



Hilden Oaks
PREPARATORY SCHOOL & NURSERY

Safeguarding Policy

2025

Safeguarding Policy including the School's Child
Protection Procedures and Whole School Policy,
including EYFS

Working Together to Safeguard Children defines safeguarding children as

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

CONTENTS

Part 1. Safeguarding Policies	Page
Key personnel and contact details	05
List of Definitions	07
01.Statement of intent	08
02.What is safeguarding?	10
03.Ethos	10
04.Responsibilities	11
05.Safeguarding and child protection policies	13
06.What is child abuse?	15
07.Transparency	19
08.Suitable People	19
09.Safer Employment Practices	20
10. Induction and training	21
11. Supervision, Support and Appraisal	22
12. Record Keeping	22
13. Confidentiality and Information sharing	23
14. Notifying Parents/Carers	24
15. Online safety	24
16. Prevent Strategy	25
17. Honour-based Abuse (including FGM and Forced Marriage)	25
18. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	26
19. Domestic Abuse	26
20. Additional Safeguarding Responsibilities	27
21. Use of Personal Mobile Phone and Cameras	27
22. Positions of Trust	28
23. Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct	28
24. Physical Contact with Pupils/ Students	29

25. Physical Restraint and Reasonable Force	30
26. Communication with Pupils/ Students	30
27. Transporting Pupils/ Students	31
28. Equal Treatment	31
29. Arrangements for Reviewing Policies	31
30. Complaints	32
31. Whistleblowing	32

Part 2: Procedures that Support Safeguarding Page

01. Dealing with Allegations or Concerns About a Child	33
02. What Staff Should Do if They Have Concerns About a Child	33
03. Early Help and Looked-after Children	36
04. Bullying & Child on Child Harm/Abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment)	36
05. Consensual and Non-Consensual sharing of nude and/or semi-nude images and videos	39
06. Children Missing from Education Procedures	40
07. Actions if a Child Goes Missing From The School	40
08. Actions if a Child Goes Missing on an Outing	41
09. Actions Once the Child Is Found	42
10. Child Not Collected Procedure	42
11. Disclosures/Allegations of Abuse Against Staff	43
12. Body Map Guidance for Schools	44
13. Body Map	45
14. Child Protection Incident/Welfare Concern Form	50

Appendix	Page
01. Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and Annex B	52
02. Signs of abuse	52
03. Early Help	57
04. Children and the court system	58

Annex A— What to do if a child discloses abuse.

Annex B— Procedure for Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff.

Annex C— What to do if a child discloses Child on Child sexual violence and harassment.

Note that Annex are now published as sperate documents.

Safeguarding contact details for Hilden Oaks Preparatory School and Nursery Designated Safeguarding Leads:

1. Mrs S Wade (Headteacher, DSL with ultimate lead responsibility) 01732 353941
2. Mr A Hardwick (Deputy Head, DSL) 01732 353941
3. Mrs S Forrest (Manager of Early Years & Nursery, Early Years DSL) 01732 353941
4. Mrs C Wenham (Early Years Practitioner) 01732 353941
5. Ms Smith (Teaching Assistant) 01732 353941
6. Miss Bean (Early Years) 01732 353941
7. Miss Kirk (Early Years) 01732 353941

Designated Safeguarding Trustee: Mr C Swainson 07502457833

Filtering and Cybersecurity Trustee Mr D Mills

Online Safety Coordinators: Mr J Makey & Mrs S Wade

To refer a child with a safeguarding concern. Use the Kent Integrated Children's Services Portal: [Request for Support - Professionals](#)

If a call is urgent, please ring: 03000 411111 (out of hours: 03000 419191). If a child is in immediate danger dial 999 and ask for the Police.

Non urgent referrals should always use the portal. Urgent referrals may be made via the portal – select 'URGENT'.

To report a safeguarding incident/concern involving an adult who works with children: The Kent Education Safeguarding Team now operate a digital portal for referrals. This flow chart enables you to link to the service you need: [Kent LADO and LESAS](#)

Any queries should be emailed to KentChildrensLado@kent.gov.uk or you can speak to the LADO Enquiries Officer on 03000 410 888.

To report a Prevent terrorism concern:

- For emergency concerns: Call 999.
- For non-emergency concerns: Call the national [ACT Early Support Line](#) on 0800 011 3764.
- For education-specific concerns: Use the [reporting extremism form](#) on [GOV.UK](#) if you have concerns about extremism within an education provider.

- For referrals: Download and email the [National Prevent Referral Form](#) to preventreferrals@kent.police.uk.

To report Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

If you are a regulated professional, such as a health worker, social worker or teacher, you are required by law to report any 'known' cases of FGM directly to the police via our non-emergency number [101](#). If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use the textphone service on 18001 101.

National FGM helpline on 0800 028 3550

List of Definitions

CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DBS	Disclosure Barring Service
DFE	Department for Education
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
DST	Designated Safeguarding Trustee
DVD	Digital Versatile Disc
EYDP	Early Years Designated Person
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HBA	Honour-based Abuse
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
KCSIE	Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
KSCMP	Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership
LACs	'Looked After' Children
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
NCTPHQ	The National Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters
PHSCEE	Personal Social Health Economic & Citizenship Education
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
SCS	Specialist Children's Services
SID	Safer Internet Day
SMSC	Spiritual Moral Social Cultural
TRA	Teaching Regulation Agency
WTSC	Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Part 1: Hilden Oaks Preparatory School and Nursery Safeguarding Policies

01. Statement of Intent

1. This policy is applicable to the whole School, including Pupils/ Students in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in accordance with Kent's agreed integrated procedures and policies of the Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership.

2. The policy is available for parents on the School website and on request. The Hilden Oaks Educational Trust Ltd (The Trust) and staff at the School take seriously their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all the children at Hilden Oaks Preparatory School and Nursery. We will work together with other agencies to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place within the School to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, harm and to promote their welfare through the provision of early help services.

3. For the purposes of this policy, 'children/child' includes everyone under the age of 18.

4. The School should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. Managing information and referrals must always be conducted within a framework of confidentiality. We promote the culture that "it could happen here".

5. We recognise that we have a duty to safeguard the children in our care from significant harm. This includes physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. It also includes our responsibilities to educate children to keep them safe online, to identify children who may be at risk of mental health problems, honour-based abuse, female genital mutilation and those who may be at risk of radicalisation. It is the School's intention to know everyone as an individual and to provide a secure and caring environment so that every child can learn in safety.

6. The School aims to create a safe environment where children can thrive. We will endeavour to ensure that:

- i. Children are listened to, valued and respected, and that we have an unrelenting focus on protection and the best outcomes for children.
- ii. Staff are alert to the signs of abuse and aware of the correct channels and procedures to follow if they have concerns,
- iii. All employees and volunteers are subject to rigorous recruitment procedures (see Safer Recruitment Policy),
- iv. All employees, Agency Staff, Contactors and volunteers are given appropriate training, guidance and support. Additionally, all third parties who use school facilities must reach the same standards thereby creating learning cultures in which practitioners stay up to date as new evidence of best practice emerges.
- v. Staff will strive to create an environment in which it is safe to challenge, including assumptions that relate to ethnicity, sex, disability, and sexuality.
- vi. Staff will strive to support practitioners with effective supervision as determined by their regulatory body in which they can critically reflect on their findings and strengthen their analysis, thereby helping practitioners to understand the impact of their decisions on the child and family.

7. Pupils/ Students at the School will be taught through the wider curriculum, PSHE and through Relationship, Sex and Health Education, how to stay safe, including staying safe online (see section 15 for further information on online safety).

8. All child protection concerns must be acted upon immediately. If a member of staff or a parent or guardian is concerned that a child might be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, they should inform a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) The DSLs are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate people to advise on the response to the concern.

9. This Safeguarding Policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes;

- i. The Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework (2025)
- ii. DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- iii. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- iv. Prevent duty guidance for England, Scotland and Wales (2015)
- v. Kent Integrated Children's Services Portal
- vi. What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2015)
- vii. Information Sharing (2024)
- viii. The revised Relationships, Sex and Health Education guidance
- ix. Early Years Foundation Stage – Strengthening the EYFS Safeguarding Requirements 2025
- x. The Digital and Technology Standards, The Cyber Security Standards and the recent guidance on Generative AI

10. All members of staff have a duty to promote the welfare and safeguarding of pupils/ students and must always therefore familiarise themselves and comply with this policy. All School staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents can happen at any time and anywhere and members of staff are required to be alert to any possible concerns.

11. Staff should also be aware that children can harm/abuse other children. This is known as Child on Child abuse and is something that requires sensitive action in accordance with these procedures and other School policies such as online safety and anti-bullying.

12. If the School is identified by another safeguarding partner (such as KCC, a clinical commissioning group, or the Police) as a relevant agency to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child/children, the School will cooperate with their published arrangements.

02. What is Safeguarding?

13. Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 as:

- i. providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- ii. protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- iii. preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- iv. ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- v. promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
- vi. taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

14. It also reminds us that 'safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role in play. KCSIE makes this point very strongly when it says: 'School and college staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.'

03. Ethos

15. The Trust adheres to the EYFS statement that 'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.' (EYFS 2025)

16. The Trust considers all those directly involved with our setting have an essential role in making it safe and secure. Our School aims to create the safest environment within which every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential, and we take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguarding all the children and young people entrusted to our care.

17. As part of the ethos of the setting we are committed to:

- i. Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern,
- ii. Providing an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to,
- iii. Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties,
- iv. Using learning at the School to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem assertiveness and decision making. This is so that young children have a range of

contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others,

- v. Working with parents to build an understanding of the School's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations,
- vi. Ensuring all staff have regular training and are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the School's procedures and lines of communication,
- vii. Monitoring children who have been identified as 'in need' including the need for protection, keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals, and
- viii. Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.

18. The School adheres to the Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership advice and guidance which can be found on the KSCMP website www.kscmp.org.uk

04. Responsibilities

All Staff

19. All staff have responsibility to identify children who may need help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff have a duty of care to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

Leadership

20. The trustees of Hilden Oaks School Educational Trust Ltd are responsible for the School's compliance with its duties under legislation. The trustees have regard to KCSIE 2025 and are responsible for ensuring that policies, procedures and training in the School is effective and comply with the law at all times. The trustees have appointed a Designated Safeguarding Trustee (DST) to take leadership responsibility for the School's safeguarding arrangements although overall responsibility is held by all trustees collectively. The DST is responsible for ensuring the School's safeguarding policy is implemented and reporting to the trustees to this effect. The DST receives regular reports from the Head on safeguarding matters and is available to the Head for advice and support when required.

21. The School's safeguarding policy is reviewed by the trustees at least annually, and more frequently when required. Safeguarding forms part of the agenda at trustee meetings and at the Full Trust meeting each term.

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Early Years Designated Person

22. The trustees have appointed the Head (as leader of the Senior Leadership Team) as the lead Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The lead DSL has overall responsibility for day-to-day safeguarding and child protection at the School. The Head has appointed four 'deputy' DSLs three of whom are based in the Early Years setting (one of which is our EYDP, see below). The deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the lead DSL. The activities of the lead DSL can be delegated to the deputies, however the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the Head and cannot be delegated.

23. The EYFS states that a practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in every setting. As such, an appropriately qualified and experienced Early Years Designated Person (EYDP) has been appointed to fulfil this role in our Early Years setting. The School is committed to ensuring the EYDP is properly supported in being able to carry out this role fully, including providing them with appropriate time and resources away from other job commitments.

24. Our EYDP is also one of the School's DSLs, and all DSLs are trained to deal with any issue regardless of whether it arises in the School or Nursery. Most DSLs are part of the Senior Leadership Team. They have access to a range of supporting documents to identify and respond to children in need or risk.

25. The DSL and deputy DSLs have responsibility for the day to day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems in the setting. During term-time a DSL will always be available during School hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The lead DSL will arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for out of hours/out of term activities. Their responsibilities include;

- I. Liaising with other professionals in all agencies, including social services, police and health
- II. and colleagues;
- III. Keeping apprised of any updates in policy and practice as agreed by Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership (via the Education Safeguarding Team);
- IV. Being a source of support, advice and guidance to any other setting staff, both paid and voluntary. This is on an ongoing basis and on any specific safeguarding issue as required,
- V. Co-ordinating child protection action within the setting, including making referrals as necessary and maintaining a confidential recording system,
- VI. Ensuring all staff, visitors and volunteers are aware of the setting policies and
- VII. procedures and their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children,
- VIII. Ensuring all staff, both paid and voluntary, have received appropriate and up to date child protection training,
- IX. Ensuring their training is kept up to date by attending appropriate designated person training (two-yearly inter-agency working plus any informal updates as necessary) as stipulated by KCSIE 2025 and undertake Prevent training,
- X. Representing or ensuring the setting is represented, by an appropriate senior member of staff, at inter-agency meetings Strategy Discussions, Child Protection Conferences and core groups,
- XI. Managing and monitoring the setting's part in child-in-need and child protection plans,
- XII. Tracking arrangements for school attendance and for children who are missing education,
- XIII. Paying special attention to the needs of any child who is at the School who is also looked after by the local authority,
- XIV. Paying special attention to the vulnerabilities of children with special educational needs or who have a disability.
- XV. Ensuring the safety of pupils/ students when learning online or accessing the internet, including ensuring pupils/ students are taught about online safety.
- XVI. The DSL(s) will help promote the educational outcomes of children by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that they have

been experiencing, or have experienced (including those with a social worker), with teachers and other staff.

- XVII. The welfare and safety of children, however, are the responsibility of ALL staff in the setting and ANY concern for a child's welfare MUST be reported and acted on immediately.

05. Safeguarding and Protection policies

26. Statutory guidance is set out in KCSIE 2025. Additional guidance is available:

- i. 'What to do if you are Worried About a Child Being Abused' (DfES 2015)
- ii. Information Sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (July 2024)
- iii. The Kent Support Levels Guidance Sheet. (available from the KELSI Website)
- iv. The Assessment Framework for Children in Need and their Families (2000)
- v. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023:

27. These can be found in the staff room, or on the School computer files at: 'Staff /Policies' and provide guidance for professionals including when to make a referral to Specialist Children's Services.

28. Normally concerns are referred to and managed by the DSLs, however all staff must be aware that they can report an incident directly to the relevant authority if needed. If anyone other than a DSL makes a referral, they must inform the DSLs as soon as possible.

- I. Children in need should be referred to Local Authority Children's Social Care.
- II. Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm should be referred to Local Authority Children's Social Care immediately.
- III. Allegations against anyone working at a school must be referred to the LADO within one working day in accordance with the requirements of KCSIE 2025.
- IV. If a crime may have been committed the matter should be reported to the police.

Incidents and factors occurring outside the School

29. Staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and/or can occur between children outside the School.

30. Staff and DSLs should consider the context within which such incidents/behaviour occur and consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (e.g. sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence) and whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Staff should ensure as much information as possible is provided as part of any assessment/referral.

31. The School will follow the KSCMP procedures (www.kscmp.org.uk) for supporting children who are at risk of harm as a result of their own behaviour.

Referrals and requests for support

32. It is the responsibility of the DSL to receive and collate information regarding to individual children, to make immediate and on-going assessments of potential risk and to decide actions necessary (with parents/carers in most cases). This includes the need to make referrals to partner agencies and services. To help with this decision they may choose to consult with the Area Education Safeguarding Adviser. [Children's Portal](#)

33. Issues discussed during consultations may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a child or young person and the extent to which parents/carers are made aware of these.

34. New referrals to Children's Services will be made to the KCC Integrated Service Portal (Front Door) service using the published process. These will be made with reference to the Kent Interagency Threshold Criteria for Children in Need. In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns, a telephone referral will be made prior to an online submission via the Portal. Concerns for children who are already known to Services will be passed to the allocated worker/team.

35. Parental consent is not required for referrals to statutory agencies, however in all but most exceptional circumstances, parents/carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child or young person at the earliest possible stage. In the event of a referral to Specialist Children's Services being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought unless there is a valid reason not to do so. Where any doubts exist regarding the provision of information to parents and possible additional risks for a child, advice will be obtained from children's services.

36. The role of the School in situations where there are child protection concerns is not to investigate but to RECOGNISE and REFER.

37. On occasion, staff may pass information about a child to the DSL but remain anxious about action subsequently taken. Staff should feel able to clarify with the DSL about further progress, so that they can reassure themselves the child is safe, and their welfare is being considered. If, following this process, the staff member remains concerned that appropriate action is not being taken, it is the responsibility of that staff member to seek further direct consultation from either a member of the Education Safeguarding Team or the local Specialist Children's Service Team (numbers above) who will be able to discuss the concern and advise on appropriate action to be taken. Where concerns exist regarding the conduct and behaviour of adults in the School towards children and it is felt appropriate action is not being taken staff have the right to contact the LADO direct.

38. Staff must be persistent in making referrals if they feel appropriate action is not being taken by the statutory agencies – this should be recorded.

06. What is Child Abuse

39. The NSPCC identifies, amongst others, the following as possible signs of abuse or neglect:

- i. unexplained changes in behaviour or personality,
- ii. becoming withdrawn,
- iii. seeming anxious,
- iv. becoming uncharacteristically aggressive,
- v. lacks social skills and has few friends, if any,
- vi. poor bond or relationship with a parent,
- vii. knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age,
- viii. running away or going missing,
- ix. always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

However, it must be remembered that this list is not exhaustive. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. More information can be found at: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/spotting-signs-child-abuse/>

Indicators of abuse and neglect

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

41. Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. Sometimes children are sexually abused by other children.

42. Staff and trustees at the School recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Child on Child abuse is not tolerated and will not be passed off as 'banter' or 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

43. Child on Child abuse is a safeguarding matter and will be handled in line with this policy, with due regard to our anti-bullying policy. The School educates children, in an age appropriate manner, to prevent sexting and other forms of abuse. Children in Reception to Year 6 are taught during online safety week, regular inclusion in the curriculum and focused lessons and assemblies. All children are taught to keep their personal information and photos private and that they should talk to a trusted adult or CEOP online if anything worries them. Additionally, Year 6 have more specific lessons about appropriate conduct online, including awareness of sexting, or the sharing of nude or semi nude images.

44. Physical Abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical

harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

45. Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone. Staff should be particularly attentive to children living in an environment subject to domestic abuse, even if the child is not the primary victim.

46. 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. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (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. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education. See section 'child on child/child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment'.

47. 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); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

48. Child sexual (CSE) and criminal (CCE) exploitation are both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individual or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance

and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

59. 'County Lines' is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'.

50. Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move (and store) drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

51. One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs.. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation. If you believe the child has been subject to trafficking or slavery an additional referral should be made to the National Referral Mechanism.

52. County lines exploitation can affect any child or young person, and instances of this type of exploitation have been identified in and around the local areas of West Kent.

53. Female Genital Mutilation: Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), or already having suffered FGM. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Information on the warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found in the government's 'Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines'. Whenever there are concerns about the imminent possibility that FGM is about to take place, or that it has already taken place, the School will activate local safeguarding procedures using existing protocols for liaison with police and Local Authority Children's Social Care. Up to here

54. Serious violence: All staff need to know the indicators that might signal that children are at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime. Including:

- I. unexplained gifts/new possessions – these can indicate children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs,
- II. unexplained absence from school,
- III. change in friendships/relationships with others/groups,
- IV. significant decline in performance,
- V. Signs of self-harm/significant change in wellbeing,
- VI. signs of assault/unexplained injuries.

Staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these.

55. Radicalisation and Extremism Exposes of children to extremist ideology. It can hinder their social development and educational attainment alongside posing a very real risk that they could support or partake in an act of violence. Radicalisation of young people can be compared to grooming for sexual exploitation.

56. Every member of staff at Hilden Oaks Preparatory School & Nursery recognises that preventing children being exposed to radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability and should be approached in the same way as protecting children from other risks.

57. All staff should complete an e-learning training package developed by The National Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters (NCTPHQ), in conjunction with the College of Policing which included guidance on how to identify people who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, and how to refer them into the Channel process. The DSL should also have attended additional training which includes further information to the Prevent Duty.

58. Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to:

- i. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others or;
- ii. undermine, overturn or replace the UKs system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights or;
- iii. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in 1 and 2 above.

59. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

60. There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

61. It is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the DSL making a referral to the Channel programme.

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

63. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

64. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and

into adulthood. Staff should be aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

65. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, and a DSL should be informed. A record should be made on CPOMS. Further guidance can be found in the Government guidance 'Mental health and behaviour in schools' (2018)

66. The School has a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for pupils which is available on the School website and in the policy folder on the staff computer network. The policy outlines the systems and processes for identifying possible mental health problems and how concerns should be handled.

07. Transparency

67. The School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/carers have an important role in supporting the School in this. Copies of this policy, together with our other policies relating to issues of Safeguarding are on the School website and we hope that parents and carers will always feel able to take up any issues or worries that they may have with the School. Allegations of child abuse or concerns about the welfare of any child will be dealt with consistently in accordance with this policy. Open communications are essential unless to do so would place a child at additional risk of harm.

08. Suitable People

68. Hilden Oaks Preparatory School & Nursery is committed to ensuring all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our children and have their welfare and protection as the highest priority. It is the responsibility of the trustees to ensure that effective systems are in place so that all staff and volunteers are properly checked to make sure they are safe to work with the children who attend our setting. This entails undertaking and updating the checks as specified in KCSIE 2025 and also the recent changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (EYFS Framework), which also comes into effect on 1st September 2025. These checks are recorded on the School's Single Central Register.

69. All trustees and members of the Senior Leadership Team are subject to DBS and Section 128 checks.

70. We advise all staff that they are expected to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions and warnings.

71. The School is signed up to the DBS Update Service which allows staff to keep their DBS certificates up to date and the School to check a DBS certificate.

72. We acknowledge our responsibilities under EYFS, including:

- I. In the event of disqualification, we recognise that we must not continue as an early-years provider – nor be directly concerned in the management of such provision.
- II. Where we become aware of relevant information which may lead to disqualification of an employee, we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children.

- III. We will notify Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the
- IV. suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children on the School/Nursery premises. Disqualification of an employee could be an instance of a significant event.

We will give Ofsted the following information about ourselves or an employee when relevant – including: details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from; the date of the order, determination or conviction, or the date when the other ground for disqualification arose; the body or court which made the order, determination or conviction, and the sentence (if any) imposed; and a certified copy of the relevant order (in relation to an order or conviction).

73. Further information regarding disqualification of staff can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>

09. Safer employment practices

74. The School follows the government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff who work with children and acts at all times in compliance with the Independent School Standards Regulations. At least one member of the recruitment panel involved in interviewing and appointing staff will have received Safer Recruitment training.

75. In addition to carrying out safe recruitment procedures as set out in the DfE's guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the School including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches are subject to the necessary statutory child protection checks before starting work. All trustees, volunteers, contractors working regularly during term-time, such as contract catering staff, are also subject to the relevant statutory checks. Contractors, or employees of contractors, working at the School, are subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors and contractors' employees for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken, will be supervised if they will have contact with children. Visiting speakers will be suitably and appropriately supervised whilst in School.

76. Contractors who are engaged by or on behalf of the School to undertake works on site will be made aware of this policy and the reasons for this. All contractual organisations who work with or for the School are sent a copy of this policy and the School's Code of Conduct for Staff, with a covering letter stating the safeguarding responsibilities of the School. They are required to sign and return a form in acknowledgement of their understanding and consent, and that they are willing to comply with the School's Safeguarding Policy.

77. The School will report promptly to the DBS, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. Ceasing to use a person's services includes:

- i. dismissal,
- ii. non-renewal of a fixed-term contract,
- iii. no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency,
- iv. terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee,
- v. no longer using staff employed by contractors,
- vi. no longer using volunteers,

- vii. resignation, and
- viii. voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training or volunteering.

78. Reports will include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible understanding that a failure to make a report constitutes an offence and as a consequence could lead to the School being removed from the register of independent schools. 'Compromise agreements' cannot apply in this connection as there is a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information that the School holds already.

79. The School's Safer Recruitment Policy provides full details of the School's recruitment and vetting procedures. This has been written in accordance with KCSIE 2025.

10. Induction and training

80. All School staff, both paid and voluntary, will be expected to undertake an appropriate level of safeguarding training in accordance with the requirements of KCSIE 2025, the revised Relationships, Sex and Health Education guidance published in July 2025 and local procedures. Training should ensure that the trustees and staff have an up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. This will enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. It should also include an understanding of the School's own safeguarding policy and procedures including the action to be taken in the event of inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children.

81. All staff will be trained to manage a report of child-on-child sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. The full procedure to be followed is outlined in Annex C.

82. In addition to being encouraged to report any safeguarding concerns as they arise, staff will be given the opportunity to raise safeguarding concerns at the weekly staff briefing and during any appraisal meetings with their line manager.

83. At Hilden Oaks we require all staff to read and confirm they understand Part 1 and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education. This is beyond the minimum requirement that all staff are required to read Part 1 and School leaders and those who work directly with children are additionally required to read Annex B.

84. The Trustees will ensure the DSLs attend the required DSL safeguarding training when they first take up the role and that they continue to update their knowledge on an on-going basis and at least every 2 years as required by KCSIE 2025 guidance, plus additional informal updates. All of the School's DSLs are trained to the same level.

85. The lead DSL will ensure that all new staff and volunteers (including temporary staff) are appropriately inducted in the setting's internal safeguarding procedures and communication lines. This includes provision of the School's Safeguarding Policy (which includes the safeguarding response to children missing in education); Behaviour Policy; the Staff Code of Conduct (including staff/pupil relationships, communication and social media, transportation of pupils/ students, physical contact with pupils/ students, physical restraint and reasonable force and acceptable use of technology); whistleblowing procedures; the identity of the DSL's and a copy of Part 1 and Annex B of KCSIE 2025.

86. Staff are retrained at least annually, more often as needed. Updates (through email, newsletter or staff meeting) are regularly distributed by the DSLs to keep everyone up to date with changes and advice as required. Inset days are used to provide additional training and refresher training in safeguarding, at least annually. Staff are also trained in online safety, FGM and the Prevent duty.

87. A record of staff training is maintained by the Headteacher. The School makes every effort to ensure that members of staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe, children who are looked after by a local authority. This includes ensuring that members of staff have the information from the relevant local authority, the most recent care plan, contact arrangements with parents and delegated authority to carers, and information available to the DSL.

11. Supervision, support, and appraisal

88. The trustees recognise that regular, planned and accountable supervision and appraisal offers support, and develops the knowledge, skills and values of the individual and the group or team. Its purpose is to monitor the progress of professional practice and to help staff to improve the quality of the work they do, thus improving outcomes for children as well as achieving agreed objectives. Supervision and appraisal meetings also provide an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues including the safeguarding of children and any concerns raised about an individual or colleague's practice.

89. The School will ensure that members of staff who are working within the foundation stage are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (EYFS) 2025.

12. Record Keeping

90. Staff must record any welfare concern that they have about a child on the School's CPOMS System. For the small number who do not have access to the System then the previously used safeguarding incident/concern form can still be used. (with a body map where injuries have been observed). All reports must be brought to the attention of the DSL without delay. Records must be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event and must be signed and dated.

91. Incident/concern forms are available in the staff room and on the School's staff computer network. CPOMS is available on all School computers.

92. Safeguarding records are kept separate from all other records relating to the child in the School. They are retained centrally and securely by the DSL and are shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

93. Detailed guidance on record keeping is found in a separate document "Early Years Record Keeping Guidelines" – Staff MUST familiarise themselves with the responsibilities outlined in this document.

94. Should a child be removed from the School for home schooling then the School should retain any records and will advise Children's Services.

95. Where a child leaves the School, Hilden Oaks will contact the forwarding school to ensure that the child has been enrolled and arrived safely.

13. Confidentiality and information sharing

96. We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential, but that information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse. The DSL should keep written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions, including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program. The DSL will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis. School staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children.

97. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information between professionals and other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. Further advice and the 'seven golden rules for sharing information' is available in the document 'Information Sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2024)', in chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children which includes a myth-busting guide to information sharing, and in Data protection: toolkit for school.

98. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR requires us to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information safe and secure but must not stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. The DPA 2018 contains the 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information.

99. The School can refuse to share information if a serious harm test is met. The harm test is explained on the Disclosure and Barring service website.

100. When a pupil leaves the School, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is transferred to their new school as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt is obtained. This file will be kept separately from the main pupil file. The DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school in advance of a child leaving that would allow the new school to have support in place for when the child arrives.

101. Members of staff should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils/ students or adults wishing to tell them about something serious. They should guarantee only that they will pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort out the problem and that they will not tell anyone who does not have a clear need to know. They will also take whatever steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure has been made.

102. Staff should be aware of the School's whistle-blowing procedures and share immediately any disclosure or concern that relates to a member of staff with the Headteacher, or with one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads if the Headteacher is not available. Nothing should be said to the colleague involved. It should be shared with the Chair of the Trust if it relates to the Headteacher.

14. Notifying parents/carers

103. In general, the School believe that parents should be informed about any concerns regarding their children. In general, pupils/ students should be encouraged to discuss with their parents or guardians' issues that are troubling them.

104. It is important that we are honest and open in our dealings with parents. However, concerns of a child protection nature must be referred to the DSL/Headteacher who will decide on the appropriate response. In a very few cases, it may not be right to inform parents/carers of our concerns immediately as that action could prejudice any investigation or place the child at further risk. In such cases, advice will be sought from the LADO.

15. Online safety

105. Online safety relates to the specific challenges and risks presented by new technologies, including the internet, smart phones and other devices, for children and young people as well as adults, both within and outside of School. The school recognises that such technologies can provide platforms for bullying and has measures in place to mitigate this. The School uses 'Schools Broadband' to provide its web access. This company is a specialist in technology provision to schools and has extensive safeguarding measures in place. This company is fully compliant with the directions of KCSIE 2025 (*appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks.*). The School regularly ensures that this continues to be the case.

106. The School will seek to create an appropriate balance between controlling access to the internet and technology, setting rules and boundaries and educating children, parents/carers and staff about safe and responsible use. This will include a range of practices including undertaking appropriate risk assessments of technology, ensuring there is appropriate supervision of children, ensuring appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, providing safe and suitable equipment/tools for staff and children and ensuring that there is up-to-date training/education in place for all members of the community regarding online risks and responsibilities. The additions made in KCSIE 2025 regarding Disinformation and Fake news are noted.

107. The School is aware that children and staff cannot always be prevented from being exposed to online risks and will therefore seek to empower and educate all members of the community so that they are equipped with the skills to make safe and responsible decisions as well as to feel able to report any concerns.

108. All members of staff will be made aware of the importance of good online safety practice in order to educate and protect the children in their care. Members of staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of electronic communication (e-mail; texting; social network sites) and will be informed about how to manage their own professional

reputation online in the School's Acceptable Use Policy. The School will be guided by the standards set out in The Digital and Technology Standards, The Cyber Security Standards and the recent guidance on Generative AI.

109. More detailed information can be found in the School's online safety policy which can be found on the School computer drive 'Staff Public/Policies'. A copy may be requested from the School Office.

16. Prevent strategy.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty for schools to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

- i. regularly assess the risk of our pupils/ students being drawn into terrorism,
- ii. protect pupils/ students from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies,
- iii. ensure our safeguarding policies are in line with those of the KSCMP Ensure staff have training that give them knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and ensure children are safe from accessing terrorist and extremist material when online using the internet in School.

110. The trustees and staff endeavour to adhere to the requirements set out in section 78 of the Education act 2002 and promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of our pupils/ students. Through ensuring our pupils/ students' SMSC development we are actively promoting British Values. Staff are expected to undergo training on the Prevent duty and are aware of their responsibility to challenge opinions or beliefs that are contrary to fundamental British values. The DSL should also have attended additional training which includes further information to the Prevent Duty.

17. Honour based abuse (HBA)

111. The School recognises honour-based abuse as incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and/or the community and can include multiple perpetrators.

112. If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the DSL who will activate local safeguarding procedures. Further information about HBA can be found in KCSIE 2025.

113. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): All staff are expected to complete training on this form of abuse to equip them with the understanding that FGM is a form of child abuse and how to recognise signs that it may be planned or have occurred.

114. All staff must report any concern about FGM to the DSL however since 31 October 2015 there is a specific legal duty on teachers to report to the police. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence and they should not be examining pupils/ students.

115. The teacher should personally make an oral report to the police by calling 101, the single non-emergency number. More information on how to make a report can be found in Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - Procedural Information and at the Home Office [FGM – the facts leaflet](#) Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the DSL and involve Local Authority Children’s Social Care as appropriate. The duty to report does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

18. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

116. The School recognises that children with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges, including additional barriers in recognising abuse and neglect. Staff are trained to recognise this and not assume that changes in behaviour, mood or injuries necessarily relate to the child’s disability. Children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things such as bullying or peer group isolation – without showing any outward signs. All indicators should be explored, and communication barriers will be taken into consideration and resolved in order to ensure the best interests of the child are met at all times.

19. Domestic abuse

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

117. Domestic abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This abuse can be direct or indirect (e.g. through a child) and it is noted that this definition has been changed in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Staff are to be aware of the implications of this change in definition and its potential impact on Safeguarding throughout the School’s procedures. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- i. psychological

- ii. physical
- iii. sexual
- iv. financial and;
- v. emotional

118. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at [Protecting children from domestic abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)

119. The School has signed up to Operation Encompass. This is a system that operates in the majority of police forces across England and helps police and schools to work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. When police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the DSL in School before the child or children arrive at School the following day. This ensures the School has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs.

20. Additional Safeguarding responsibilities

120. The School's curriculum and pastoral systems are designed to foster the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils/ students, to promote a positive healthy lifestyle and to build self-esteem.

121. All members of staff play a vital role in this process, helping to ensure that all pupils/ students relate well to one another and feel safe and comfortable within the School. We expect all members of staff to lead by example and to play a full part in promoting an awareness that is appropriate to their age amongst all our pupils/ students on issues relating to health, safety and well-being.

122. All members of staff, including all non-teaching staff, have an important role in insisting that pupils/ students always adhere to the standards of behaviour set out in the School's Behaviour Policy and in enforcing the School's Anti-Bullying Policy. A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern where there is a reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

123. Time is allocated in PHSCEE to discussions of what constitutes appropriate behaviour and on why bullying and lack of respect for others is never right. Assemblies, Drama and RE lessons are used to promote tolerance and mutual respect and understanding. Safeguarding, including online, is addressed via lessons in PHSCEE, as is Relationship, Sex and Health Education. In addition to this, safer use of electronic equipment and safe access to the internet is addressed in ICT lessons. The School recognises the annual SID (Safer Internet Day), providing up to date information to the wider School community.

21. Use of Personal Mobile Phone and Cameras

124. Neither members of staff nor children may use their own personal mobile devices to take photographs, including those in the EYFS setting. Staff should not carry personal mobile devices while on duty with the children. Staff working in Pre-School and Reception have a locked cupboard in which to safely store personal mobile devices.

125. Photographs of children will only be used with their parents' permission (provided in writing via consent form). When photographs of pupils/ students are published, the School will only use the child's first name with an image. The School will ensure that children are appropriately dressed in photographs that are published, and children are encouraged to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

126 Where photographs are taken by staff to give evidence of children's progress, photos can only be taken on School cameras or technology. They must then be downloaded onto School computers, where they will be stored in the media drive. Photos cannot be used or passed on outside the School, or the School's secure platform. The exception to this is the recording and production of DVDs of School plays, photos from residential trips etc. Parents are requested not to share photographic images provided by the School with any other parties or to post images of other people's children on social network sites without the permission of the relevant parent/carer. Staff may use phones in order to apply second factor authentication of devices or secure apps such as CPOMS. The phone should then be put directly away again. While off site, staff may carry use their personal mobile phone to contact the emergency services or the school as required. The phone should not be out or on view.

22. Position of trust

127. As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people in education settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and all members of staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

128. Wherever possible, staff should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.

23. Staff behaviour and code of conduct.

129. Staff are required to abide by the School's Staff Code of Conduct. This sets out how members of staff should conduct themselves as employees and around pupils/ students and includes rules on the use of technologies (the School has a separate Acceptable Use Policy and online safety Policy which provides greater detail on this, including the use of social media).

130. Members of staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse. They need to treat all pupils/ students with respect and try, as far as possible, for their own safety and protection not to be alone with a pupil or young person. Where this is not possible, for example, during an instrumental music lesson, or sports coaching lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot. The door to the room in

which 1:1 coaching, counselling or a meeting is taking place should be left open. Where this is not practicable because of the need for confidentiality, another member of staff should be close by, and a record kept of the circumstances of the meeting. All rooms that are used for the teaching or counselling of pupils/ students will have clear and unobstructed glass panels in the doors.

131. Except in cases of emergency, first aid will only be administered by qualified First Aiders. If it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for first aid treatment there will, wherever possible, be another adult present. If a child needs help with toileting, nappy changing or washing after soiling themselves, in EYFS settings, another adult would be close by.

132. All first aid treatment and non-routine changing or personal care will be recorded and shared with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. Children requiring regular medication or therapies for long term medical conditions will have appropriate Care Plans devised in agreement with the parents/carers.

133. Personal care includes helping a child with eating and drinking for reasons of illness or disability or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing for reasons of age, illness or disability.

134. Where possible, a gap or barrier should be maintained between teacher and child at all times. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. Staff should avoid taking one pupil on his/her own in a car.

135. Please refer to the School's online safety policy for details on managing relationships on social media and avoiding a 'breach of trust'.

136. It is an offence for any person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual.

24. Physical Contact with Pupils/ students

137. There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils/ students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils/ students and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils/ students or onlookers.

138. Where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, extreme caution should be used if the demonstration involves contact with pupils/ students and, wherever possible, contact should be avoided. It is acknowledged that some staff, for example, those who teach PE and Games, or who offer music tuition, will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils/ students in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement. Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

139. A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection. Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible, the DSL informed and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file.

25. Physical Restraint and Reasonable Force

140. Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself/herself or on another, and then only as a last resort when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL and/or Headteacher who will decide what to do next. Parents must be informed of the incident at the earliest opportunity. Where this relates to the School's Nursery/EYFS setting, parents will be informed of any physical restraint (including any physical intervention) used on their child the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

141. There are circumstances when it may be appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard a pupil. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or restraining a child to prevent violence or injury.

142. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils/ students or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom. Hilden Oaks refers to the Department of Education's advice 'Use of reasonable force in schools' for guidance and recognises the DfE's belief that a 'no contact' policy at a school can leave staff unable to fully support and protect its pupils/ students. The DfE encourages schools to adopt sensible policies which allow and support staff to make appropriate physical contact. The decision on whether to use reasonable force to control or restrain a child is down to the professional judgement of the staff concerned and will always depend on individual circumstances.

143. When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with SEN or disabilities or with medical conditions, Hilden Oaks will recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups and work with parents and carers to reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use reasonable force.

26. Communication with pupils/ students

144. Members of staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils/ students, nor should they communicate with them by text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the School's telephones for contacting parents/carers and email using the School system.

145. Members of staff will only use the School's digital technology resources and systems for professional purposes or for uses deemed 'reasonable' by the Headteacher and trustees.

146. Members of staff will only use the approved School email or other School approved communication systems with pupils/ students or parents/carers and will not use personal cameras (digital or otherwise) or camera phones or other mobile devices for taking and transferring images of pupils/ students or staff without permission and they will not store images at home.

147. The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a School mobile phone with him/her and may ask the pupils/ students for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The School mobile phone should be used for any contact with pupils/ students that may be necessary. The group leader will delete any record of pupils/ students' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit and should ensure that pupils/ students delete any staff numbers that they may have acquired during the trip.

27. Transporting pupils/ students

148. Staff should not give a lift in a car to a pupil alone. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. If there are exceptional circumstances that make unaccompanied transportation of pupils/ students unavoidable, the journey should be made known to a senior member of staff.

149. The School recognises the need to be alert to the risks posed by strangers or others (including the parents/carers of other pupils/ students) who may wish to harm children either in School or whilst travelling to and from School and will take all reasonable steps to lessen such risks.

28. Equal treatment

150. We are committed to equal treatment for all pupils/ students regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief. The School will carry out a thorough investigation, followed by a Trustee review and appropriate action. The School keeps a record of all racist incidents.

151. The School aims to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil. Members of staff undertake regular consultation activities with the pupils/ students e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in Anti-Bullying week and speaking to children about their experiences at lunchtime and playtimes.

29. Arrangements for Reviewing Policies

152. The trustees are responsible for reviewing and approving the School's Safeguarding Policy. There is an annual review of the Safeguarding Policy at a meeting of the Full Trust, and updates are submitted to the trustees for approval throughout the year as required.

153. The trustees recognise the expertise staff build by managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis and provide an opportunity for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements by speaking with staff directly to gather suggestions and feedback. The trustees are responsible for:

- i. annually reviewing the policy and procedures for, and the efficiency with which the child protection duties have been discharged,
- ii. ensuring that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay,
- iii. ensuring the School works with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the School's procedures or practice following a substantiated allegation against a member of staff,
- iv. ensuring the School's commitment to report promptly to the DBS, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children (please refer to section 9. Safer Employment Practices).

154. The Designated Safeguarding Trustee attends termly safeguarding review meetings with the Headteacher as Lead DSL to review any emerging, or ongoing child protection issues and themes, and to support, review and challenge the School's safeguarding practices in light of changing regulations or recommended best practice.

Contact details for DBS: Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA - Tel: 01325 953795

Contact details for Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA): TRA.Casework@education.gov.uk for teacher misconduct, qts.enquiries@education.gov.uk for general enquiries and accessibility requests, and tra.prohibition@education.gov.uk for urgent queries about checking a teacher's record or issues with [Letters of Professional Standing](#). You can also contact teaching.status@education.gov.uk if you cannot find your [Teacher Reference Number \(TRN\)](#).

Tel: 0207 593 5393 (Teacher Misconduct)

30. Complaints

155. Copies of the School's Complaints Procedure can be sent to any parent on request. Any complaint arising from the implementation of this policy will be considered under the School's Complaints Procedure.

31. Whistleblowing

156. If a teacher or member of staff has concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff towards a pupil, he/she should report it at once to the Headteacher and to the DSL who will refer the matter directly to the LADO. Where the concern relates to the Headteacher the matter should be reported to the Chair of Trustees (or the Designated Safeguarding Trustee) without informing the Headteacher. They will then refer the matter directly to the LADO. Any concern will be thoroughly investigated under the School's whistleblowing procedures. Where there are allegations of criminal activity, the statutory authorities will always be informed.

157. Wherever possible, and subject to the rights of the pupil, the member of staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No one who reports a genuine concern in good faith needs to fear retribution. The member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the circumstances justify it.

158. NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline: 0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk for staff who feel unable to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Available Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm.

PART 2. HILDEN OAKS PREPARATORY SCHOOL AND NURSERY PROCEDURES THAT SUPPORT SAFEGUARDING

01. Dealing with Allegations or Concerns About a Child

1. The School treats the safeguarding of the pupils/ students in its care as the highest priority and recognises the important role it has to play in the recognition and referral of children who may be at risk. All our members of School staff are made aware of their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the School's care. Members of staff are alerted to the potential vulnerabilities of looked after children.

2. Every member of staff, including part-time, supply, visiting, contract and volunteer staff working in School is required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to a DSL. This includes alleged abuse by one or more pupils/ students against another pupil. Where the allegation(s) concern a DSL the member of staff should report the matter to the Headteacher who will then report it to the LADO. Where the concern relates to the Headteacher the matter should be reported to the Chair of the Trust or Designated Safeguarding Trustee (without informing the Headteacher) and/or direct to the School's local authority LADO (see below).

02. What Staff Should Do if They Have Concerns About a Child

3. Step by step guidance on how to respond if a child discloses abuse is provided in Annex B.

4. If a member of staff has concerns about a child, they should act on them immediately by raising them with a DSL and completing a report on CPOMS This also includes situations of abuse which may involve members of staff. The DSL will decide whether to:

- i. manage any support for the child internally via the School's own pastoral support processes,
- ii. arrange an Early Help assessment,

- iii. make a referral to [Children's Portal](#)
- iv. contact the police, or other course of action as necessary.

5. Where there is any doubt as to the seriousness of this concern, or disagreement between the DSL and the member of staff reporting the concern the DSLs will confer and if necessary, seek professional advice.

6. It is important to note that any member of staff can refer their concerns to Local Authority Children's Social Care via the Kent County Council 'Front Door' service directly using the Kent Single Request for Support Form. This can be found on the Kent Safeguarding Children multi agency partnership website. Anyone with a concern about a child may contact the West Kent Area Safeguarding Advisor to obtain informal advice on borderline cases. Where issues are raised regarding the conduct of adults in the School towards children the LADO must be contacted. (details at the start of this policy)

7. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child an immediate referral should be made to Local Authority Children's Social Care. Anybody can make a referral. If anyone other than a DSL makes the referral they should inform a DSL as soon as possible. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving the member of staff with concerns should press for re-consideration. Such concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

8. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes: failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect, poor record keeping, failing to listen to the views of the child, failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information too slowly and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

9. Staff should not assume that a colleague or other professional will take action and/or share information that might be critical in keeping a child safe. The government has issued advice on sharing information for safeguarding purposes, which includes the seven golden rules to sharing information.

10. The parent/carer will normally be contacted before a referral is made to Local Authority Children's Social Care. However, if the DSL has reason to believe that informing the parent at this stage might compromise the safety of the child or a member of staff, nothing will be said ahead of the referral. It will then be for Children's Services to follow up the referral including the arrangements for investigation and informing parents.

11. Referrals to Local Authority Children's Social Care will be confirmed in writing, using the KSCMP Single Request for Support Form and copied to the Local Authority's (LA) Area Safeguarding Adviser. In situations where pupils/ students sustain injury or are otherwise affected by an accident or incident whilst they are the responsibility of the School, parents will be notified of this as soon as possible.

12. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, a referral to local agencies will be made within 24 hours of the safeguarding issue being raised in accordance with KSCMP procedures. The School's local authority is Kent, and Tonbridge falls into the area known as West-Kent.

13. The contact details for Kent Safeguarding Team are shown below and at the front of the Policy. Any members of staff or parent may contact the Kent Safeguarding Team.

14. Once a referral has been made to Local Authority Children's Social Care KCC should decide, within one working day of a referral being made, about the type of response that is required and should let the referrer know the outcome. This will include determining whether:

- I. the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required,
- II. whether the child is in need, and should be assessed under section 17,
- III. here is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made and the child assessed under section 47,
- IV. any services are required by the child and family and what type of services, and
- V. further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

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

16. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the DSL as required).

Supporting children who need a social worker.

17. A child may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. As a matter of routine, local authorities should share the fact that a child has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

18. Where a child needs a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

19. 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. The School has a well-established pastoral support system and any concern that a child may require mental health support should be raised accordingly through this process. If there is a concern that the mental health problem may indicate a safeguarding issue, this should be acted on immediately and referred to the DSL. A record of the referral should be made on CPOMS.

20. The School has a separate Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy which outlines how possible mental health problems are identified, how children are supported/referred and who is responsible for doing this. The policy is available on the School website and in the policy folder of the staff computer network. The School has also identified a Trustee with specific responsibility for Mental Health and Wellbeing oversight.

21. In circumstances where a child has an unexplained or suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention, the child protection referral process should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency medical assistance. If a pupil is thought to be at immediate risk because of parental violence, intoxication, substance abuse, mental illness or threats to remove the child from School during the school day, urgent police intervention must be requested. The National Police Chiefs Council has provided guidance, [when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf](#) to help DSLs understand when they should consider calling the police and what to expect if they do.

22. Where a child sustains a physical injury or is distressed as a result of reported chastisement or alleges that they have been chastised by the use of an implement or substance, this must immediately be reported for investigation.

23. Staff should not take photographs of any injuries they wish to report, instead they should complete a body map (see appendix) and record the site and severity of any injuries. By completing a body map the School is not beginning an investigation as it will follow the procedures outlined in this document with regard to referring any incident. Medical staff, GP or Emergency room staff may take photographs during the medical examination.

24. The procedure for dealing with abuse by one or more pupils/ students against another pupil when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm' is detailed below under 'Bullying/Child on Child abuse'.

03. Early Help and Looked-after Children

25. As stated in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges. Early help can also prevent further problems arising. Staff should be alert to the potential need for early help for a child and raise concerns with a DSL. A list of indicators is provided in the Appendix.

26. If early help is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to Local Authority Children's Social Care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

27. Early Help and Preventative Services in Kent use the Kent Family Support Framework (KSFS) to support families. Guidance on how to undertake an assessment for early help is provided by KELSIS at [www.kelsi.org.uk /early help](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/early-help).

28. The Early Help Preventative Services No is 03000 42 15 76

29. If at any time it is considered that the child may be a child in need or that the child has suffered significant harm or is likely to do so, a referral should be made immediately to the KCC Local Authority Children's Social Care.

30. Previously looked after children potentially remain vulnerable and the School will work with the necessary agencies and take prompt action to safeguard them. All staff, by virtue of their safeguarding training, should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. The DSL will obtain details of, and work with the local authority Personal Adviser appointed to guide and support a child who ceases to be looked after and becomes a care leaver.

04. Bullying & Child on Child Harm/Abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment)

31. Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils/ students and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the School.

32. The School has an Anti-bullying Policy which is reviewed annually. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable, and the School keeps a record of any incidents.

33. Staff recognise that children can abuse other children and that this can occur inside and outside School. All Staff are reminded 'THAT IT COULD HAPPEN HERE'. An absence of any reported cases does not mean that it is not occurring. Abuse and sexual violence or sexual harassment will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. All victims, potential victims, witness and legitimately interested parties will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support throughout.

34. Child on Child abuse can take many forms including (but not limited to)

- i. bullying (including cyberbullying),
- ii. physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- iii. sexual violence and sexual harassment,
- iv. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude/semi-nude images and videos.
- v. initiation/hazing type violence and rituals,
- vi. gender-based abuse,
- vii. upskirting.³⁶
- viii. Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent

35. The School is mindful that some potential issues may be affected by the gender, gender identity, age, ability and culture of those involved. We recognise potential gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with Child on Child abuse including but not limited to children being sexually touched/assaulted or subject to initiation/hazing type violence. The School recognises that the recent ruling by the Supreme Court on biological sex may impact this issue. and will implement the required changes as outlined in the statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex and Health Education 2025.

36. The School takes a proactive approach to minimising the risk of Child on Child abuse. As a VbE School we consistently affirm our set of twenty-two lifelong values which have been selected by pupils/ students, parents and staff. These include kindness, sharing, equality, consideration, empathy, self-control, confidence, courage, responsibility, respect and diversity. We promote these values and an anti-bullying ethos through our curriculum including, but not limited to, PSHE lessons, assemblies, anti-bullying week.

37. Upskirting is a criminal offence and typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge,, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Anyone of any gender can be a victim.

38. Victims of bullying and Child on Child abuse will always be supported by:

- I. Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL or a member of staff of their choice.
- II. Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- III. Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- IV. Providing ongoing support; this may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- V. Where necessary, working with the wider community and other organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or specialist Children's Services, or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service.

39. Perpetrators will be helped by:

- I. Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- II. Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- III. Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- IV. If online, requesting that the content be removed and reporting accounts/content to the service provider.
- V. Sanctioning, in line with the School Behaviour Policy.
- VI. Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the police or referrals to Early Help, specialist Children's Services, or the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service.

40. Staff to whom the incident is reported, should listen to pupil concerns and if appropriate, immediate medical treatment/advice should be sought. Reassure the pupil/pupils/ students that they have done the right thing by reporting their concern/s.

41. The child should be informed that a promise of confidentiality cannot be made as it is very likely that a concern will have to be shared further (with the DSL or Local Authority Children's Social Care) to discuss next steps.

42. Members of staff should refer the pupil concerned immediately to a DSL and complete a CPOMS report and, if necessary, by completing a body map also available on CPOMS. If CPOMS is unavailable then complete a Child Protection Incident/Welfare Concern Form. (Green Form).

43. The DSL will listen to the pupil and make a written record of the incident and identify evidence and seek witnesses. The DSL cannot guarantee confidentiality of information and will inform the pupil that the School will seek advice and possible intervention from inter-agency bodies and the alleged abuser.

44. Information will be reported to parents of pupils involved in such incidents.

45. In the event of disclosures about pupil on pupil abuse, it is recognised that all children involved, whether perpetrator or victim, should be treated as being 'at risk'.

46. The School recognises that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children of any age and sex. Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBTQ children are at greater risk.

47. The School will respond to incidents in line with government [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#) and Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff will be trained how to manage a report of Child on Child sexual violence or sexual harassment.

48. Staff to whom the incident is reported, should listen to pupil concerns and if appropriate, immediate medical treatment/advice should be sought. Reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing by reporting their concern/s.

49. Staff must not view or forward illegal images of a child.

50. The child should be informed that a promise of confidentiality cannot be made as it is very likely that a concern will have to be shared further (with the DSL or Local Authority Children's Social Care) to discuss next steps.

51. Members of staff should refer the pupil/s concerned immediately to a DSL using CPOMS or for those without access, a Child Protection Incident/Welfare Concern Form and, if necessary, by completing a body map (also on CPOMS).

52. Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex. The School will respond with a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports. All victims will be taken seriously, will be supported and will be kept safe. The child will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

53. Detailed guidance on how staff should respond when a child makes a report of Child on Child sexual violence or sexual harassment is provided in Annex C.

05. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of Nude/semi-nude images

54. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of Nude/semi-nude images is defined as 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' to mean the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of images sharing incidents. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'.

55. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of Nude/semi-nude images does not include the sharing of sexual photos and videos of under-18-year olds with or by adults. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police.

56. The School will respond to cases of Consensual and non-consensual sharing of Nude/semi-nude images in line with the UKCCIS "Sexting in Schools and Colleges" guidance³⁸ (and KSCMP guidance.³⁹) and Dept for Digital, Cultural Media and Sport Guidance: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people⁴⁰

57. Incidents will be recorded in the Head's online safety log.

58. All such incidents should be reported to the DSL.

What to do if an incident involving of consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude/semi-nude images comes to your attention:

- i. Report the matter to the DSL immediately.
- ii. Never view, download or share the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – this is illegal.
- iii. If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL.
- iv. Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- v. Do not ask the young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
- vi. Do not share information about the incident to other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- vii. Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- viii. Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

06. Children Missing from Education Procedures

59. The School Trustees will ensure that the School has appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place to respond to children who are absent from education particularly those who have failed to attend regularly (excluding where they were out of school and attending an approved educational activity). The School will adhere to the statutory guidance in Working Together to improve school attendance. For more details, please refer to the Schools Attendance Policy available on the website.

60. In line with statutory guidance, the School will report all instances of children missing from education to the local authority in line with their published reporting procedures. This includes any children joining or leaving the School at non-standard points.

61. The School will monitor pupils' attendance closely through the daily registers and will address poor or irregular attendance. The School will inform the local authority of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed ten school days or more without permission.

62. Primarily this is handled by the Registrar, who will liaise with a DSL, and then report the issue to the Children Missing Education Team at Kent County Council.

63. Where possible, the School will hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. Phone numbers and email addresses are kept to hand and advice is always sought if needed.

64. Where the parents/guardians of a child do not live together, both sets of parents will be informed when a child is reported absent from School (e.g. in the case of illness/holiday).

07. Actions if a child goes missing from School.

65. Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child is found to be missing, we will carry out the following actions:

- I. Check the doors, gates for signs of entry/exit.

- II. Ask all the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child.
- III. At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search the School, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, toilets where a small child might hide.
- IV. Take a register to ensure that all other children are present.
- V. Inform the Headteacher or if unavailable, the Deputy Headteacher and School Secretary
- VI. Return all other children to their classroom(s) while a search is carried out. Registers should be taken of all other children in the School.

66. If the child remains missing, the following steps will be taken:

- i. The Headteacher/DSL will contact the child's parents to confirm the child is not at home, explain the situation and the steps that have been set in motion and request they come to the School.
- ii. The DSL/Headteacher/Secretary will notify the Police.
- iii. The Headteacher will arrange for available staff to search the local area.
- iv. If the child's home is within walking distance, a member of staff will set out on foot to ascertain if the child has attempted to go home.
- v. The School will cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care
- vi. The Head will inform the Chair of Trustees

67. After the event:

- i. The DSL will inform OFSTED (if applicable) and the School's insurers.
- ii. If the child is injured, a report will be made under RIDDOR to the HSE

68. A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found will be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures will be adjusted.

08. Actions if a Child Goes Missing on an Outing

- I. Conduct an immediate head count to ensure that all the other children are present.
- II. Ask all the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child.
- III. An adult will search the immediate vicinity and inform the appropriate authority at the venue.

69. If the child is still missing, the following steps will be taken:

- I. Contact the Police and arrange a wider search using venue staff.
- II. Contact and inform the Headteacher, or if unavailable the Deputy Headteacher or other DSL and the School Secretary

70. If the child is still missing, the following steps will be taken:

- I. The Headteacher will contact the child's parents (Subject to there being no legal reason not to) to explain the situation and the steps that have been set in motion and ask them to come to the venue/ the School at once if appropriate.
- II. The remaining children will be returned to School.
- III. The School will cooperate fully with any Police investigation.

71. After the event:

- i. The DSL will inform the OFSTED (if applicable) and the School's insurers.
- ii. The Head will inform the Chair of Trustees
- iii. If the child is injured, a report will be made under RIDDOR to the HSE
- iv. The School will cooperate fully with any safeguarding investigation by Social Care

72. A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child was found would be made for the incident report. If appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

09. Actions Once the Child Is Found

- i. Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- ii. Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing.
- iii. The Headteacher will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- iv. The Headteacher will ensure a full investigation is conducted (if appropriate involving Social Services/). The School will not investigate if the School refers the issue to Social Services.
- v. Media queries should be referred to the Headteacher.
- vi. The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements.
- vii. The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the purpose of the outing, the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing and lessons for the future.

10. Child Not Collected Procedure

73. In the event that a child is not collected by an authorised adult within twenty minutes of the collection time, we will put into practice agreed procedures. These ensure the child is cared for safely by experienced and qualified members of staff who are known to the child. We will ensure the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. We inform parents/carers of our procedures so that, if they are unavoidably delayed, they will be reassured that their children will be properly cared for.

- i. If a child is not collected within 20 minutes of the agreed collection time, the School secretary (before 17.00hrs) or the most senior member of staff on the School site (after 17.00hrs) will call the contact numbers for the parent or carers.
- ii. If there is no response from the parents or carers contact numbers or the emergency numbers within an hour the Head (or most senior member of staff on site) will contact KCC Children's Social Services.
- iii. If the child is collected by a social care worker, the School staff will ensure they know the name of the person collecting and will check their identity when they arrive for the child.
- iv. Social Care will aim to find the parent or carer. If they are unable to do so they will become looked after by the local authority.

- v. Under no circumstances will staff go to look for the parent/carer, nor will they take the child home with them.
- vi. A full written report of the incident will be recorded in the child's file.

11. Disclosures/Allegations of Abuse Against Staff (Inc, Volunteers, Contractors, Trustees and third party site users).

Part 1, Allegations that may meet the Harm threshold

74. Part 1, Allegations that may meet the Harm threshold.

KCSIE 2025 has divided allegations against staff into 2 categories: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold dealt with in part of this policy, and allegations that do not meet it, dealt with in part 2 below.

Allegations of abuse may be made against a member of staff (including supply staff) a volunteer, a trustee, a pupil, parent or other person connected to the School. The School will manage cases of allegations that might indicate a person may pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity in accordance with the statutory guidance set out in KCSIE 2025. The procedure will be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) in the School has:

- i. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- ii. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child,
- iii. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, or
- iv. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

75. The detailed procedure to be followed is outlined in Part 4 of the guidance.

76. The School follows DBS guidance and procedures regarding referrals and barring decisions. The School will report to the DBS within one month of leaving the School, any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. This includes dismissal, non-renewal of a fixed term contract, no longer using a supply teacher engaged directly or supplied by an agency, terminating the placement of a trainee or volunteer, no longer using staff employed by a contractor and resignation and voluntary withdrawal by any of the above, and includes those who are paid or unpaid, have harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child, and includes anyone who would have been removed from employment had he or she not left earlier.

77. Where an allegation relates to a member of supply staff provided by an agency, the agency will be fully involved in the investigation and referral process.

78. Where a referral has been made to the DBS, it is not necessary for a referral to be made to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), as information is shared between the two bodies. Where a dismissal does not reach the threshold for DBS referral, separate consideration must be given to a TRA referral. This includes issues of professional misconduct.

79. Any pupils who are involved will receive appropriate care. If an investigation leads to the dismissal or resignation prior to dismissal of a member of teaching staff, the School will make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and a prohibition order may be appropriate (because that teacher has displayed unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence). Compromise agreements cannot apply in this connection. A referral may still be made, even where an individual refuses to co-operate with an investigation. The School will make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission whenever the Commission's guidelines deem it appropriate to do so.

80. For all cases, even where the allegation concluded to be either, unfounded, false, malicious or unsubstantiated the case manager (and if they have been involved the LADO) should consider the facts and determine whether any lessons can be learned and if improvements can be made.

Part 2, Allegations that do not meet the Harm threshold

81. Part 2, Allegations that do not meet the Harm threshold.

These allegations can be referred to as 'Low Level', they are NOT however to be regarded in anyway as insignificant. Examples of such concerns could be, but are not limited to being over friendly with children; having favourites; taking photographs of children on their mobile phone; engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language. It also includes the humiliation of pupils.

83. Hilden Oaks will ensure that it has clear and transparent guidance on low level concerns and that staff are aware of these. It will also ensure that there are mechanisms in place to bring

these concerns to light. The procedure to be followed are detailed in KCSIE 2025. We will ensure that these procedures embrace the key tenets of the guidance:

- i. Ensure staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is.
- ii. Are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others.
- iii. Staff are empowered to share any low-level safeguarding concerns as per paragraph 74 of KCSIE 2025.
- iv. Address unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage.
- v. Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised; and, helping identify any weakness in the school or colleges safeguarding system.

84. Hilden Oaks will ensure that Low Level concerns are recorded on a centralised system overseen by the Headteacher The system will be effective and ensure that no opportunity is lost to further the overall aims of Safeguarding. (as outlined in KCSIE 2025)

85. The School recognises that a concern initially thought to fall into the Low-Level category can become a part 1 allegation as new information becomes known. We will ensure that any concerns are closely supervised and subject to regular and effective review. This will include

ensuring that the guidance around what concerns should not be disclosed in staff references is followed as outlined in KCSIE 2025.

12.12 Body Map Guidance for Schools

Body Maps should be used to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries.

These are now integrated with CPOMS system. A physical copy is included below for reference an emergency use should CPOMS be temporarily unavailable.

Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment.

»At no time should an individual teacher/member of staff or school take photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person, the body map below should be used. Any concerns should be reported and recorded without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services, e.g. Social Care direct or child's social worker if already an open case to social care.

When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations and wounds, scalds and burns:

- I. Exact site of injury on the body, e.g. upper outer arm/left cheek.
- II. Size of injury - in appropriate centimetres or inches.
- III. Approximate shape of injury, e.g. round/square or straight line.
- IV. Colour of injury - if more than one colour, say so.
- V. Is the skin broken?
- VI. Is there any swelling at the site of the injury, or elsewhere?
- VII. Is there a scab/any blistering/any bleeding?
- VIII. Is the injury clean or is there grit/fluff etc.?
- IX. Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
- X. Does the site of the injury feel hot?
- XI. Does the child feel hot?
- XII. Does the child feel pain?
- XIII. Has the child's body shape changed/are they holding themselves differently?

importantly the date and time of the recording must be stated as well as the name and designation of the person making the record. Add any further comments as required.

Ensure First Aid is provided where required and record.

A copy of the body map should be kept in the child's concern/confidential file.

Adapted by Vicki Maybin Safeguarding Advisor for Education

BODYMAP

(This must be completed at time of observation)

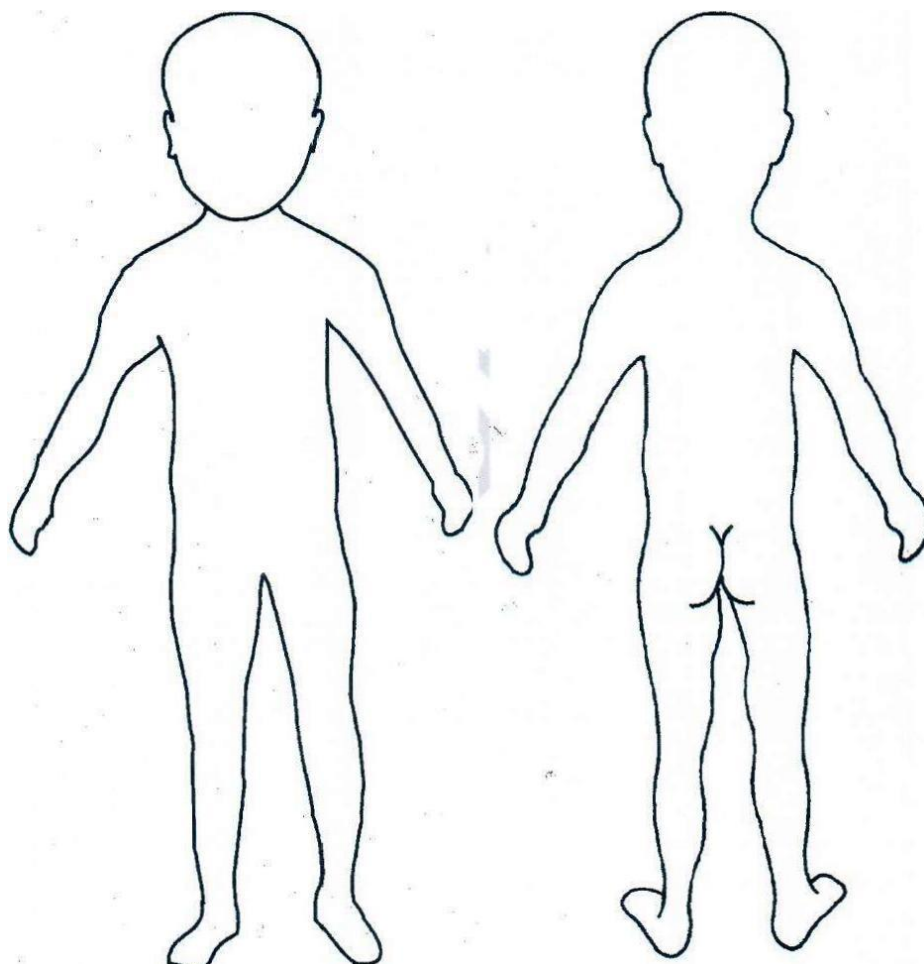
Name of Pupil: Date of

Birth:

Name of Staff: Job title:

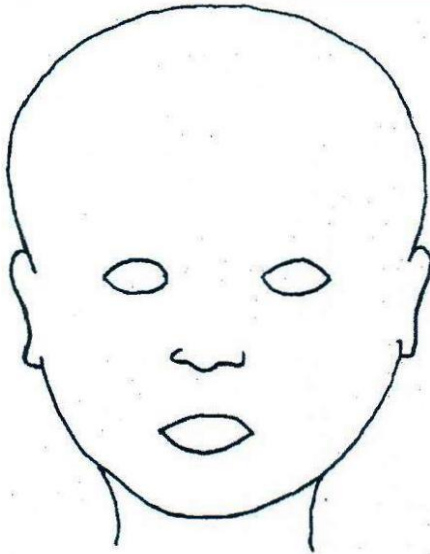
Date and time of

observation:

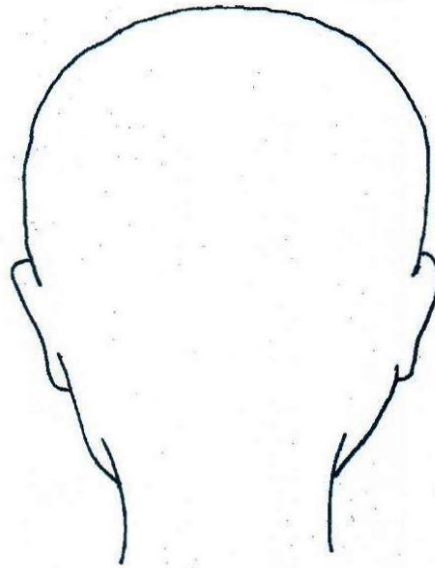


Name of pupil: _____

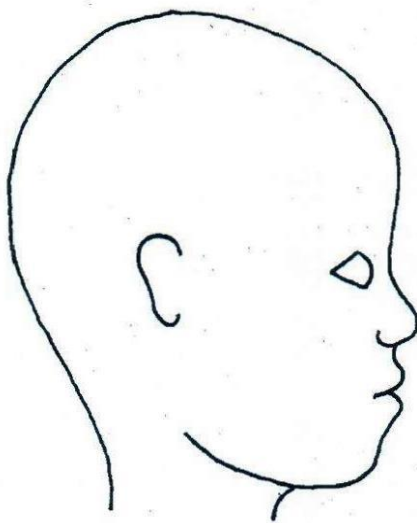
Date and time of observation: _____



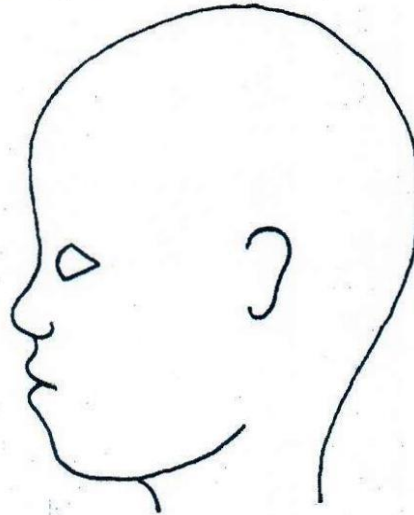
FRONT



BACK

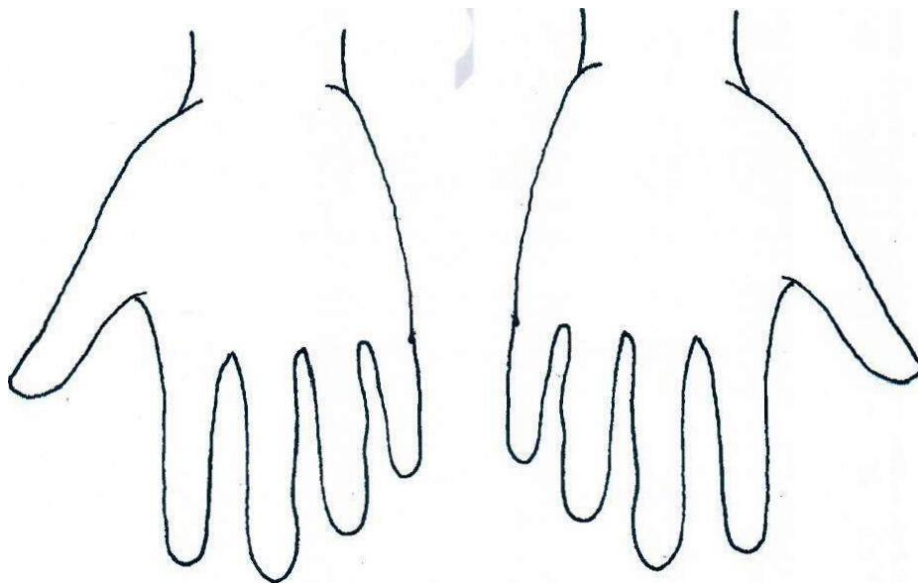
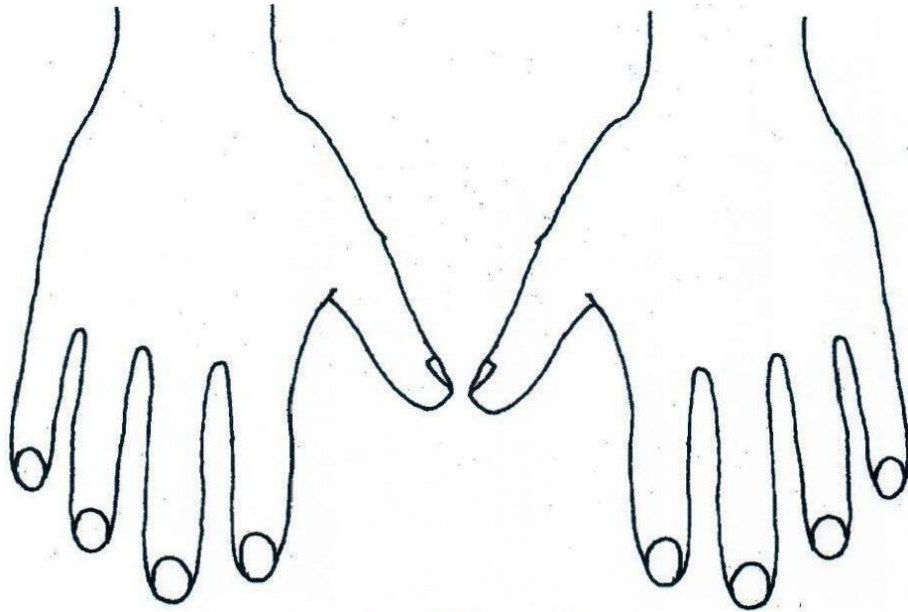


RIGHT



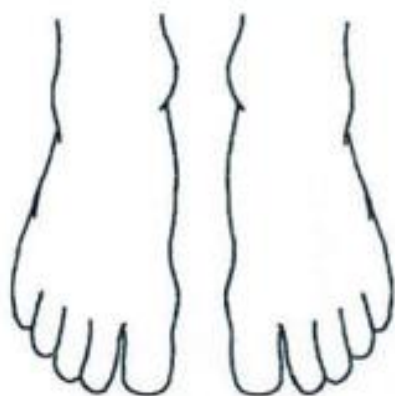
LEFT

Adapted by Vicki Maybin Safeguarding Advisor for Education



Name of Pupil: _____

Date and time of observation: _____



R TOP L



R BOTTOM L



R INNER L



R OUTER L

Printed Name,
Signature and Job
title of staff:

Adapted by Vicki Maybin Safeguarding Advisor for Education



Child Protection Incident / Welfare Concern Form

Pupil Name:	Date of Birth:
Year Group:	
Name and position of person completing form (please print):	
Time and date of incident causing concern 24:00 dd/mm/yy:	
Incident or concern (who, what, when, where, how):	
Please use continuation sheet if required.	
Other relevant information (witnesses, immediate action taken etc):	
Action taken:	
Reporting staff signature date	
DSL response/action taken	

DSL signature..... date

Child Protection Incident / Welfare Concern Continuation Sheet

Incident / concern / other relevant information:

Pupil Name:	Date of Birth:
	Year Group:

Time and date of incident causing concern 24:00 dd/mm/yy:

Date:	Details:
-------	----------

--	--

Reporting staff signaturedate
DSL signature..... date

APPENDIX

01. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Part 1 and Annex B

It is mandatory for all staff to read AND UNDERSTAND Part 1 and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and these documents therefore form part of the School's own safeguarding policy.

The documents can be accessed in the staffroom (printed copy), on the School website, on the

staff School computer drive or via this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Annex B provides further safeguarding information on a wide range of topics including:

- I. Child abduction and community safety incidents
- II. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- III. County lines
- IV. Children and the court system
- V. Children who are absent from education
- VI. Children with family members in prison
- VII. Cybercrime
- VIII. Domestic abuse
- IX. Homelessness
- X. Mental health
- XI. Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- XII. Preventing radicalisation
- XIII. The Prevent duty
- XIV. Channel
- XV. Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- XVI. Serious Violence
So-called 'honour'-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced
- XVII. Marriage)
- XVIII. FGM
- XIX. FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers
- XX. Forced marriage
- XXI. Additional advice and support

FURTHER SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

02. Signs of abuse

1. Abused children may be afraid to tell anybody about the abuse. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion – particularly if the abuser is a parent, carer or other close family member or friend. Anyone working with children or young people needs to be vigilant to the signs listed below.

2. Whilst these signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused, they probably indicate that the child or family is having some problems which should be investigated.

- I. Regularly experiencing nightmares or sleeping problems.
- II. Changes in personality.
- III. Outbursts of anger.
- IV. Changes in eating habits.
- V. Showing an inexplicable fear of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people.
- VI. Self-harming (includes head banging, scratching, cutting).
- VII. Not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries.
- VIII. Showing violence to animals, toys, peers or adults.
- IX. Knowledge of "adult issues" e.g. alcohol, drugs, sexual behaviour.
- X. Lacking in confidence or often wary/anxious.
- XI. Regressing to the behaviour of younger children.
- XII. Regular flinching in response to sudden but harmless actions, e.g. someone raising a hand quickly.

3. Whether or not a child's behaviour or appearance is concerning depends on their age or stage of development. Below are signs of potential abuse to look out for in children of specific age groups. Remember that children with learning difficulties, physical disabilities or health-related issues may be at a different developmental stage to most of their peers. However, children who have experienced abuse or neglect from a young age may also display developmental delays compared to children their own age. In such cases, the lack of a clear medical explanation for these delays may be an indicator of abuse.

Infancy to preschool

- I. Doesn't cry or respond to parent's presence or absence from an early age (usually because they have learnt that their parent will not respond to their distress, this is known as a lack of attachment).
- II. Late in reaching developmental milestones such as learning to speak, with no medical reason.
- III. Acting out excessive violence with other children.
- IV. Significantly underweight but eats well when given food.
- V. Talks of being left home alone or with strangers.

Middle childhood

- I. Talks of being left home alone or with strangers.
- II. Lacks social skills and has few if any friends.
- III. Shows lack of attachment to a parent.
- IV. Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information.
- V. Acting out excessive violence with other children.

School age (5 to 11 years)

- I. Reluctant to go home after school.
- II. Unable to bring friends home or reluctant for professionals to visit the family home.
- III. Poor school attendance and punctuality, or late being picked up.
- IV. Parents show little interest in child's performance and behaviour at school.
- V. Parents are dismissive and non-responsive to professional concerns.

- VI. Is reluctant to get changed for PE etc.
- VII. Wets or soils the bed.
- VIII. Acting out excessive violence with other children.

Physical Abuse

4. It is normal for children to have cuts and bruises on their bodies caused by accidents which happen whilst they are moving about and/or playing. These are marks that have an acceptable and reasonable explanation.

5. Marks or injuries which do not have an acceptable explanation may indicate that a child has been abused. This may include:

- I. Bruising
- II. Bruises on the cheeks, ears, palms, arms and feet.
- III. Bruises on the back, buttocks, tummy, hips and backs of legs.
- IV. Multiple bruises in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs.
- V. Bruising which looks like it has been caused by fingers, a hand, or an object i.e. belt, shoe etc.
- VI. Large oval shaped bite marks.

6. Burns or scalds.

- I. Any burns which have a clear shape of an object, e.g. cigarette burns.
- II. Burns to the backs of hands, feet, legs, genitals, or buttocks.

7. Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (i.e. bruising, fractures) inflicted at different times. It is particularly concerning if parents/carers are unable to explain these injuries and it is not clear whether they took the child to receive medical treatment at the time of the injury.

8. Be vigilant to possible abuse if a child is frequently described as ill by their parent but does not have any symptoms which are obvious to others. In addition, the parent will be unable to provide details of a medical diagnosis for the child's apparent condition.

9. There are other signs and indicators of abuse that are age specific.

10. Infancy to pre-school

- I. Unexplained head injuries to a baby.
- II. Bruises on babies who are not yet crawling or walking.
- III. Acting out excessive violence either with toys or peers.

Sexual Abuse

11. It is normal for children to show signs of sexual behaviour at each stage in their development. Children also develop at different rates, and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Behaviours which might be concerning depend on the child's age and the situation.

12. 'Normal' sexual behaviour in children:

Infancy to pre-school

- I. Kisses and hugs others.
- II. Is curious about and looks at other's private body parts; has limited understanding of privacy needs.
- III. Talks about private body parts.
- IV. Uses words such as 'poo', 'bum' and 'willy' freely.
- V. Plays 'house' or 'doctor' games.
- VI. Shows, touches, or rubs own genitals, or masturbates as a 'comfort' habit.

Middle childhood

- I. Kisses and hugs others.
- II. Displays an interest in others' private body parts but is aware of the need for privacy.
- III. Talks about and occasionally shows private body parts to others.
- IV. Uses words such as 'poo', 'bum' and 'willy' freely and delights in being 'shocking'.
- V. Sometimes uses swear words and/or 'sex' words copied from others.
- VI. Plays 'house' or 'doctor' games.
- VII. Sometimes touches or rubs own genitals or masturbates as a comfort habit.

Pre-adolescent children (aged 10 to 11 years)

- I. Kisses, hugs, and may 'date' others.
- II. Is interested in others' private body parts and in the changes occurring in puberty, is aware of the need for privacy.
- III. May ask questions about relationships and sexual behaviour.
- IV. May look at sexual pictures including internet images.
- V. Masturbates in private.

13. The following are age-specific signs and indicators of sexual abuse:

Infancy to pre-school

- I. Talking about sexual acts or using sexually explicit language.
- II. Having sexual contact with other children.
- III. Using toys or other objects in a sexual way.
- IV. Becoming withdrawn or very clingy.
- V. Physical signs such as anal or vaginal soreness or an unusual discharge.

Middle childhood

- I. Masturbating in public.
- II. Showing adult-like sexual behaviour or knowledge.
- III. Using toys or other objects in a sexual way.
- IV. Becoming withdrawn or very clingy.
- V. Physical signs such as anal or vaginal soreness or an unusual discharge.

A useful resource to help understand normal sexual behaviours in children is the Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool.⁴⁴

Neglect

14. It is important to remember that some children are very picky eaters whilst others may refuse to wear a coat regardless of how cold it is outside. A child may also appear to be underweight, but is, in fact, naturally thin.

15. Some of the most obvious signs of neglect (e.g. children being thin, dirty or not wearing a coat) are not in themselves indicators of abuse. However, if, over time, it is clear that a child is not receiving an adequate level of care and supervision appropriate to their age, it may indicate that the child is being neglected. The following are general and age-specific signs of neglect.

16. General signs of neglect for children of all age groups:

- I. Medical needs are not being met not being registered with a G.P.; not being taken to the dentist despite having obvious dental problems; failing to ensure that the School has a child's medication, e.g. asthma inhalers.
- II. Not taking the child to see a doctor when they are ill or have been injured.

17. There are other signs and indicators of neglect that are age specific.

Infancy to pre-school

- I. Frequent and untreated nappy rash.
- II. Child has numerous accidental injuries and the explanations given suggest a lack of supervision.
- III. Immunisations are not up to date.
- IV. Child is significantly underweight but eats well when observed.

Middle childhood

- I. Child has poor school attendance and punctuality and is often picked up late at the end of the day.
- II. A child is frequently tired at school due to a lack of routine at home (e.g. regular bedtimes).
- III. Parents are unsupportive and uninterested in the child's education or behaviour.
- IV. A child frequently appears to be hungry and does not have a packed lunch or money to buy food.

Emotional Abuse

18. It is important to remember that some children are naturally open and affectionate whilst others are quieter and more self-contained. Children also develop at different rates from one another, and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child.

19. The following signs may indicate emotional abuse for children of all age groups:

- I. Inappropriate knowledge of 'adult' matters such as sex, alcohol and drugs
- II. Extreme emotional outbursts
- III. Regularly experiencing nightmares or sleep difficulties.

20. There are other signs and indicators of emotional abuse that are age specific.

Infancy to pre-school

- I. Over-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long.
- II. Lacks confidence and is often wary or anxious.
- III. Displays lack of attachment to parent, e.g. when being taken to or collected from nursery, etc.
- IV. Is frequently aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Middle childhood

- I. Frequently soils the bed.
- II. Language and behaviour are not socially appropriate.
- III. Struggles to control strong emotions.
- IV. Shows lack of attachment to a parent.
- V. Lacks social skills and has few if any friends.
- VI. Self-harms, e.g. scratching, head banging.

21. A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. It is also possible that a child may not show any outward signs of abuse and hide what is happening to him/her from everyone.

03. Early Help

22. Some children may be at increased risk of significant harm as a result of neglect and/or physical, sexual or emotional abuse and therefore require early help. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse happens, or who have a high level of tolerance in respect of neglect.

23. The School recognises that any child may benefit from early help, but to ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration and attention to children who are:

- I. disabled and have specific additional needs.
- II. have special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- III. young carers
- IV. showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- V. frequently missing/go missing from care, from home or Education.
- VI. misusing drugs or alcohol
- VII. involved directly or indirectly, or at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, exploitation or prostitution.
- VIII. in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the children, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.
- IX. asylum seekers
- X. living away from home
- XI. vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying.
- XII. living in temporary accommodation· living transient lifestyles

- XIII. living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations
- XIV. vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- XV. do not have English as a first language.
- XVI. 'Looked After' Children (LACs) or children in care. This includes those who are subject to a care order or temporarily classed as looked after on a planned basis for short breaks or respite care.
- XVII. Have returned home to their family from care.
- XVIII. being privately fostered
- XIX. showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect and/or exploitation
- XX. at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- XXI. experienced multiple suspensions, are at risk of being permanently excluded from schools/colleges or are in alternative provision or Pupil Referral units.

24. Special consideration and attention include the provision of safeguarding information, resources and support services in community languages and accessible formats. It may also include, as necessary, the appointment of an appropriately trained and informed teacher to promote the educational achievement of any child who is 'looked after' or who is otherwise considered in need of such support. Where a member of staff is placed in a position of working with a 'looked after' child, they will be provided with all necessary information, including: the information taken from the relevant local authority, the most recent care plan/s, contact arrangements with parents or those with parental responsibility, care arrangements and delegated authority to carers and information available to the DSL.

25. A DSL will act as the 'lead practitioner' to undertake an assessment, provide help to the child and family, act as advocate on their behalf and co-ordinate the delivery of support services. A GP, family support worker, school nurse, health visitor and/or SEND Co-ordinator could also undertake the assessment.

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

27. The consent of parents is always required with regards to the development of a Family Support Framework or TAC. In cases where consent is not given for an early help assessment. The DSL (or other lead practitioner) should consider how the needs of the child might be met.

04. Children and the court system

28. Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. An age appropriate guide to support children is <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds>

29. For children, whose parents are separating, making child arrangements via the family courts can be stressful. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service.

[Making child arrangements if you divorce or separate: Making child arrangements - GOV.UK](#)

