whistleblowing and children Missing in Education), Part 1 of KCSIE and Annex A and Annex B and the Falkner House staff Code of Conduct which includes online safety. Staff must also be aware of all other Falkner House policies, with particular regard to the Behaviour Policy and the Internet Policy. Each time Part one of KCSIE is updated by the Department for Education, staff will be updated on the changes via INSET days.
- Receive regular training in child protection in line with advice from the LSCP. This training includes mental health, online safety, *Prevent* awareness training and training in how to manage a report of child on child sexual violence and harassment.
- Undertake regular informal refresher updates, at least annually (which takes account of any staff turnover or changes in national or local guidance), to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively, including online. The School provides these via, for example, one to one discussions, termly INSET days and staff meetings.

### **11.2 DSL Team (DSL, DDSL, Board Level Lead)**

The DSL team receive updated child protection training including inter-agency training every two years and training in the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) approach to *Prevent* duties. If considered necessary, staff complete this on-line training so as to give them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extremist ideas and to know how to refer children and young people for further help.

In addition to their formal training, the DSL team's knowledge and skills are updated at least annually to keep up with any developments relevant to their roles. In particular, the School will support the DSL in developing her knowledge and skills to understand the views of children including to encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes, as well as having an awareness of the difficulties children may face in approaching staff with a disclosure. The DDSLs are trained to the same level as the DSL.



### **11.3 Oversight of Safeguarding, Including Arrangements for Reviewing Policies and Procedures**

Mrs Griggs is the board-level lead designated to take a lead in relation to responsibility for the safeguarding arrangements at Falkner House. She is the school Principal and a member of the LLP.

Members of the LLP receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training. This training is regularly reviewed and updated to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenges to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding.

The School considers its obligation to review safeguarding practices a matter of its everyday concerns. The School draws on the expertise of staff, including the DSLs, in shaping the School's safeguarding arrangements and policies. In addition, guidance is sought by external consultants when reviewing policy, procedures etc. on an annual basis to ensure both compliance and best practice. In addition, careful note is taken of advice notes from Farrar and Co, Veale Wasbrough Vizards as well as updates from Andrew Hall and our local authority. The board gives final approval to any revisions.

If there has been a substantiated allegation against a member of staff, the School will work with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the School's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

On 11th March 2025 the LLP members, the DSL and the DDSLs reviewed this document after reviewing KCSIE 2024 and incorporating the "Working together to improve school attendance" 2024 with the new attendance and registration requirements, and it was approved by the board on 12th March 2025.

**There is an annual meeting of the members of the LLP together with all the DDSLs to discuss and review the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including the effectiveness of procedures and their implementation, lessons learnt and the 'Falkner House Log'.**

## **12. Arrangements to Fulfil Other Safeguarding Responsibilities**



## **12.1 Teaching Children How to Keep Safe**

The School ensures that all pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, in assemblies, through the curriculum and PSHE to help children to adjust their behaviours, both inside and outside of school, in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to radicalisation. This includes teaching pupils about the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet and its associated risks. The School recognises that a "one size fits all" approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed.

Falkner House is aware of its duty to build resilience to radicalisation both now and in the future for our pupils as they move on to secondary school. In addition, the PSHE syllabus and promotion of Fundamental British values teaches pupils to manage risk, resist pressure, make safer choices and seek help if necessary. Our teaching across the curriculum focuses where appropriate on the values of democracy, diversity, mutual respect and the good management of contentious issues.

Internet safety (including when children are online at home) is an integral part of the School's IT curriculum and also embedded in PSHE and Relationships Education and/or Relationships and Sex Education ("RSE").

The children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it. Their welfare in the widest sense of the word – their happiness as well as safety is paramount.

## **12.2 Online Safety including Filtering and Monitoring**

It is essential that pupils are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Teaching children how to keep safe online is therefore an integral part of the school computing and PSHE curriculum (see Falkner House PSHSE Policy, syllabus and schemes of work). Throughout computing lessons pupils are taught how to use the laptops responsibly. They will understand that at school they must:

1. Only access sites and material that have been approved by the teacher and that are relevant to their schoolwork
2. Log on to the school's computer network using their username and password and they must not allow any other pupil to use their username and password
3. Log off at the end of each session.
4. Not at any time log on to any internet chatroom or similar facility which may result in their personal details being disclosed or may identify them to persons unknown





5. Understand that the school and its Internet Service Provider can, at any time, access and monitor their usage of the computer.
6. Not download anything from the internet unless given permission by a teacher
7. Only send and receive emails, or open attachments under the supervision of a teacher
8. Report any incidence of bad language or distasteful images to a teacher if they come across them accidentally
9. Always be themselves and will not pretend to be anyone or anything they are not
10. Realise that unkind actions like posting photos, snide comments, meanness or bullying online are totally unacceptable
11. Only use generative AI tools on the School's devices/systems in specific and supervised circumstances.

They are also taught both in their computing and PSHE lessons and whenever appropriate, similar guidelines apply when out of school (replacing guidance of a teacher with guidance from a parent or responsible adult). The dangers of cyberbullying, generative AI and sexting are discussed as are the risks of being bullied, groomed, abused or radicalised on-line.

Parents are a crucial part of this process: they are told of the school's internet monitoring and filtering systems (which are set out in our Internet Policy) and what their child is being asked to do on-line, what sites they may use at school and which members of staff they may be interacting with on-line (as per our Internet Policy). There is active communication with parents as to how to help keep their child safe on the internet. **Pupils are not allowed personal mobile devices at school (aside from their school i-Pad which is only used in the classroom or in supervised homework) or on trips etc.**

As part of the above process the School has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and the Head of IT together with the Headteachers regularly reviews their effectiveness and appropriateness, with due regard to content, contact, conduct and commerce (as defined in the Internet Policy). The school fully complies with the Department for Education's published filtering and monitoring standards, as set out in the Internet Policy.

### **12.3 Staff Interaction with Pupils and Use of Technology Including Cameras (Including EYFS)**

Please see the Falkner House Staff Code of Conduct, the Falkner House School Internet Policy and the Falkner House PSHE policy syllabus and schemes of work. The school computing curriculum also details internet safety in and out of school.



- Use of mobiles and personal devices -
  - Staff should turn off mobiles at all times except during lunch or mid-morning breaks. Any phone conversations should be held in private so as not to disturb other staff. During work hours minimal use of personal mobile phones at work is permitted, for example important or urgent communications with family. If staff use a personal device while at school they may only access sites and material that are appropriate. Any personal mobile devices that may be brought into school must only contain material that is appropriate. If staff access the school shared files remotely through a personal device, they must sign out when finished.
  - The children should not see staff with their phones either in school or out on trips. The only exception to this is use of the school mobile when on a trip or at PE.
  - Staff should not share their personal details with parents or mobiles; this includes personal mobile phone numbers.
  - When logging into Google Drive for the first time on school devices, staff will need to enter a two-factor authentication code which will be received on a personal mobile phone. Staff will try to ensure that they are logged onto any new devices before or after the school day begins to avoid carrying their phones around.
- Use of cameras or other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities -
  - Photographs of pupils by staff should only be taken using a school device in connection with normal school activities e.g. trips, sporting events, or for academic purposes. Any such 'school photographs' must immediately be deleted from the device once they have been promptly uploaded to the school website, the school's IT system or sent to the relevant parent. No 'school photograph' is to be uploaded to any social media site or to any website without authorisation from the Headteacher.
  - If members of the public are observed photographing / videoing Falkner House pupils in the playground or off-site staff should politely ask them to stop.

## **12.4 Arrangements for Health & Safety, Extended School Activities and Educational Visits**

### **In terms of physical safety, the following is routine:**

- Risk assessments are reviewed at least annually (and acted on) for all aspects of school life including school visits
- Registers are taken before the start of morning and afternoon school.
- Children or adults leaving the school during the school day e.g. for a medical appointment have to sign in and out in the office. Parents are called immediately in the case of an unexplained absence.



- Regular fire and lockdown practices are held
- There are secure external doors and locks on windows
- All reasonable steps are taken to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises, and all visitors have their identity checked
- The school undertakes an enhanced DBS check and other required checks on all employees and all those over 16 who look after children or who live on the premises, to ensure they are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role or who are likely to have regular contact with children) are suitable. People whose suitability has not been checked, including through a DBS check, are not allowed to have unsupervised contact with children being cared for. Falkner House records information about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed (including the criminal records disclosure, reference number, the date a disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it) as part of the SCR. Staff are told that they must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting).
- Children never leave the premises unsupervised and are only released into the care of individuals after prior notification to the school by the parent who are required to notify school in advance if anyone other than parent or known carer is to collect their child.
- Teachers are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If teachers are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, those teachers should seek medical advice. Those teachers only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly.
- All medication on the premises (including in handbags etc.) are stored securely and out of reach of children at all times.
- Medical protocols are updated annually, for all children with significant medical conditions or needs and relevant medical information from the child's doctor or doctors is requested as supporting information.
- Only first names of children are used when publishing photographs so as to preserve identity
- Particular care is taken when children are engaged in one on one teaching – either academic, music or sport. Staff are given additional training, music rooms all have glass internal windows / doors and doors are generally kept open during individual lessons.

**In terms of emotional safety, the following is routine:**

- There is always a happy atmosphere within the school and all children are taught that they can talk to any adult regarding any matter.



- To this end, there is a clear no-bullying culture supported by the Behaviour policy, and kindness to others is regarded as paramount.
- The staff understand what to look out for in terms of mental health issues, and what to do in the event of any concerns. The children feel secure because there is very close contact between school and home and the leadership is always prepared to suggest that parents seek external professional advice from a specialist or therapist if this seems appropriate.
- Staff are alert to the possibility of Fabricated Illness – hence the need to check supporting medical information.

### 12.5 Legal Concerns:

- **Defamation** - One of the main concerns quoted by adults in their reluctance to report suspicions of abuse is the fear that the person suspected will sue them for defamation if the allegation turns out to be unfounded. To be defamatory, a statement must first of all be untrue. Even if subsequently shown to be untrue, the statement will be protected by "qualified privilege" if it is made to the appropriate authority in response to a duty whether legal, moral or social or in the protection of an interest.
- **Breach of Confidence** - If certain conditions are met, information may be regarded as confidential. Passing on confidential information without permission could lead to an action for breach of confidence. If the conditions listed below are satisfied and an action is raised, it would be a defence to show that the information was passed on in pursuit of the public interest. As there is a clear public interest in the protection of children, it is difficult to envisage any such action succeeding. Information would be regarded as confidential if:
  - The information disclosed was confidential in character (e.g. not a matter of public record, such as a person's age)
  - Disclosure has or would cause actual harm to the person whose confidence was breached
  - One could infer that the confider did not want the information passed on.
- **Confidentiality** - Confidentiality is an important issue for children, parents and professionals. Children and parents may wish to raise or share concerns but be fearful of setting in train a series of events, which will have far-reaching and unwanted consequences. They may seek an assurance of confidentiality before expressing their concerns. Staff will also be concerned because they do not want to lose the trust of those who may have sought their help. Neither do they wish to feel responsible for initiating what might be seen as uncomfortable procedures, but they recognise they have a responsibility towards the children. Problems may arise when a child consults a member of staff about a problem and does not want that information to be



shared with parents. Whilst staff will try to encourage children to share the information with parents, there may be circumstances in which any pressure to pass the information on could result in the child keeping the problem to themselves, or not sharing concerns in the future. Whilst every effort will be made to respect a desire for confidentiality, if serious concerns arise about a child's welfare, it may be necessary for that information to be passed on to the appropriate authorities. It will be made clear to those seeking advice that the staff member may not be able to promise confidentiality but that they will not breach the confidence without letting the person know that they intend to do so. The policy of Falkner House is to work in partnership with parents in order to promote the welfare of children and to build up relationships of trust with children. Children and parents should feel able to raise concerns about safety and welfare with the school in the knowledge that these will be dealt with sensitively. Due to the nature of such concerns, the school will operate on the presumption that anything imparted in confidence will be treated in confidence.

This is subject to three qualifications: -

1. Anything imparted "in confidence" to a member of staff or an associate of the school may be shared with a restricted number of colleagues, if that person feels in need of support and guidance
2. If serious concerns are raised about the safety or welfare of a child, the person approached may be obliged, in terms of the school's child protection procedures, to pass that information on to the DSL. In these circumstances, the person approached would not, except in an emergency, breach the confidence without letting the child know their intentions
3. Falkner House School will, of course, pass on information when legally obliged so to do.



## APPENDIX 1 - SIGNS AND TYPES OF ABUSE

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children, and staff should be aware that being subjected to harassment, violence or abuse may breach children's rights under the Human Rights Act. Staff should always consider contextual matters such as the wider environmental factors in a child's life that may be a threat to their safety and or welfare. Staff must keep abreast of concerns to check whether matters are improving. Staff should all be aware that SEND children or children with or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline.

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children. These can include:

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

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of any kind of abuse, including neglect. All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. The training that the staff receive enables them to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way and to share information quickly and to challenge inaction. If unsure, staff should always speak to the DSL (or DDSL). All school staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely



stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

## Child on Child Abuse

Child on Child abuse most likely includes, but may not be limited to:

1. bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) can be defined as the sustained exercise of power by an individual or group over another individual or group in a manner that causes hurt (physical or emotional). It can include;
  - Name calling, banter, taunting, teasing, insulting, “snide” remarks, putting people down. This could include but is not limited to: comments mocking protected characteristics including disabilities, religions, being adopted, appearances, cultures or of a homophobic, sexual/sexist or racist nature
  - Intimidating, isolating or exclusion from a group
  - Spreading false rumours or writing unkind or malicious notes (including cyber bullying i.e. social networking, sexting, email or text messages) about fellow pupils or staff
  - Taking, damaging or hiding belongings
  - Physical abuse (which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm)
  - Emotional abuse,
  - Inappropriate sexualised behaviour, sexual violence or harassment,
  - Initiation rites or hazing behaviour either in person or remotely e.g. by the use of banter.
  - **Cyber / online bullying** (on the internet or on mobile phones): Unpleasant comments or photographs can be placed on social networking sites or sent via mobile phones.
    - **In school:** As access to such sites is barred at Falkner House, as are mobile phones, such activity is unlikely to take place on school premises or in school time. Pupils are taught within school not only how to keep themselves safe online (see PSHE Policy, curriculum and schemes of work) but also that unpleasant comments made electronically do indeed constitute bullying and such cyber bullying is totally unacceptable. Please also see the Falkner House Internet Policy and pupil iPad Code of Conduct which details the school Computing infrastructure and roles and responsibilities. In addition pupils are only allowed to use their iPads, or school laptops in the presence of school staff and in connection with their school work.
    - **Out of school:** School policy is that parents are asked to involve themselves closely with their child’s cyber activities and to monitor their use of the internet and emails etc. Advice to parents on this topic is given by annual talks with a summary in our Parent Go to guide - Tech.





2. physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
3. sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
4. causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
5. sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
6. abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse)
7. upskirting, typically involving taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
8. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images or videos (also known as sexting);
9. emotional abuse – the importance of children's self-esteem and self-confidence is paramount at Falkner House.

## **Domestic Abuse**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence (including where they see, hear or experience its effects) can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at: *NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects, Refuge - what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children and Safelives: young people and domestic abuse.*

## **Emotional abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they



say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to 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, although it may occur alone.

## **Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **Physical Abuse**

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

## **Sexual abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of the School's policy and procedures for dealing with it.



School staff must be aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. We are referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

1. Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
2. Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
3. Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

What is consent? Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

## **Sexual Violence and Harassment Between Children**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. It can occur in families and between siblings. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing and need support. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Sexual harassment: ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:



1. sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
1. sexual “jokes” or taunting;
2. physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (schools should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
3. online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
  - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
  - sexualised online bullying;
  - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; •
  - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and
  - upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

Sanctions, support and management are detailed in the school’s Behaviour (including Exclusion) and Anti-Bullying Policy. Such abuse may become a safeguarding issue and would then be dealt with in accordance with school protocol, liaising with statutory safeguarding partners.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the 18 financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

1. can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17-year olds who can legally consent to have sex
2. can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
3. can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and noncontact sexual activity; •
  - can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;



4. can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
5. may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
6. can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse;
7. is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

**Some of the following signs may be indicators of child sexual exploitation:**

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

**Child Criminal Exploitation: County Lines**

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity, drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism<sup>15</sup> should be considered.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

1. can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
2. can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
3. can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
4. can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;



5. can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
6. is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

## **Specific safeguarding issues**

### **Children and the Court System and Children with Family Members in Prison**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families which can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. C.200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

### **Serious Violence**

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs. All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.



## **So Called Honour Based Violence (HBV) including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.**

So-called HBV encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV. If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBV or who has suffered from HBV, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. It is mandatory and a statutory duty for teachers to report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss such a case with the school’s DSL and involve children’s social care as appropriate. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

### **Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Any form of marriage for someone under 18 is illegal. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into

Document reviewed on 11th September 2025. Date of next review - no later than 11th September 2026





marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

## **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis. In most cases school staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis.



## **APPENDIX 2 -KCSIE Definition of Early Help (Para 18)**

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

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to antisocial or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care,
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.



## **APPENDIX 3 - KCSIE Annex C:**

### **Role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)**

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school or college leadership team, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description. The designated safeguarding lead should have the appropriate status and authority within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. The role of the designated safeguarding lead carries a significant level of responsibility, and they should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively. Their additional responsibilities include providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so, and contributing to the assessment of children.

#### **Deputy designated safeguarding leads (DDSLs)**

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy designated safeguarding leads. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

#### **Availability**

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

#### **Manage referrals**

Document reviewed on 11th September 2025. Date of next review - no later than 11th September 2026



The designated safeguarding lead is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC - When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police

### **Working with others**

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- 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 or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) [of KCSIE] and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and 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 and/or carers 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 children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes:

- ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and
- supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes

### **Information sharing and managing the child protection file**

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome<sup>3</sup>

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice set out in Parts one and two of this guidance.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) or the named person with oversight for SEND in colleges, are aware as required.

---

<sup>3</sup> We recognise that in some settings there may be a different strategic lead for promoting the educational outcomes of children who have or have had a social worker, particularly in larger schools or colleges. Where this is the case, it is important that the DSL works closely with the lead to provide strategic oversight for the outcomes of these children and young people.



Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

### **Raising awareness**

The DSL should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff
- ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff

### **Training, knowledge and skills**

The DSL (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should also undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly local authority children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Full details in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.



- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers<sup>5</sup>
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses,
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

---

<sup>5</sup> Section 17(10) Children Act 1989: those unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health and development without local authority services, those whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of such services, or disabled children.





### **Providing support to staff**

Training should support the DSL in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes, and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

### **Understanding the views of children**

It is important that all children feel heard and understood. Therefore, DSLs (and deputies) should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them, and,
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

### **Holding and sharing information**

The critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts one, two and five of this document [KCSIE], and therefore the designated safeguarding lead should be equipped to:

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, 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 General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc.



Department  
for Education

# **Keeping children safe in education 2025**

**Statutory guidance for schools  
and colleges**

**September 2025**

# Contents

Contents	2
Summary	4
The status of this guidance	4
About this guidance	4
Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff	7
What school and college staff should know and do	7
What school and college staff need to know	8
What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child	17
Part two: The management of safeguarding	25
Legislation and the law	25
Part three: Safer recruitment	57
Recruitment and selection process	57
ii. Pre-appointment vetting checks, regulated activity and recording information	62
Prohibitions, directions, sanctions and restrictions	73
iii. Other checks that may be necessary for staff, volunteers and others, including the responsibilities on schools and colleges for children in other settings	79
iv. How to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of children and the legal reporting duties on employers	90
Part four: Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors	93
Section one: Concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold	93
Section two: Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold	107
Part five: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment	112
What schools and colleges should be aware of	112
Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment	117
Ongoing response	133
Annex A: Safeguarding information for school and college staff	144
The role of school and college staff	144
What school and college staff need to know	144
Annex B: Further information	149
Table of contents	149

Annex C: Role of the designated safeguarding lead	171
Deputy designated safeguarding leads	171
Availability	171
Manage referrals	172
Working with others	172
Information sharing and managing the child protection file	173
Raising awareness	174
Training, knowledge and skills	175
Providing support to staff	176
Understanding the views of children	176
Holding and sharing information	177
Annex D: Host families - homestay during exchange visits	178
School/college arranged homestay – suitability of adults in UK host families	178
Homestay – suitability of adults in host families abroad	179
During the visit	180
Additional action for extended homestays	180
Annex E: Statutory guidance - Regulated activity (children) - Supervision of activity with children which is regulated activity when unsupervised	181
Examples	182
Annex F: Table of changes from September 2024 version	184

# Summary

## The status of this guidance

This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education ('the Department') issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (as amended), the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015 and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended). Schools and colleges in England **must** have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. For the purposes of this guidance children includes everyone under the age of 18.

## About this guidance

We use the terms “**must**” and “**should**” throughout the guidance. We use the term “**must**” when the person in question is legally required to do something, and “**should**” when the advice set out should be followed unless there is good reason not to. The guidance **should** be read alongside:

- statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), and
- departmental advice [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners](#)

### Unless otherwise specified:

- ‘**school**’ means: all schools whether maintained, non-maintained or independent schools (including academies, free schools and alternative provision academies), maintained nursery schools<sup>1</sup> and pupil referral units.
- ‘**college**’ means further education colleges and sixth-form colleges as established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and institutions designated as being within the further education sector.<sup>2</sup> College also means providers of post-16 Education as set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended).<sup>3</sup> 16-19 Academies, Special Post-16 institutions and

---

<sup>1</sup> The [Early Years Foundation Stage Framework](#) (EYFS) is mandatory for all early years’ providers. It applies to all schools, including maintained nursery schools that have early years provision. Maintained nursery schools, like the other schools listed under ‘About this guidance’, must have regard to Keeping children safe in education when carrying out duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (by virtue of section 175(2) of the Education Act 2002 – see footnote 19 for further detail on this requirement).

<sup>2</sup> Under section 28 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (‘designated institutions’).

<sup>3</sup> [Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 \(as amended\)](#)

Independent Training Providers. For colleges, the guidance relates to their responsibilities towards children who are receiving education or training at these institutions.

## Victims and alleged perpetrator(s)

For the purposes of this guidance, we, in places, use the term '**victim**'. It is a widely recognised and understood term. It is important that schools and colleges recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. Ultimately, schools and colleges should be conscious of this when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which the child is most comfortable.

For the purpose of this guidance, we, in places, use the term '**alleged perpetrator(s)**' and where appropriate '**perpetrator(s)**'. These are widely used and recognised terms and the most appropriate to aid effective drafting of guidance. However, schools and colleges should think very carefully about terminology, especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. As above, the use of appropriate terminology will be for schools and colleges to determine, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

## Who this guidance is for

**This statutory guidance should be read and followed by:**

- **governing bodies of maintained schools** (including maintained nursery schools) and colleges which includes providers of post-16 Education as set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended): 16-19 Academies, Special Post-16 institutions and Independent Training Providers
- **proprietors of independent schools** (including academies, free schools and alternative provision academies) and non-maintained special schools. In the case of academies, free schools and alternative provision academies, the proprietor will be the academy trust
- **management committees of pupil referral units (PRUs), and**
- **senior leadership teams**

Throughout the guidance, reference to '**governing bodies and proprietors**' includes management committees unless otherwise stated.

## School and college staff

It is essential that **everybody** working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that those staff who work directly with children read **at least** Part one of this guidance.

Governing bodies and proprietors, working with their senior leadership teams and especially their designated safeguarding lead, should ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children read either Part one or Annex A (a condensed version of Part one) of this guidance. This is entirely a matter for the school or college and will be based on their assessment of which guidance will be most effective for their staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities as set out in Part one (or Annex A if appropriate) of this guidance.

## What this guidance replaces

This guidance replaces Keeping children safe in education September 2024 version. A table of changes is included at Annex F.



# **Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff**

## **What school and college staff should know and do**

### **A child centred and co-ordinated approach to safeguarding**

1. Schools and colleges and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This system is described in the statutory guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
3. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
  - providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
  - protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
  - preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
  - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

### **The role of school and college staff**

4. School and college staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
5. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

6. All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.<sup>4</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
7. Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in paragraphs 49-55. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.
8. Every school and college should have a designated safeguarding lead who will provide support to staff to carry out their safeguarding duties and who will liaise closely with other services such as local authority children's social care.
9. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns.
10. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.<sup>5</sup>

## **What school and college staff need to know**

11. All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:
  - child protection policy (which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse)
  - behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).<sup>6</sup>
  - staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct) should amongst other things, include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing
  - safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods

---

<sup>4</sup> Detailed information on early help can be found in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>5</sup> [Teachers' standards](#).

<sup>6</sup> All schools are required to have a behaviour policy (full details are [here](#)). If a college chooses to have a behaviour policy it should be provided to staff as described above.

- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies)

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A, if appropriate) of this document should be provided to **all** staff at induction.

12. All staff should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring – see para 140 for further information) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

13. All staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

14. All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments.<sup>7</sup> under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

15. All staff should know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited, or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and local authority children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

16. All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse and/or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

17. All staff should be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not

---

<sup>7</sup> Detailed information on statutory assessments can be found in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)

recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or are being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication with children and young people.

## **What school and college staff should look out for**

### **Early help**

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

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child.

## Abuse, neglect and exploitation

19. All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

20. All school and college staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

21. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

22. All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

23. **In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.**

## Indicators of abuse and neglect

24. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can

take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

26. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to 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, although it may occur alone.

27. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

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

from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## Safeguarding issues

29. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.<sup>8</sup> can be signs that children are at risk. Below are some safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of.

**Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in Annex B.**

### Child-on-child abuse

30. **All** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. **All** staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

31. **All** staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening. It may be the case that abuse is not being reported. As such it is important that when staff have **any** concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

32. It is essential that **all** staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Examples of which are listed below. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe

---

<sup>8</sup> Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. [UKCIS](#) provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.



environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence<sup>9</sup> such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment<sup>10</sup> such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos<sup>11</sup> (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting<sup>12</sup> which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

---

<sup>9</sup> For further information about sexual violence see Part 5 and Annex B.

<sup>10</sup> For further information about sexual harassment see Part 5 and Annex B.

<sup>11</sup> UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings](#)

<sup>12</sup> For further information about ‘upskirting’ see Annex B.

## **Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

34. Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

### **Child criminal exploitation (CCE)<sup>13</sup>**

35. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

36. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

37. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

### **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

38. CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside

---

<sup>13</sup> See information on CCE definition on page 48 of [Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy](#)

clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

39. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.

40. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

### Domestic abuse

41. Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

### Female genital mutilation (FGM)

42. Whilst **all** staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal duty on teachers**.<sup>14</sup> If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police. See page 161 for further information.

### Mental health

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

---

<sup>14</sup> Under section 5B(11) (a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, "teacher" means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

44. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Schools and colleges can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

45. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken to follow their school or college's child protection policy and by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

### Serious violence

46. **All** staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school or college, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in educational performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

### Additional information and support

47. Departmental advice [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners](#) provides more information on understanding and identifying abuse and neglect. Examples of potential indicators of abuse and neglect are highlighted throughout that advice and will be particularly helpful for school and college staff. The [NSPCC](#) website also provides useful additional information on abuse and neglect and what to look out for.

48. **Annex B contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse, exploitation and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read Annex B.**

## What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child

49. Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the **best interests** of the child.

50. If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them **immediately**. See page 24 for a flow chart setting out the process for staff when they have concerns about a child.

51. If staff have a concern, they should follow their own organisation's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

52. Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own pastoral support processes
- undertaking an early help assessment,<sup>15</sup> or
- making a referral to statutory services,<sup>16</sup> for example as the child could be in need, is in need or is suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

53. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

54. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan). [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules

---

<sup>15</sup> Further information on early help assessments, provision of early help services and accessing services is in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>16</sup> [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) sets out that the safeguarding partners should publish a threshold document that should include the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services under section 17 and 47. Local authorities, with their partners, should develop and publish local protocols for assessment. A local protocol should set out clear arrangements for how cases will be managed once a child is referred into local authority children's social care.

for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

55. **DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare.** If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

## Early help assessment

56. If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Further guidance on effective assessment of the need for early help can be found in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#). Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to local authority children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

## Statutory children's social care assessments and services

57. **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care and if appropriate the police,** (see [when to call the police: guidance for schools and colleges \(npcc.police.uk\)](#)) **is made immediately.** Referrals should follow the local referral process.

58. Local authority children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside of the home<sup>17</sup>, so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm. Additional information is available here: [Contextual Safeguarding](#).

59. The online tool [Report child abuse to your local council](#) directs to the relevant local authority children's social care contact details.

---

<sup>17</sup> See [working together](#) for further information about extra-familial harms and environments outside the family home

## Children in need

60. A child in need is defined under the [Children Act 1989](#) as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under [section 17 of the Children Act 1989](#).

## Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm:

61. Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under [section 47 of the Children Act 1989](#) if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment. This includes all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

## What will the local authority do?

62. Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required. This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details of the assessment process
- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details of the assessment process, and
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

63. The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

64. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) as required).

65. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

## Record keeping

66. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. This will also help if/when responding to any complaints about the way a case has been handled by the school or college. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records **should** include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

67. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

## Why is all of this important?

68. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and local child safeguarding practice reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action.<sup>18</sup> Further information about local child safeguarding practice can be found in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#). Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect
- poor record keeping
- failing to listen to the views of the child

---

<sup>18</sup>An analysis of serious case reviews can be found at [gov.uk/government/publications/serious-case-reviews-analysis-lessons-and-challenges](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-case-reviews-analysis-lessons-and-challenges)



- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve
- not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies
- sharing information too slowly, and
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

### **What school and college staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another staff member**

69. Schools and colleges should have processes and procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concern or allegation (no matter how small) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).

70. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation of harming or posing a risk of harm to children is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors), then:

- this should be referred to the headteacher or principal
- where there is a concern/allegation about the headteacher or principal, this should be referred to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor of an independent school, and
- in the event of a concern/allegation about the headteacher, where the headteacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, or a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) LADO(s). Details of your local LADO should be easily accessible on your local authority's website.

71. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers or contractors) that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the school or college low-level concerns policy. Further details can be found in Part four of this guidance.

### **What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college**

72. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or college's safeguarding provision and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

73. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures should be put in place for such concerns to be raised with the school or college's senior leadership team.

74. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them:

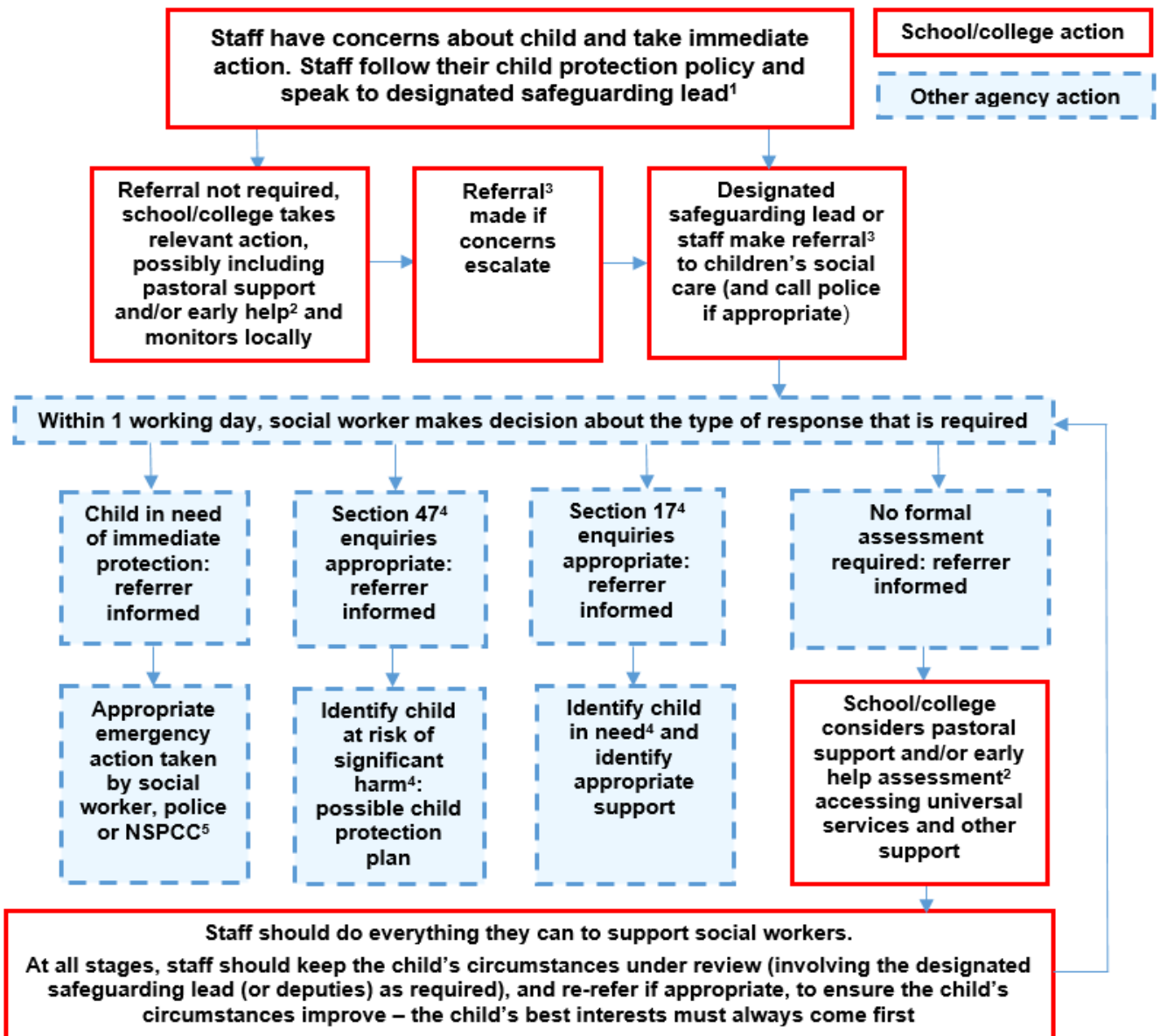
- general advice on whistleblowing can be found at [whistleblowing for employees](#)
- the [NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line](#) is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school or college. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – and the line is available from 08:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday, and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain, Road, London EC2A 3NH.

## A flowchart setting out the actions taken where there are concerns about a child

Figure 1



<sup>1</sup> In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

<sup>2</sup> Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

<sup>3</sup> Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. See [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>4</sup> Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>5</sup> This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

## Annex A: Safeguarding information for school and college staff

The following is a condensed version of Part one of Keeping children safe in education. It can be provided (instead of Part one) to those staff who do not directly work with children, if the governing body or proprietor think it will provide a better basis for those staff to promote the welfare of and safeguard children.

### The role of school and college staff

1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children has an important role to play.
2. School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating. It is important all staff (including those who do not work directly with children) recognise the important role they play in protecting children.

### What school and college staff need to know

3. For the purposes of safeguarding, a child is anyone under the age of 18. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
  - providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
  - protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
  - preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
  - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

### All staff should:

- Be aware of the systems in their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. As a minimum this Annex and the child protection policy should be shared with staff at induction.

- Receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) which is regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (including online safety) (for example, via emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to provide them with the skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- Know the identity of the designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) and how to contact them.
- Know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, neglected or exploited. This includes understanding they should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone else about a report of abuse, as this is unlikely to be in the best interests of the child.
- Should be able to reassure all victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

## **What school and college staff should look out for**

### **Abuse, neglect and exploitation**

4. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation. All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.
5. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

## Forms of abuse and neglect

6. **Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused by other children or adults, in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.
7. **Physical abuse:** a form of abuse that may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
8. **Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.
9. **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Females can also be abusers as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child-on-child abuse) in education and **all** staff should be aware of it and their school or colleges policy and procedures for dealing with it.
10. **Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
11. **All** staff should be aware that child sexual and child criminal exploitation are forms of child abuse.

## Safeguarding issues

12. **All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children

at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos<sup>148</sup> (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

## Child-on-child abuse

13. **All** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children at any age (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

14. **All** staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment

## What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child

15. Staff working with children should maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the **best interests** of the child.

16. Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

17. If staff have **any concerns** about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. They should follow their school or college's child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). In the absence of the

---

<sup>148</sup> Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. [UKCIS](#) provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.

designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) staff should speak to a member of the school or college's senior leadership team.

18. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will generally lead on next steps, including who else, if anyone, in the school or college should be informed and whether to pass a concern to local authority children's social care and/or the police. In some instances, staff may be expected to support the local authority children social care assessment process. If this is the case, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will support them.

### **Why all of this is important**

19. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks and prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare. Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective and immediate action. Examples of poor practice includes failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect.

### **What school and college staff should do if they have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another staff member who may pose a risk of harm to children**

20. If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, contractors, volunteers, and visitors) harming or posing a risk of harm to children, they should speak to the headteacher or principal (unless it relates to the headteacher or principal, in which case they should speak to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee, or the proprietor of an independent school).

### **What school or college staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school or college**

21. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or college's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

22. Appropriate whistleblowing procedures should be in place for concerns to be raised with the school or college's senior leadership team.

23. Where staff feel unable to raise an issue with the employer or feel that their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed [NSPCC whistleblowing advice line](#) is available. Staff can call 0800 0280285 – 08:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 18:00 at weekends. The email address is: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). Alternatively, staff can write to: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH.



## Annex C: Role of the designated safeguarding lead

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure an appropriate **senior member** of staff, from the school or college **leadership team**, is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead. The designated safeguarding lead should take **lead responsibility** for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place). This should be explicit in the role holder's job description.

The designated safeguarding lead should have the appropriate status and authority within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. The role of the designated safeguarding lead carries a significant level of responsibility, and they should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively. Their additional responsibilities include providing advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so, and contributing to the assessment of children.

### Deputy designated safeguarding leads

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy designated safeguarding leads. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

### Availability

During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) would be expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the designated safeguarding lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

## Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. [NPCC - When to call the police](#) should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police

## Working with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- 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 or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#).
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and 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 and/or carers 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 children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.<sup>156</sup> This includes:
  - ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and
  - supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes

## Information sharing and managing the child protection file

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

---

<sup>156</sup> We recognise that in some settings there may be a different strategic lead for promoting the educational outcomes of children who have or have had a social worker, particularly in larger schools or colleges. Where this is the case, it is important that the DSL works closely with the lead to provide strategic oversight for the outcomes of these children and young people.

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice set out in Parts one and two of this guidance.

Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs) or the named person with oversight for SEND in colleges, are aware as required.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

## **Raising awareness**

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff
- ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff

## Training, knowledge and skills

The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should also undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly local authority children's social care, so they:

- understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements<sup>157</sup>
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers<sup>158</sup>
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation

---

<sup>157</sup> Full details in Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

<sup>158</sup> Section 17(10) Children Act 1989: those unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health and development without local authority services, those whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of such services, or disabled children.

- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses,
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

## **Providing support to staff**

Training should support the designated safeguarding lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes, and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

## **Understanding the views of children**

It is important that all children feel heard and understood. Therefore, designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them, and,
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

## Holding and sharing information

The critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts one, two and five of this document, and therefore the designated safeguarding lead should be equipped to:

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, 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 General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc.

## **Annex D: Host families - homestay during exchange visits**

Schools and colleges often make arrangements for children to take part in exchange visits, either to other parts of the UK or abroad. Exchanges can benefit learning across a range of subjects. In particular, foreign visits can enrich the languages curriculum and provide exciting opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence and expertise in the use of other languages.

Schools and colleges have a duty to safeguard and promote children's welfare, as defined at paragraph 4. This extends to considering their safety and how best to minimise risk of harm to those children during any exchange visit the school or college arranges, and when organising the care and accommodation for a child with a host family (known as homestays) as part of the exchange.

### **School/college arranged homestay – suitability of adults in UK host families**

When arranging a homestay, schools should consider the suitability of the adults in the respective families who will be responsible for the visiting child during the stay.

In circumstances where a school or college arrange for a visiting child to be provided with care and accommodation in the UK (including where they engage a company to make those arrangements) in the home of a family to which the child is not related<sup>159</sup> the responsible adults will be engaging in regulated activity for the period of the stay.<sup>160</sup> In such cases and where the school or college has the power to terminate such a homestay the school or college would be the regulated activity provider.<sup>161</sup>

A regulated activity provider commits a criminal offence if it knows or has reason to believe that an individual is barred by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) from engaging in regulated activity but allows that individual to carry out any form of regulated activity.<sup>162</sup>

---

<sup>159</sup> This includes where a person has parental responsibility for the visiting child.

<sup>160</sup> Paragraph 1(5) of Schedule 4 and Section 53 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. Where an adult is providing homestay in circumstances other than as described in this section, the school or college should seek advice from the DBS about whether the individual will be in regulated activity.

<sup>161</sup> Section 53(3) and (4) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

<sup>162</sup> Section 9 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.