THE DISTRICT
CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Chair of Governors	Mr F Maguire
Headteacher	Mrs L Shelford
Date adopted: September 2022	**Review Date:** September 2023

The caring path to achievement, reflecting the values of Christ.

Important contacts		
Role/Organisation	Name	Contact details
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Sue Swift	01744 678250 Internal 218
Deputy DSL	Lavern Shelford	01744 678250 Internal 216
Local Authority Designated Officer	Contact the Safeguarding Unit 01744 671262	sthelenslado@sthelens.gov.uk
Chair of Governors Safeguarding Governor	Frank Maguire	Famaguire13@gmail.com

1. Aims:

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are property trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018),and the (Governance Handbook). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- The school staffing (England) Regulations 2009 which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirements for at least one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques.
- The Children Act 1989 and (2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children.
- Section 5B (11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM.
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children.
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)

- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The Childcare (Disqualification and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the '2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations') and Childcare Act 2006, which sets out who is disqualified from working with children.
- This policy meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

Child protection
Is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

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

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

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

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following three safeguarding partners are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and are defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make

arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police area in the LA area

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

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

4. Equality Statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations, for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12).
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

5. Roles and responsibilities

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

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

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- To recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)

- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) and how to access support
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

All Staff

- Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBT to speak out and share their concerns

All staff are aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff behaviour /code of conduct policy, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and (deputy DSL), the behaviour policy, the online safety policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- The early help process (known as Early Help Assessment Tool - EHAT) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE)indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines).
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by other children.
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection.

Section 15 and appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.1 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is Sue Swift (Head of Safeguarding, pastoral and attendance lead). The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in school.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss and to report any safeguarding concerns. Out of school hours the DSL can be contacted by using her personal mobile phone number.

When the DSL is absent the Deputy DSL, Lavern Shelford (Head teacher) will act as cover. If the DSL and deputy DSL are not available, in the first instance staff should contact the deputy headteacher, if the deputy headteacher is not available staff should contact a member of the senior leadership team who will act as cover.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Police, Channel programme etc) and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies.
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment and be confident as to how to access this support.
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search.

The DSL will also keep the headteacher informed, of any issues, and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.

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

5.2 The governing board

The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Will appoint a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person to the DSL. The school's link governor is Frank Maguire.
- Make sure:
    - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support.
    - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.
- The leadership team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the IT filters and monitoring systems in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns.
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure.
- That this policy reflects that child with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised.

Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):

- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place and inspect them if needed.
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate.
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher.
All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety. Section 15 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

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

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
  - Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction.
  - Understand and follow procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training, and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.
- Ensuring that the DSL is offered regular supervision and opportunity for case discussion.
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3)
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable.
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person.

6. Confidentiality

The pupil privacy notice, available on the school website, provides details of:

- Pupil information collected
- The purpose of collecting and using pupil information
- Why it is lawful to collect this information
- Who we will share information with
- Why we share information

We do not share information about our pupils with anyone without consent unless the law and our policies allow us to do so.

The DfE may share information about our pupils with third parties, who promote the education or wellbeing of children in England, but it has robust processes in place to ensure the confidentiality of our data and there are stringent controls in place regarding access and use of the data.

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.
- The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

The DSL should consider that:

- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care.
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved.
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3.
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

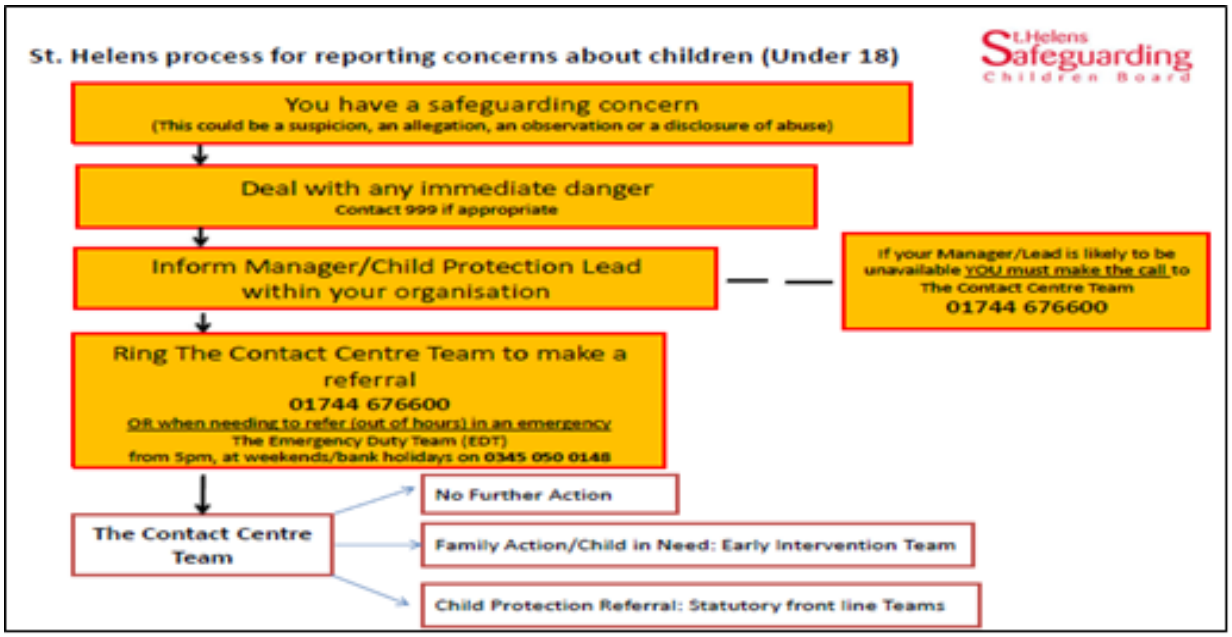
Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue. Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean "the DSL (or deputy DSL)".

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

The DSL (or deputy DSL) will make a referral to children's social care (and/or the police immediately if the child is in immediate danger) If the DSL (or deputy DSL) is not available anyone can make a direct referral, this may be the case if the concern occurs outside of school hours.

Tell the DSL (see section 5.2) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

How to make a referral



If it is appropriate to refer the case to the local authority children's social care, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so. If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible. Record the referral using My Concern.

The Local Authority will make a decision within one working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the Local Authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.

In the absence of the DSL (or deputy DSL) you must always make a direct referral if:

- You believe that a child is in immediate danger you must always contact the Police by dialling 999.
- You believe the child is suffering or likely to suffer harm you must contact the local authority contact centre by telephone 01744 67600 immediately to verbally report your concerns and prevent delay. A written referral will be completed detailing the contents of the referral as a follow up action.

For further guidance please refer to https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

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

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions.
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset.

- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Verbally inform the DSL and write up your conversation, using the My Concern Safeguarding recording system as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it.
- The DSL will triage the concern and decide on the most appropriate action. This may result in a referral being made to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1)
- Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs". FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4 of this policy.

A teacher who either:

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

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

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

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

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

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM, or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

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

Figure 1 on page 11 illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.

You must report your concerns using My Concern Safeguarding Recording system, the DSL will triage the concern and decide upon the appropriate course of action. If in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or deputy DSL) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from Local Authority Children's Social Care by contacting the Contact Centre 01744 676600.

Record details of the concern and any action taken using My Concern Safeguarding recording system. The DSL will be able to access the recording system to view all information. Make a referral to Local Authority Children's Social Care directly, using the table on page 6, if appropriate.

Early help

Early Help is:
Services working together for children, young people and their families, who would benefit from extra support in:

- Keeping children, young people and their families safe from harm
- Helping children, young people and their families to overcome difficulties.
- Supporting children, young people and their families to and be happy.
- Making sure families can support themselves.

If Early Help is appropriate, the DSL or trained practitioners working within the pastoral team will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an Early Help Assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed using regular supervision and case management.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so. If you make a referral directly you must tell the DSL as soon as possible
The local authority will make a decision in one working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the children's situation improves using the local authority's safeguarding children partnership board escalation processes.
https://sthelenssafeguarding.org.uk

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first so that appropriate referrals can be made as soon as possible and follow the discussion by recording concerns using the My Concern safeguarding recording system.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or the deputy DSL) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from the Local Authority Children's Social Care. Make a referral to Local Authority Children's Social Care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral and record the referral using the My Concern safeguarding recording system.

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

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations. In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist related

7.6 If you have a concern about mental health

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

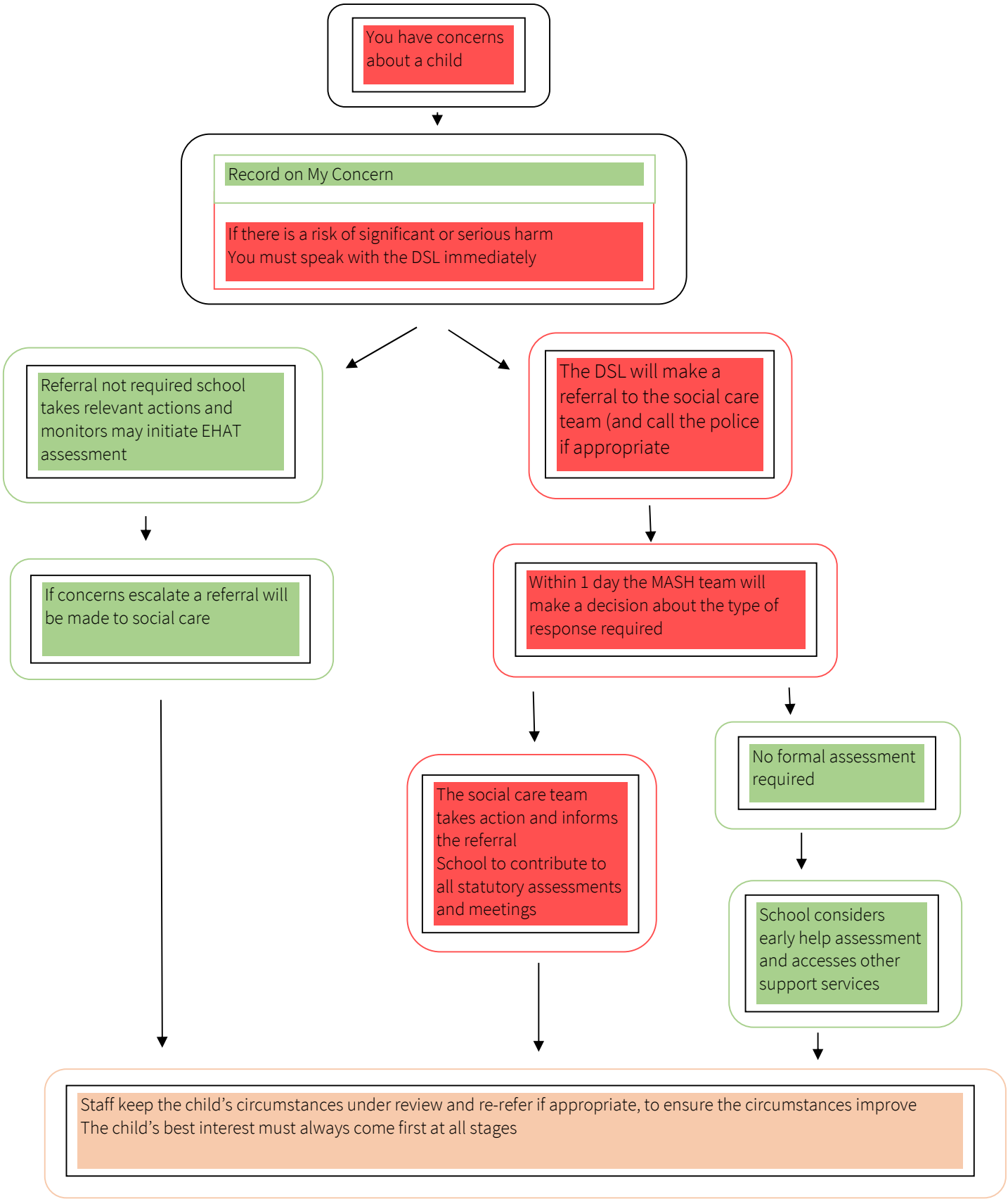
Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4.

If you have a mental health concern that is not also a safeguarding concern, record the concern using the My Concern safeguarding recording system. The concern will be triaged by the DSL who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

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

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See section 7.4 for what to do.)



7.7 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher or volunteer), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher or volunteer) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.

The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate. Where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale (see appendix 3 for more detail).

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO)

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up" as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils. We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on- child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence.
- Could put pupils in the school at risk.
- Is violent.
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol.
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sharing of nudes and semi-nudes).

See appendix 4 for more information about child-on-child abuse.

Procedures for dealing with allegations made against other pupils

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it.
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence.
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s).
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate.

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

Creating a supportive environment in school and minimizing the risk of peer-on-peer abuse

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour, between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images.
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys.
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent.
- Ensuring pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse to a trusted adult.
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously.
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners.
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed.
- Consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.

Ensuring staff are trained to understand:

- How to recognise the indicators and signs of peer-on-peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.
- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"
- That if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
    - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to.
    - A friend may make a repor.t
    - A member of staff may overhear a conversation.
    - A child's behavior might indicate that something is wrong.
    - That certain children may face, additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.
    - That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.
    - The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.
    - That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side.
    - That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns.

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

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g., by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own

conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or LA children's social care to determine this.
- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing.

7.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('Sexting')

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced imagery') you must report it to the DSL immediately
You must not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL).
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it.
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility).
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.

You should explain that you need to report the incident and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL and or the pastoral lead.

Response protocol:

Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff. This meeting may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding team who will deal with the incident. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s.)
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care.
- If it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, imagery should not be viewed).
- What further information is required to decide on the best response.
- Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown).
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services.
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment.
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual.
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents should be involved).

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

- The incident involves an adult.

- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs).
- What the DSL knows about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent.
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13.
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

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

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review.
They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate) to establish the facts and assess the risks.
If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents

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

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through contacting the local neighbourhood police, dialing 101.

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them will be recorded using the My Concern safeguarding recording system.

Curriculum coverage

While sharing of nude and semi-nude images is not explicitly covered within our online safety curriculum, pupils are taught how to be respectful towards others online, that their behaviour and anything they post online will contribute to their digital footprint, and how to seek support if anything they come across online upsets them. Our SRE and PHSE curriculum also encourages pupils to consider the appropriateness of their behaviour towards and with others.

8.0 Online Safety and use of mobile technology

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

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors.
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones').
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community.

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

The 4 key categories of risk

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

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

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

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
  - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology.
  - Keeping personal information private.
  - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online.
  - How to report any incidents of cyber-bulling, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so including where they are a witness rather than a victim.
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyberbullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members receive refresher training at the beginning of each academic year, and periodically throughout the year through face-to-face training and online training.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them through our Class Dojo system and by supporting documentation e.g., information leaflets and safeguarding newsletters. We will also share clear procedures with them so that they know how to raise concerns about online safety.
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phones and cameras, for example that:
  - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bag or classroom cupboard during contact time with pupils. Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.
  - We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.
  - Pupils phones will be collected by the class teacher on entry into school and stored in a secure box in the classroom cupboard.

- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology.
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones.

- Make sure all staff, pupils and parent/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE guidance on searching, screening, and confiscation.
- Put in robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by the school community.

Online safety Group:

- The online safety group consists of Sue Swift (Head of Safeguarding), David Atkinson (computing subject leader), Mandy Pierce (Business Manager), Daniel Foster (IT support), Donna Barker (Pastoral manager) and Bethany Donovan (local PCSO).
- Meets at least once per term.
- Monitors the impact of online safety education and recommends any changes necessary.
- Raises new initiatives (e.g., safer internet day, and the introduction of an online code of conduct created by pupils)
- Assists in the monitoring and review of policies relating to online safety.
- Arranges regular parents' information events and ensures that the information and advice we make available for parents is relevant and appropriate.

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For comprehensive details about out school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to our online safety policy.

9. Notifying parents or carers

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

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

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

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or careers of all the children involved.

10. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation than other pupils
- The potential for pupils with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

We offer additional pastoral support for pupils with SEN and disabilities. This includes:

- Early Years well-being group
- A wide range of classroom-based strategies, including quality first teaching
- Nurture group
- Allocated TA support and focused interventions
- Sensory/seedlings group
- Classroom calm kits
- Class based zones of regulation
- Alternative curriculum
- Circle of Friends
- SUMO for children
- Transition Toolkit
- Online programmes – clicker, IDL Literacy and Numeracy, etc.
- Pre-exclusion strategies
- Referral to health and other support services.

We use a range of screening and assessment tools, such as:

- Boxall Profile
- Strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQ)
- ELKLAN Language screener
- AET screener
- SNAP screening tool
- Dyscalculia screener
- GL assessment
- B squared small steps, etc

11. Pupils with a social worker

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children. Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.
For example, it will inform decisions about:

- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

12. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

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

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

We have appointed a designated teacher, Claire Ryder (Deputy head), who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.

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

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans.

13. Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

13.1 Whistleblowing (Confidential reporting policy)

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns where they exist about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude and actions of colleague's concerns should be reported to the Head teacher. Where a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistle blowing channels may be open to them. General guidance can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing/what -is-a-whisteblower

Whistleblowing regarding the Headteacher should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body whose contact details are noted on page 2 of this policy.

14. Record-keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule. All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing using the My Concern safeguarding recording system. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

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

All safeguarding information is confidential, and records will be held securely and only available to those appointed to DSL status on the My Concern safeguarding recording system.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be archived using the My Concern Safeguarding recording system, once a pupil has left the school.
Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be retained for the independent inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICA), for the term of the inquiry.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will hold a

case discussion with the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child. The receiving school will sign to state they have received the pupil's records.
To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- 5 days for an in-year transfer, or within.
- The first 5 days of the start of a new term.

15. Training

15.1 All staff

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

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning
- Be in line with advice from the three safeguarding partners
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support eh expectation that all teachers:
  - Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
  - Have a clear understanding of the needs for all pupils

All staff will have annual training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training. Volunteers will receive appropriate training, as applicable and the school procedures will be covered during induction.

15.2 The DSL and Deputy DSL

The DSL and Deputy DSL will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. Either by completing the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' local authority training, or as agreed by the local authority by completing a range of safeguarding training throughout the year, as continual CPD.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).
They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

15.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities. Governors can access safeguarding training in the following ways:

- Accessing Local Authority Governing Body Safeguarding training
- Accessing school inset safeguarding training

- Attending Keeping Children Safe in Education part two briefings carried out by the Head of Safeguarding

The chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

15.4 Recruitment – interview panels

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

15.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families

Pastoral staff who have contact with children and families will have monthly supervisions which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Sue Swift (Head of Safeguarding and Extended Services). At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

17. Links with other policies and protocols

Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct Policy
Whistleblowing (Confidential reporting policy)
Anti-bullying
Well-being and Behaviour
Health and Safety
Allegations against a member of staff
Parental concerns
Attendance
Curriculum
PSHE
Teaching and Learning
Administration of Medicines
Drug Education
Physical Intervention
Online Safety, including staff use of mobile phones
Risk Assessment
Recruitment and Selection
Intimate Care
Relationship and sex education
Bereavement and loss
Case Management and supervision
St Helens LA Remote Learning Via Microsoft 365
PAN Merseyside Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Protocol 2020

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

Appendix 1: types of abuse

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

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

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

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

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

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

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

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

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)

- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

Appendix 2: Safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.
We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken.
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with the children.
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013, and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account.

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on employment of ex-offenders.

Shortlisting

Our shortlisting process will involve at least two people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them.
- Explore all potential concerns.

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
  - If they have a criminal history.
  - Whether they are included on the barred list.
  - Whether they are prohibited from teaching.
  - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales.
  - Any relevant overseas information.
  - Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true.

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online.

Seeking references and checking employment history

We obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references.
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees.
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher as an accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations.
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed.
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children.
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate.
- Resolve any issues before the appointment is confirmed.

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will;

- Prove any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this.
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made.

Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff

The offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment check. The Local Authority Human Resource department is responsible for carrying out the following checks.

- Verifying identity.
- Obtaining (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed, we may still keep a record of the fact that a vetting check took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision made.
- Obtaining a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available.
- Verifying their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.
- Verifying their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards.
- Verifying their professional qualifications, as appropriate.
- Ensuring they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher.
- Carrying out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. Where available, these will include:
    - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records check for overseas applicants

- For teaching positions: obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked.

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

We will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.

Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual move from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- The 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors. We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.
For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children. In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity.
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity.
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment.
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual fall outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

Governors

The School Business Manager (Mandy Pierce) will carry out enhanced DBS checks for all governors, without barred list information. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity. All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

All governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008
- Identity.
- Right to work in the UK.
- Other checks deem necessary if they have lived or worked outside of the UK.

Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff

Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher or volunteer, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children this includes behavior taking place both inside and outside of school.

If we are in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult out local authority designated officer (LADO).
We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earlies opportunity

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned.
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children.
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children.
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted.
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the local authority.

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's personnel adviser and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive.
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.

- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the headteacher (or chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation) – the 'case manager' – will take the following steps:

- Immediately make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the referrer is to complete the LADO referral form and email securely to sthelenslado@sthelens.gov.uk and then follow up with a telephone call to the Safeguarding Children Unit on 01744 671262 within 1 day of the allegation. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate
- If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate e.g. advice and support from a trade union, work colleague, counselling or medical advice.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations

are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.
Where the police are involved, wherever possible the governing body will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as supply staff provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

- We will not decide to stop using a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our local authority designated officer to determine a suitable outcome
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the local authority designated officer as required
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

Specific actions Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required. If they think that the individual has engaged in conduct that has harmed (or is likely to harm) a child, or if they think the person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child, they must make a referral to the DBS.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the headteacher, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the headteacher, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.

Confidentiality

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared.
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality.
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises.

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation.
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved.
- Notes of any action taken, and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file and provide a copy to the individual.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer. The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.
This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff.
- The duration of the suspension.
- Whether or not the suspension was justified.
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer of the local authority (LADO)

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly to children.
- Having favourites.
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phones.
- Engaging with a child on a one-to -one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door.
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language.

Sharing low level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately

We create a culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others.
- Empowering staff to self-refer.
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage.
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system.

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously.
- To the individual involved and any witnesses.

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's staff behaviour policy.

Record Keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any actions taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority.
- Retained at least until the individual leaves' employment at the school.
- Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance.

Appendix 4: specific safeguarding issues

Children with family members in prison

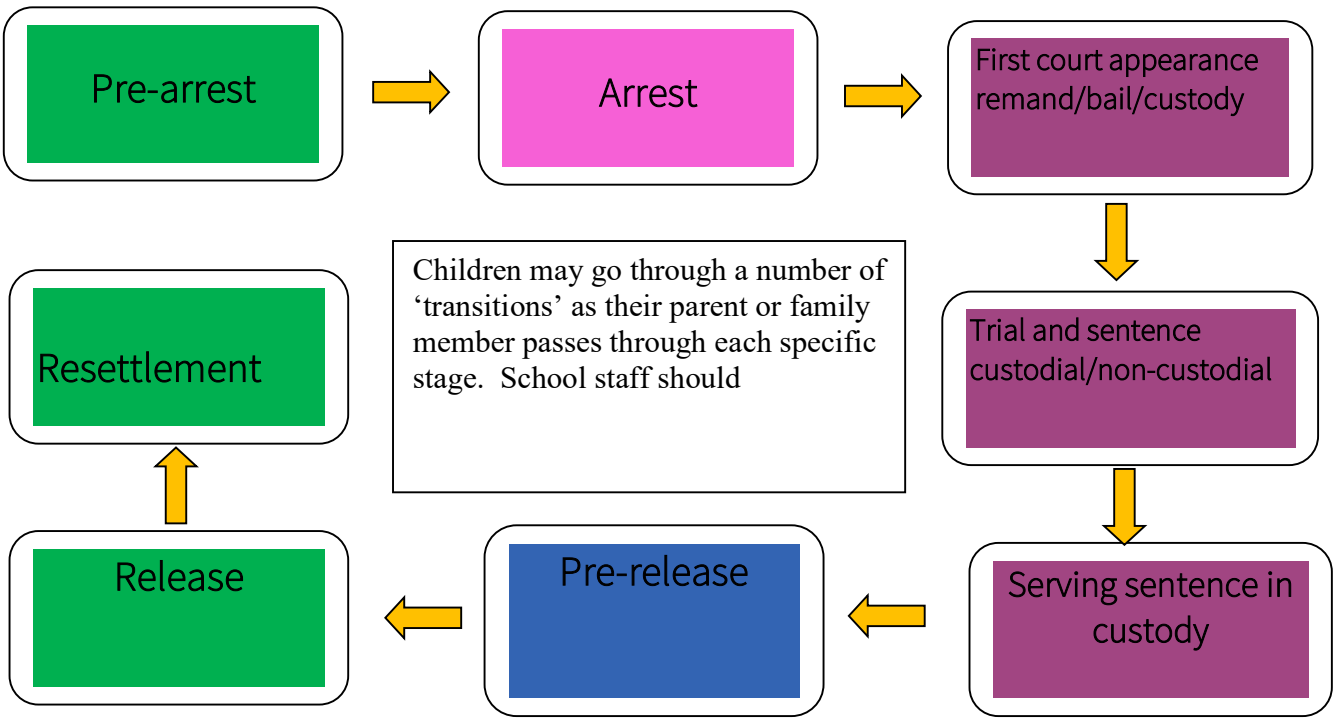
Having a parent or other family member in prison can impact on a child's sense of identity and how they interact with their family and community. Equally importantly, it can impact on their lives in school and in wider society. Schooling, in particular, is the most universal service provision for children, however many organisations come into contact with children affected by having a family member in prison. It is therefore crucial that as a school, we work with other key agencies to support and recognise the child's needs.

How children are affected:

- A sense of sadness about the loss of the parent.
- Concern about what is happening to the family member in prison, for example worrying if they are lonely or sad, or being hurt.
- Emotional difficulties, for example feeling anxious, not expressing their feelings and having sleep disturbances.
- Changes in behaviour.
- The child's concentration and schoolwork may deteriorate.

The arrest, trial, court proceedings and potential imprisonment of a parent can be a long and distressing time for a parent, the child and their families. There are different stages in the 'offender journey', and schools should consider the different effects on children and families at each stage.

The offender journey (taken from Action for Prisoners' Families)



Children may go through a number of 'transitions' as their parent or family member passes through each specific stage. School staff should be aware of the range of emotions that children may experience at each stage in order

to best meet the child's needs. The pastoral team are highly trained and skilled to meet these needs and have a range of assessment and support tools that can be used with children.

Child criminal exploitation

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

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

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

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

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

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

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

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

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

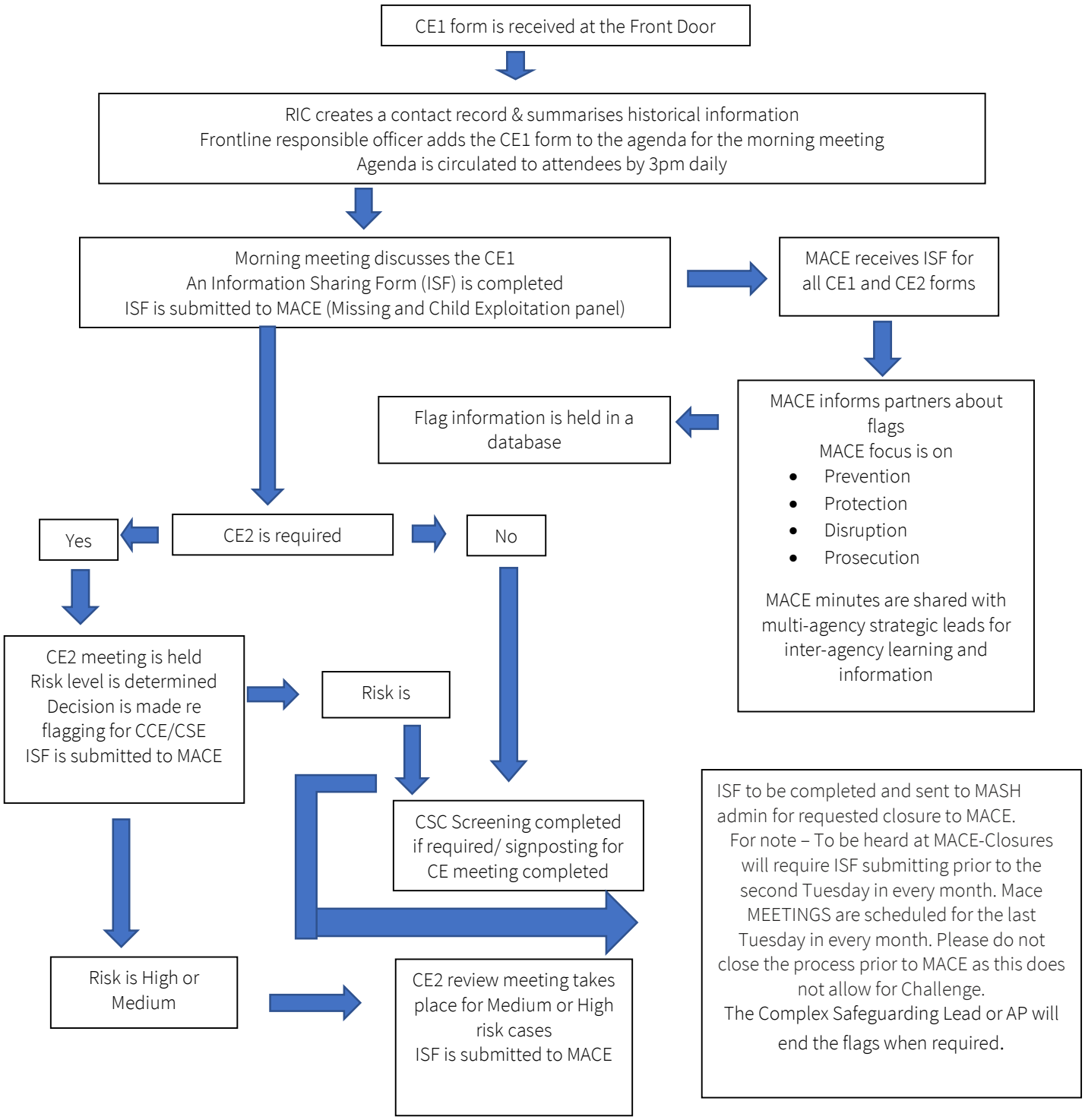
CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities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

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

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

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

Child Criminal and Sexual Exploitation Flow Chart



Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and

outside of school. It can take place both face- to- face and online and can occur simultaneously between the two.

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

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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes' images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

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

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

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

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

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

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

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

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

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

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

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

Serious violence

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

- Increased absence from school.
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups.
- Significant decline in performance.
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above)).
- Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:
- Being male.
- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school.
- Having experienced child maltreatment.
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.
- Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.
Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.
Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

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

- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out

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

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will:

- We will call the child's parent or carer, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed.
- If unable contact with the child's parent or carer, a named contact e.g., alternative family member or other named adult will be contacted.
- If no contact can be made with any named adult, the child will be placed in our afterschool club provision whilst the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the Headteacher will go to the child's home and/or to the named adults to see if contact with an adult can be made.
- If no contact can be made with any named adult and the child has not been collected by a suitable adult the police will be called. A referral will also be made to children's social care or the emergency duty team (EDT) if after 5.00 pm.
- The concern and subsequent actions will be recorded on the child's individual safeguarding record, using My Concern.

Missing pupils

Once a pupil is identified as missing by any member of school staff within the core hours of the school day, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head teacher will be informed.

Staff will use professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the pupils' whereabouts before notifying the Police. Timeliness should be on a case by case basis.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will, together with the class teacher, assess the child's vulnerability.

School staff will try to locate the pupil and try to establish the whereabouts of them.

School staff will contact home and try to contact the pupil via their mobile telephone if known.

The information required by the Police to assist in locating and returning the pupil to a safe environment is as follows:

- The pupil's name/s; date of birth; status (for example looked after child); responsible authority.
- Where and when they went missing.
- Previous missing episodes and where they went.
- Who, if anyone, they went missing with.
- What the child was wearing plus any belongings they had with them such as bags, phone etc.; include mobile number.
- Description and recent photo.
- Medical history, if relevant.
- Time and location last seen.
- Circumstances or events around going missing with relevant safeguarding information.

- Details of family, friends and associates.
- Contact details of safeguarding lead if it was after school hours.

Whilst the search is ongoing, the school will continue to liaise with the Police and act in accordance with Police instructions.
Option 1 – if the child returns before the Police have arrived then the Police must be informed, and own school procedures need to be followed.
Option 2 - if the child returns to school of their own volition, then the Police must be informed, and own school procedures need to be followed.
Option 3 - if the Police locate the child and bring them back to the school the Police will conduct the safe and well interview and the school will follow School procedure.

Where a pupil has a known risk of being missing, a risk assessment for the pupil will be written and put in to place.

The incident /concern will be recorded on the child's individual safeguarding profile, using My Concern.

Domestic abuse

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

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

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

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

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

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL and the pastoral lead will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority, so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

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

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

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

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

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

FGM

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

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place.
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out.
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues.

A girl:

- Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable.
- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously).
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE.
- Being repeatedly absent from school or absent for a prolonged period.
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behavior.
- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations.
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem.
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

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

- The girl's family having a history of practicing FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider).
- FGM being known to be practiced in the girl's community or country of origin.
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out.
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.

A girl:

- Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM.
- Having limited level of integration within UK society.
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman".
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period.
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM.
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion).
- Being unexpectedly absent from school.

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

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

Forced marriage

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

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

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

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place.
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer.
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate.

Preventing radicalisation

- Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- Terrorism is an action that:
    - Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people.
    - Causes serious damage to property; or
    - Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system.

The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.
Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.
We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.
We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.
There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.
The government website Educate Against Hate and charity NSPCC say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities, they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

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

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

Staff should always take action if they are worried.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.
Visitors are expected to sign in using the Inventory electronic singing in system, they will be provided with and expected to wear a visitor's badge whilst they remain on the premises.
Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and. The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out and that the school has copies of these. The school will follow the Local Authority procedures.
All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will always be accompanied by a member of staff. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

Children missing in education

A child gong missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issue. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and

to help and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in the future. All staff should be aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

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

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

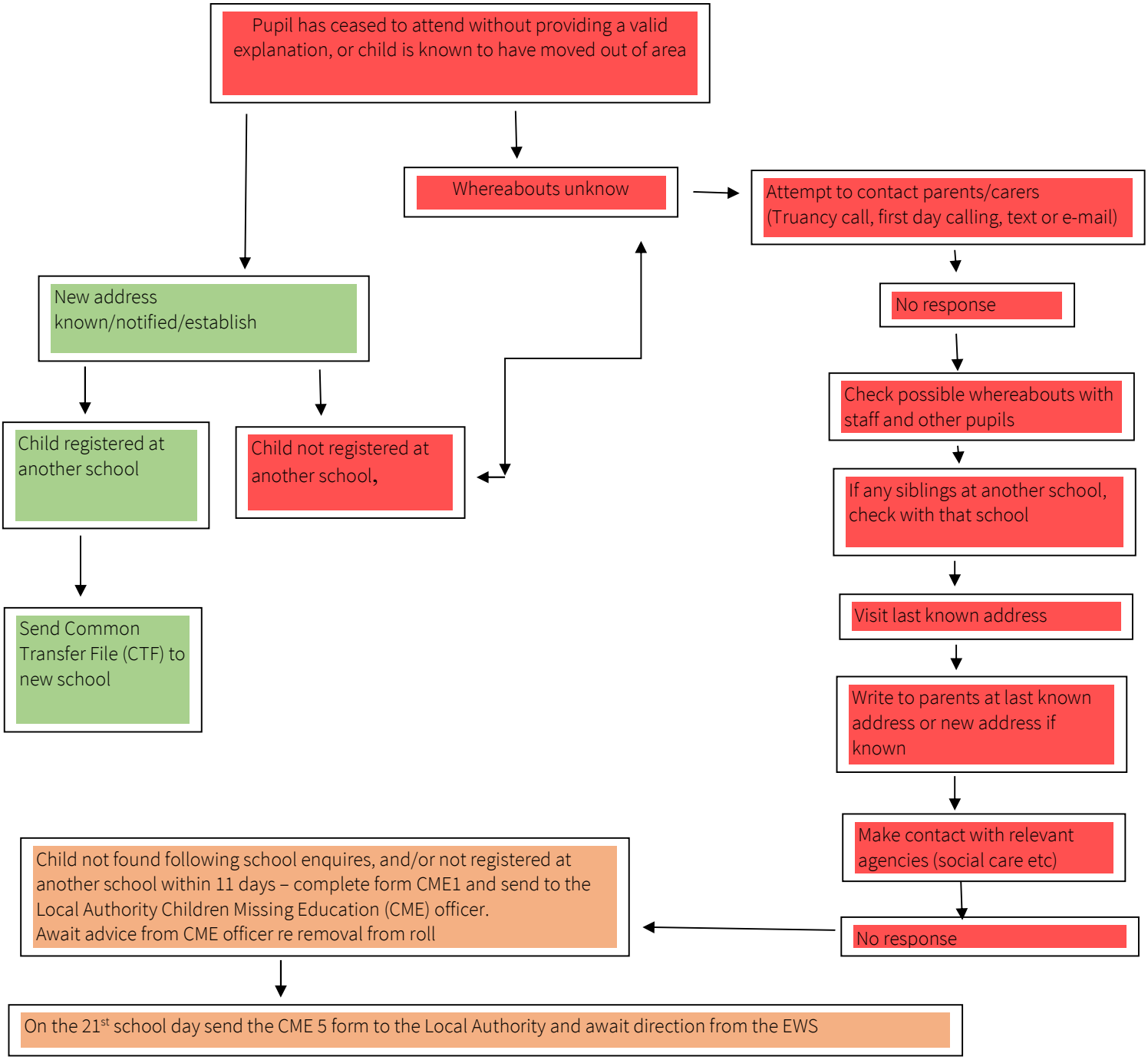
We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes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

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

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

Children Missing Education – Responsibilities of school flowchart

(Taken from St Helens Local Authority, EWS Children Missing Education (CME) Policy and Procedures).



Social media control and usage

When there is a need for schools to provide pupils with the ability to continue their learning and development through the use of online methods, when outside of the normal school environment. Distance learning will be offered to pupils in a secure and controlled manner, through the applications and features of the Microsoft Office 365 suite which provides a safe working environment for staff and students. Remote learning will provide

children who aren't physically in school due to isolation or school closure in-person education, access to online training materials, and the ability to communicate with their school staff from their own home through internet-based application. As a school we will adhere to the safeguarding practices detailed within the Local Authority, Remote Learning via Microsoft 365 policy

Class Dojo:

All classes use Class Dojo as an effective means of communication with parents. The app allows teachers to quickly share information, pictures, videos and other documents with parents of the children in their class. Posts can also be instantly shared with parents of all children who attend the school. Each class is administrated by the class teacher but is also monitored by a member of SLT who is registered as a co-teacher.

Twitter:

The school Twitter account @The District has an administrator who are D. Atkinson and Hayley Whitehead. They will be responsible for retweeting any relevant tweets, for checking appropriateness of tweet contents and the setting of the account. They oversee the direct messaging section and followers of the account. If a tweet is found to be inappropriate, the administrators will take the appropriate actions: delete the tweet, correct and re-post if possible and inform SLT if necessary. The uploading of content will be controlled by D Atkinson and Hayley Whitehead. Should any teachers want to upload a tweet, they must send the content to D Atkinson who will proofread the content, ensure parental consent has been obtained for any photographs included, and post it.

Suitable content would include notices to parents of events, celebrating good work, making contact with authors and experts. No photographs of children will be included on any tweet unless permission has been obtained by a parent carer.

Facebook:

The school Facebook account administrators are L. Shelford, Claire Ryder and Hayley Whitehead. Only the administrators have access to the school's Facebook account therefore the administrators will be responsible for posting any relevant posts, for checking appropriateness of content and the settings of the account. They will oversee the direct messaging section and friend's account.

The uploading of content will be controlled by the administrator, and any use of school social media accounts must be on school devices, i.e., not personal phones or tablets.

Social Media Followers:

We reserve the right to block accounts deemed inappropriate or offensive to ourselves and/or others. The school will not actively seek to follow other users and will only follow other social media user's whose association with the school is beneficial for staff, pupils, and parent/carers (e.g., a children's author or an educational account)

Staff Social Media Accounts:

Members of staff are welcome to re-post the school's social media output on their own personal social media accounts. Any content that they would like to upload concerning any school activities however must be posted via the school's social media accounts, following the process outlined above. Members of staff must be aware that, since they are associated with the school, any material that they uploaded on social media will also be associated with the school. Therefore, staff should be sure to adhere to the school and council 'Code of Conduct' policies.

Remote Learning:

In the event of a full or partial school closure, we will continue to provide education for our pupils online. If a small number of pupils are absent from school, their daily tasks and teacher's feedback will be delivered by their class teacher via Class Dojo. Should the school be closed to a larger number of children (for example if a class has to self-isolate), the teachers will communicate with them via Microsoft Teams as detailed on the remote learning policy.

Online safety

Whilst in school, there is a firewall in place named "Smoothwall," that prevents pupils from accessing unsuitable content online. Any attempt to access an inappropriate website via school's computer systems generates an email that is sent to the headteacher for further investigation. To further mitigate the risk of exposing pupils to unsuitable websites, any websites that are to be used in class are checked beforehand by the class teacher. It is accepted that from time to time, for good educational reasons, pupils may need to research topics (e.g., racism, drugs, discrimination) that would normally result in searches being blocked. In such a situation, staff can request that the Technical Staff temporarily remove those sites from the filtered list for the period of study. Any requests should have clear reasons for the need.

Whilst regulation and technical solutions in keeping children safe online are very important, their use must be balanced by educating pupils to take a responsible approach. The education of pupils in online-safety is therefore an essential part of the school's online-safety provision. Children and young people need the help and support of the school to recognise and avoid online-safety risks and build their resilience.

Any concerns relating to online safety are recorded and monitored in the same way that general safeguarding concerns are monitored: via "My Concern." Our provision for keeping children safe online is regularly reviewed and evaluated making use of the 360-degree safe online self-assessment tool.