THE LATYMER SCHOOL

Founded 1624

THE LATYMER SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING POLICY (INCORPORATING CHILD PROTECTION)

STATUTORY

Statutory Policy Review by	Pupils and Personnel Committee,
Policy adopted	Full Governors' Meeting,
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1. Purpose and Aims

1.1 Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is to ensure that every child who is a registered pupil at The Latymer School is safe, protected from harm, and able to achieve their full potential.

This policy provides clear direction to staff, governors, volunteers, visitors and parents regarding the school's legal responsibilities and expectations in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It ensures that all members of the school community understand their role in identifying concerns, responding appropriately, and contributing to a safe environment.

The school fully recognises the important role it plays in protecting children from harm and in supporting their welfare, wellbeing and development.

1.2 Aims

The school will ensure that it fulfils its safeguarding and child protection responsibilities by:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether this occurs 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
- taking action to enable all children to achieve the best possible outcomes and successfully transition to adulthood

The school will also:

- ensure that all staff are provided with the information, training, and guidance necessary to fulfil their statutory safeguarding responsibilities
- promote consistent and effective safeguarding practice across the school
- ensure that safeguarding procedures are clearly understood and applied by all staff
- demonstrate a clear and ongoing commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

1.3 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including:

- pupils
- teaching and non-teaching staff
- governors
- volunteers
- visitors
- contractors and those working on site

All individuals have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and must act in accordance with this policy.

1.4 A Whole-School Approach to Safeguarding

The school recognises the importance of a whole-school approach to safeguarding. Safeguarding is not viewed as a discrete set of procedures but is embedded across all aspects of school life.

This includes:

- policies and procedures
- curriculum provision
- behaviour and pastoral systems
- staff conduct and professional practice
- leadership and governance

The school promotes a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff understand that they must actively contribute to safeguarding and protecting the physical and mental wellbeing of children.

Safeguarding practice within the school is underpinned by the key principles of:

- prevention
- protection
- support

These principles ensure that children are safeguarded from harm, that concerns are identified and addressed promptly, and that appropriate support is provided to meet individual needs.

2. Safeguarding Ethos and Culture

2.1 The Welfare of the Child is Paramount

This school recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount. All decisions taken by staff, governors, and leaders will be underpinned by a clear commitment to always act in the best interests of the child. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, and all staff understand that they have a crucial role in identifying concerns early, taking appropriate action, and supporting children to receive the right help at the right time.

Safeguarding is not confined to protecting children from abuse alone. It also includes preventing impairment to children's mental and physical health or development, ensuring that children grow up in safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best possible outcomes.

2.2 A Child-Centered Approach

The school operates a child-centered approach to safeguarding. Staff are expected to consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child and to ensure that their actions reflect this.

The school recognises that:

- Children may not always be ready or able to communicate concerns directly
- Children may not recognise that they are experiencing abuse or harm

- Barriers to communication may exist, including disability, language, emotional vulnerability, or fear

Staff will therefore:

- exercise professional curiosity
- build trusted relationships with pupils
- remain vigilant to changes in behaviour, presentation, and circumstances

The views, wishes, and feelings of children will always be taken seriously. Where appropriate, children will be supported to contribute to decisions that affect them, and their voices will be central to safeguarding processes.

2.3 Safeguarding Culture and Vigilance

The school is committed to maintaining a strong culture of safeguarding in which:

- Safeguarding is embedded into daily practice
- concerns are identified early and acted upon promptly
- staff maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"
- no concern is considered too small to report

All staff understand that safeguarding issues are often complex and may overlap. The school promotes:

- vigilance
- professional challenge
- timely information sharing

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is prioritised across all aspects of school life, including:

- behaviour systems
- pastoral care
- curriculum delivery
- staff development

There is a clear expectation that all staff will act immediately on any concern and will not assume that others will take action.

2.4 Listening to and Acting Upon the Views of Children

The school places strong emphasis on listening to children and ensuring that they feel heard, supported, and safe.

Children are actively encouraged to:

- share their concerns
- report worries about themselves or others

- seek help from trusted adults

The school ensures that:

- systems for reporting concerns are well promoted, accessible, and understood by pupils
- children know who they can talk to and how to get help
- any disclosure or concern is taken seriously and responded to appropriately

When determining actions, the school will:

- take into account the wishes and feelings of the child
- balance these with the need to protect the child from harm
- ensure that decisions are clearly explained to the child where appropriate

Children will never be made to feel that they are creating a problem by reporting concerns and will always be reassured that they are being taken seriously.

2.5 A Whole-School Approach to Safeguarding

Safeguarding is embedded within a whole-school approach. This means that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of all policies, processes, and practice.

The school ensures that:

- Safeguarding responsibilities are clearly understood by all staff
- systems and procedures are transparent, effective, and consistently applied
- safeguarding is integrated into curriculum provision, particularly through RSHE and the pastoral programme
- pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online

The school promotes a culture of:

- openness
- trust
- accountability

where:

- staff feel confident to raise concerns about pupils or practice
- pupils feel safe to report concerns
- leaders respond to concerns promptly and effectively

2.6 Equality Statement

At The Latymer School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers. We aim to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

We carefully consider and analyse the impact of our policies and practices on equality and on pupils with protected characteristics, in line with our duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

We also recognise the importance of reducing inequalities linked to socio-economic disadvantages.

2.7 Professional Responsibility and Accountability

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff understand their duty to:

- identify concerns early
- share information appropriately
- take prompt and appropriate action

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. Effective safeguarding therefore depends on collaboration and timely communication between all those working with children and their families.

Staff must:

- report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputies
- seek advice where they are unsure
- never assume that someone else will take action

The DSL (and deputies) hold responsibility for maintaining an overview of safeguarding within the school and for advising on the appropriate response to concerns. However, any member of staff may refer directly to children's social care or the police if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm.

3. Statutory Framework and Safeguarding Duties

3.1 Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023, updated 2026), and the Maintained Schools Governance Guide.

The school complies with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by the three local safeguarding partners (the local authority, integrated care board and police).

3.2 Legislation

This policy is also based on the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out requirements relating to safer recruitment and the maintenance of the Single Central Record
- The Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004, which provide the statutory framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report cases where it

appears that female genital mutilation has been carried out on a girl under the age of 18

- Statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), which sets out safeguarding responsibilities in relation to FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which relates to the disclosure of criminal convictions for those working with children
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, including the definition of regulated activity relating to children
- The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty), which places a duty on schools to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which recognises that being subjected to abuse, harassment or violence may breach a child's fundamental rights under the European Convention on Human Rights
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against individuals based on protected characteristics and requires the school to take steps to support pupils who may be at greater risk of harm
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which requires the school to have due regard to the need to:

    - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
    - advance equality of opportunity
    - foster good relations between different groups

3.3 Local Safeguarding Arrangements

The school will work in partnership with local safeguarding partners in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The safeguarding partners are:

- the local authority
- the integrated care board
- the chief officer of police

The school is aware of and follows the local safeguarding arrangements as set out by these partners and will contribute to multi-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The school will seek advice from and work in partnership with the local authority in fulfilling its safeguarding duties.

4. Safeguarding and child protection - Definition

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026), safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

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

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Governing body

The Governing Body has strategic responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and ensures that the school complies with its statutory duties in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

The Governing Body ensures that a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is in place, reviewed at least annually, and available publicly. Safeguarding is embedded across all aspects of school life, and arrangements reflect both statutory guidance and local safeguarding partner requirements.
A suitably qualified member of the senior leadership team is appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), supported by appropriately trained deputies. A named Safeguarding Governor provides oversight and works with the DSL to ensure procedures are implemented effectively.

The governing body/proprietor, in conjunction with the senior leadership team and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), will ensure that all staff read *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE), with staff who work directly with children reading at least Part One and staff who do not work directly with children also reading Part One to ensure a whole-school understanding of safeguarding responsibilities.

The Governing Body ensures that effective systems are in place for:

- staff safeguarding training
- safer recruitment
- managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- responding to children missing from education
- information sharing and multi-agency working

The Governing Body ensures that safeguarding is regularly monitored and reviewed. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item, and governors receive at least annual safeguarding reports, including information on practice, training, and areas for development. Appropriate internal assurance processes are in place, and any weaknesses are addressed without delay.

Governors undertake safeguarding training as part of their induction and on an ongoing basis. The Governing Body promotes a strong safeguarding culture and ensures that the welfare of children is central to all decision-making.

5.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of safeguarding and child protection within the school and for ensuring that the policies, procedures and systems agreed by the Governing Body are fully implemented. The Headteacher ensures that safeguarding arrangements are effective and fully embedded within the school's culture and practice.

The Headteacher ensures that:

- safeguarding and child protection are prioritised across all aspects of school life
- the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is implemented consistently and effectively

- a suitably qualified Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is appointed, supported, and provided with sufficient time, resources and training
- all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities
- concerns are identified, reported, and responded to promptly

The Headteacher ensures that effective safeguarding systems are in place, including:

- clear procedures for managing safeguarding concerns and referrals
- arrangements for managing allegations and low-level concerns
- effective record keeping and information sharing
- robust safeguarding arrangements in alternative provision and when using external services

The Headteacher promotes a strong safeguarding culture within the school, ensuring that:

- all staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- concerns are taken seriously and acted upon without delay
- children are listened to and feel safe to report concerns

The Headteacher works closely with the DSL and safeguarding partners to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities for multi-agency working and that children receive the appropriate level of support.

The Headteacher is accountable to the Governing Body for the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and will ensure that any identified weaknesses are addressed promptly.

5.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Governing Body ensures that an appropriate senior member of the school leadership team is appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and an understanding of the school's filtering and monitoring systems.

The role of the DSL is clearly set out in their job description and carries a significant level of responsibility. The DSL must have the appropriate:

- status and authority within the school
- knowledge, skills, and experience
- time, funding, training, resources, and support

to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

The DSL is responsible for:

- overseeing safeguarding and child protection arrangements within the school
- receiving, managing, and responding to safeguarding concerns
- advising and supporting staff on safeguarding matters
- liaising with children's social care, the police, and other agencies
- ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively

The school ensures that robust arrangements are in place to provide continuity of safeguarding leadership in the absence of the DSL. This includes clear systems for receiving and responding to

safeguarding concerns without delay.

The school Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will be trained to the same standard as the DSL and will support the DSL in carrying out their responsibilities.

Further detail regarding definitions and indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix 2: Types of Abuse

5.4 All Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and must act in accordance with this policy and statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

All staff must:

- recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- maintain a child-centred approach at all times
- act in the best interests of the child
- maintain an attitude that "it could happen here"

All staff are responsible for:

- being aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding risks
- recognising that safeguarding issues can occur both inside and outside of school, including online
- understanding that safeguarding concerns are often complex and may involve multiple overlapping risks

All staff must:

- identify concerns early and act without delay
- report all safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy
- record concerns accurately and in line with school procedures
- follow the school's safeguarding processes, including escalation where necessary

All staff must understand that:

- they must not assume that someone else will take action
- any member of staff can make a referral to children's social care if a child is at risk of immediate harm
- information must be shared appropriately to safeguard children, and concerns about data protection must not prevent this

All staff are expected to:

- undertake safeguarding and child protection training, including regular updates
- be aware of safeguarding policies and procedures and apply them consistently
- contribute to creating a safe environment where children feel able to report concerns

All staff should:

- exercise professional curiosity
- seek advice from the DSL or a deputy if they are unsure about a concern
- support children in accordance with safeguarding plans and processes

The school expects all staff and volunteers to promote a strong safeguarding culture by ensuring that concerns are taken seriously, acted upon promptly, and that children are listened to and supported.

6. Whole-School Safeguarding Systems and Culture

6.1 Creating a Safe Environment

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

The school adopts a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of policy, practice and decision-making. This includes creating a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and where concerns are identified and acted upon promptly.

The school ensures that:

- children feel safe, are listened to, and know how to report concerns
- all staff maintain an attitude that "it could happen here"
- safeguarding concerns are identified early and responded to appropriately
- all systems, processes and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart

Safeguarding is embedded into all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, behaviour systems, pastoral support and staff conduct, to ensure a consistently safe and supportive learning environment.

6.2 Professional Curiosity and Vigilance

All staff are expected to exercise professional curiosity and maintain a high level of vigilance in relation to safeguarding and child protection.

Staff must remain alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm and understand that safeguarding concerns are often complex, hidden, and may overlap. Children may not always be ready or able to disclose abuse.

All staff must:

- maintain an attitude that *"it could happen here"*
- identify concerns early and act without delay
- question and explore concerns where appropriate
- avoid making assumptions about a child's circumstances
- seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy if unsure

The school promotes a culture in which concerns are taken seriously, followed up, and appropriately

challenged to ensure that children receive the right support at the earliest stage.

7. Safeguarding Concerns About Adults and Staff Conduct

7.1 Low-level concerns About Staff and Adults

The school recognises the importance of identifying and responding to low-level concerns to safeguard children and maintain high standards of professional conduct.

A low-level concern is any concern, however small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including behaviour outside of work
- does not meet the harm threshold but may indicate a risk to children

All staff are expected to:

- share low-level concerns about colleagues, including self-referrals where appropriate
- report concerns promptly to the Headteacher (or appropriate senior leader)
- maintain professional boundaries and act in accordance with the staff code of conduct

The school ensures that:

- all concerns are recorded and reviewed appropriately
- patterns of behaviour are identified and addressed
- a culture of openness and accountability is maintained

- Low-level concerns are managed proportionately but taken seriously. Where concerns meet the harm threshold, they will be addressed in line with statutory procedures.

7.2 Whistleblowing

The school promotes a culture in which all staff feel able to raise concerns about safeguarding practice or the conduct of colleagues.

Whistleblowing procedures enable staff to raise concerns where they believe:

- safeguarding practice is not being followed
- children may be at risk due to unsafe practice
- concerns have not been appropriately addressed

All staff must:

- raise safeguarding concerns without delay
- follow the school's whistleblowing procedures where appropriate
- report concerns to the Headteacher or, where appropriate, to the Chair of Governors or an external authority

Staff should feel confident that:

- concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon
- they will be supported when raising concerns in good faith
- they will not suffer detriment for doing so

Where staff feel unable to raise concerns internally, they may report concerns externally in line with statutory guidance.

7.3 Managing Allegations and the Role of the LADO

The school has procedures in place for managing allegations against staff and volunteers that meet the harm threshold.

An allegation meets the harm threshold where a member of staff or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved in a way that raises concerns about their suitability to work with children

Allegations that meet the harm threshold will be referred without delay to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The Headteacher (or appropriate senior leader) will:

- consult with the LADO before taking further action
- ensure that procedures are followed in a timely and appropriate manner
- work with children's social care, the police, and other agencies where required

Where the allegation concerns the Headteacher, this must be reported to the Chair of Governors, who will liaise with the LADO.
The school will ensure that:

- children are safeguarded and their welfare remains paramount
- staff are treated fairly and in accordance with statutory guidance
- confidentiality is maintained, where appropriate

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold will be managed as low-level concerns in accordance with school procedures.

Further detail on the management of concerns about staff, including whistleblowing procedures, is provided in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) and the School's Model Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures (The Reporting of Malpractice and Improper Conduct, June 2025)[1], which the school will follow at all times.

[1] "Model Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures (The Reporting of Malpractice and Improper Conduct) (June 2025)

8. Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding issues are rarely standalone and may involve multiple overlapping risks.

8.1 Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation (Overview)

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery. Staff must recognise that children may be at risk of harm in a range of contexts, including within and outside the home, within and outside of school, and online. The exercise of professional curiosity and an understanding of what to look for are essential in enabling early identification of children who may be in need of help or protection.

Staff must understand that safeguarding concerns are rarely standalone events and cannot be defined by a single indicator or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap, and children may experience several forms of harm simultaneously.

The school recognises that children may be at risk of harm outside of their families. These risks, often referred to as extra-familial harms, can take a range of forms. Staff, and in particular the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies, will consider whether a child may be at risk of abuse or exploitation in the wider community.

These risks may include, but are not limited to:

- sexual abuse, including harassment and exploitation
- domestic abuse within a child's own relationships, including teenage relationship abuse and child to parent or care giver abuse.
- criminal exploitation, including financial exploitation
- serious youth violence
- involvement in county lines activity
- radicalisation

The school recognises that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing concerns. Children are at risk of abuse both online and offline, and in many cases harm occurs across both contexts simultaneously.

Online risks may include:

- abusive, harassing or discriminatory messages
- the non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or videos, including those created using artificial intelligence (AI) e.g. AI generated images, deepfakes , deep nudes and manipulated content)
- exposure to inappropriate or harmful content
- the sharing of abusive images or pornography

Children may also abuse other children online, and staff must be alert to these risks and respond in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

All staff must remain vigilant to these risks and understand that children may not recognise that they are experiencing harm or may be reluctant to disclose concerns.

If staff are unsure about any safeguarding concern, they must always seek advice from the

Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy without delay.

Further detail regarding definitions and indicators of abuse can be found in Appendix 1: Indicators of abuse and neglect [2].

8.2 Contextual safeguarding [3]

All staff, and particularly the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies, must consider whether children may be at risk of abuse or exploitation in contexts outside the home.

Safeguarding risks may arise from extra-familial harm, where children are exposed to risk in the community, peer groups or online. These risks may include, but are not limited to:

- sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation
- domestic abuse within intimate relationships
- criminal exploitation, including county lines and financial exploitation
- serious youth violence
- radicalisation

Staff must recognise that:

- children may be exposed to harm inside and outside the home
- risks may be present both online and offline
- safeguarding issues are often complex and may overlap

All staff must:

- remain alert to changes in behaviour or circumstances that may indicate risk
- identify concerns at an early stage
- act without delay in accordance with school procedures
- share concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy

Children's social care assessments will consider harm occurring outside the home. The school will ensure that relevant information is shared with children's social care and safeguarding partners, providing a full picture of the child's circumstances to support a coordinated and informed safeguarding response.

Safeguarding practice within the school reflects a contextual approach, recognising that effective intervention requires an understanding of the environments in which children live, learn and socialise.

Further detail regarding contextual safeguarding can be found in Appendix 3: Contextual Safeguarding [4].

[2] Appendix 1: Indicators of abuse and neglect [2].
[3] https://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/
[4] Appendix 3: Contextual Safeguarding

8.3 Children Questioning Their Gender

This section should be read in conjunction with the Equality Act 2010[5] (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), the Human Rights Act 1998[6], and statutory guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026. The school will ensure that all actions taken in relation to children questioning their gender are lawful, proportionate and grounded in its safeguarding duties. Further detailed guidance is available within KCSIE (2026), including specific expectations relating to safeguarding, decision-making and the management of risk in this area.

The school recognises that some children may question their gender or experience uncertainty about their identity. This may be a normal part of development; however, it may also be associated with vulnerability, including mental health needs, peer difficulties, social influences or wider safeguarding concerns.

The school recognises that issues relating to children questioning their gender may present safeguarding risks and must be considered within the school's safeguarding framework. Staff must ensure that this is not treated as an isolated issue and must consider the child's circumstances as a whole.

The school adopts a safeguarding-led, cautious and evidence-informed approach, in which the welfare of the child is paramount.

Vulnerability and Safeguarding Awareness

Staff must be aware that children questioning their gender may:

- be more vulnerable to bullying, harassment or social isolation
- experience anxiety, distress or other mental health needs
- be influenced by a **range of factors**, including developmental stage, peer relationships, family context and online or social influences
- be at increased risk of exploitation, including online harm

All staff must:

- respond in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental manner
- take time to listen to and understand the child's views, wishes and feelings
- exercise professional curiosity in understanding the context of the child's presentation
- report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy without delay

Safeguarding-Led and Case-by-Case Approach

Where a child expresses a wish to be supported in relation to their gender, the school will:

- adopt a case-by-case approach, based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child
- ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is involved at the earliest stage
- consider any underlying safeguarding concerns, including mental health, peer or online influences

[5] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools

[6] Different parts of the Equality Act apply to colleges that are within the "further education sector" as defined by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and colleges that are not.

- take account of a wide range of factors, including age, maturity, developmental stage, and the potential impact of any decision

The school will not make assumptions about what is in a child's best interests.

The school will not adopt a presumption that social transition is in the best interests of a child, and will not initiate any form of social transition. Any request relating to social transition will be considered with a high level of caution, safeguarding oversight and professional judgement.

Names and Pronouns

Where a child requests to be known by a different name or pronoun:

- this will be considered on a case-by-case basis
- decisions will be grounded in safeguarding considerations and the child's best interests
- the impact on the child, staff and other pupils will be considered, including the safety, privacy, dignity and rights of all pupils

The school will:

- avoid making immediate or blanket changes
- ensure that any decision is carefully considered, clearly recorded and regularly reviewed
- ensure that staff are clear on expectations where arrangements are agreed

The use of names and pronouns will not be treated as a purely administrative matter and will be considered within the wider safeguarding context.

Involvement of Parents and Carers

In the vast majority of cases, parents and carers will be:

- informed at an early stage
- involved in discussions and decision-making
- supported to engage with the school in the best interests of the child

Where informing parents or carers may place the child at risk of harm:

- the DSL will seek advice from children's social care or safeguarding partners
- decisions will be made in line with safeguarding procedures

Decision-Making, Recording and Review

The school recognises that this is a complex and evolving area, and that staff do not hold clinical expertise.

The school will therefore:

- seek advice from appropriate professionals where required
- ensure that decisions are proportionate, evidence-informed and safeguarding-led

All decisions will:

- be clearly recorded, including the rationale for decisions
- be kept under regular review, recognising that a child's needs may change over time
- consider both the individual child's needs and the impact on others, including the safety, privacy, dignity and rights of all pupils

Safeguarding in Relation to Facilities and School Life

Safeguarding considerations will be central to decisions relating to access to facilities, participation, and school provision.

In line with the school's responsibility to maintain the highest standards of safeguarding for the children and young people in its care, and in accordance with the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the school will ensure that:

- pupils are not permitted to access toilets, changing rooms, or residential or boarding accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex
- where single-sex arrangements are in place for safeguarding or safety reasons, these will be maintained and will not be subject to exceptions
- where participation in single-sex sport is necessary for safety or fairness, pupils will not participate in sports designated for the opposite biological sex

These arrangements form part of the school's safeguarding duties and are designed to maintain the safety, privacy, dignity and rights of all pupils.

Toilets

The school will:

- maintain appropriate single-sex toilet provision in line with safeguarding and legal duties
- not permit access to toilets designated for the opposite biological sex

Where a child is unable or unwilling to use these facilities:

- the school may offer alternative arrangements, such as access to a single-occupancy or private facility
- any alternative provision must:
    - not compromise the safety, privacy, dignity or rights of any pupil
    - be risk-assessed and regularly reviewed

Changing Rooms

The school will ensure that:

- pupils are not required or permitted to undress in front of pupils of the opposite biological sex
- access to changing rooms reflects safeguarding requirements

Where necessary:

- alternative changing arrangements may be provided (e.g. separate space or different time use)
- such arrangements must:
    - be safeguarding-led
    - preserve safety, privacy, dignity and rights of all pupils
    - not create additional risk to the child or others

Residential Visits and Trips

Residential visits require careful safeguarding planning.

The school will:

- conduct a specific risk assessment in advance of the visit
- ensure that sleeping arrangements, supervision and facilities are safeguarding-led
- not place pupils in situations where:
    - privacy, safety, dignity or rights may be compromised
    - they are expected to share sleeping or washing facilities inappropriately

Where required:

- individual arrangements will be made (e.g. separate accommodation or facilities)
- decisions will:
    - involve the DSL
    - be clearly recorded
    - be communicated appropriately to relevant staff

Risk Management and Safeguarding Oversight

The school will be particularly mindful of situations where:

- a child's biological sex is not known to all staff
- information is being withheld or managed in a way that could create risk
- there are overlapping safeguarding concerns

In such cases:

- the DSL will ensure that risks are identified, assessed and managed appropriately
- information will be shared on a need-to-know basis to safeguard the child

School Culture and Behaviour

The school is committed to maintaining an environment in which:

- all pupils are treated with dignity and respect
- bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated

- safeguarding concerns are identified and addressed promptly

All staff must:

- challenge inappropriate language or behaviour
- reinforce clear expectations of respect
- respond to concerns in line with safeguarding procedures

8.4 Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

Some children may be at greater risk of harm due to their individual circumstances, needs or experiences. Staff must be aware of these factors and recognise that they can increase a child's vulnerability to abuse, neglect or exploitation.

All staff should be alert to the potential need for additional support for a child who:

- has special educational needs or disabilities
- has mental health needs (mental health problems may, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has experienced abuse, neglect or exploitation)
- is a child who has or has had a social worker and may be at greater risk of harm
- is a young carer
- is pregnant or a young parent
- has experienced family difficulties, including domestic abuse, substance misuse or parental offending
- is at risk of or experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation
- is at risk of radicalisation or criminal or sexual exploitation
- is missing or frequently absent from education, including a child who has a part-time timetable
- is persistently absent from education or has patterns of absence which may indicate safeguarding concerns
- has experienced suspension, exclusion or disrupted education (including repeated removal from class)
- is displaying early signs of harmful or abusive behaviour

The school recognises that children who have or have had a social worker may be at increased risk of harm and may continue to experience vulnerabilities even when statutory intervention has ended. These children will be given additional consideration through safeguarding systems, including the monitoring of attendance, engagement and progress, and through the provision of appropriate academic and pastoral support to promote positive educational outcomes.

Safeguarding risks may arise from extra-familial harm, including peer, community and online contexts. Risks are often complex and may overlap. Children may be exposed to harm both inside and outside the home.

All staff must:

- identify concerns at the earliest stage
- act without delay in accordance with school procedures
- share concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy
- avoid making assumptions about a child's circumstances

The school will ensure that appropriate support is provided through early help, internal safeguarding processes and referral to external agencies where required. Staff must understand that no single practitioner will have a full picture of a child's needs, and effective safeguarding requires information sharing and multi-agency working.

Further detailed information on specific safeguarding issues is provided in Appendix 11, aligned with Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

9. What Staff Must Do If They Have a Concern

9.1 Staff Vigilance and Immediate Action

All staff must maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" in relation to safeguarding.

When there are concerns about the welfare of a child, staff must act at all times in the best interests of the child.

Staff must be alert to any concerns, act upon concerns immediately and without delay, and follow the school's safeguarding procedures when responding to concerns. No concern should be ignored or assumed to be addressed by others. Prompt action is essential to ensure that children receive the support and protection they require at the earliest possible stage.

If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, or if a concern requires an immediate response, staff must speak directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, a deputy or a member of the Child Protection Team[7] without delay.

Where there is a risk of immediate harm, staff must take appropriate action in accordance with school procedures. This may include contacting emergency services or making a referral to local authority children's social care. This must not be delayed by the unavailability of the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy. Any action taken must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy as soon as possible.

The concern must then be recorded on MyConcern[8] as soon as possible.

9.2 Responding to a Disclosure and Reporting Concerns

If a member of staff has a concern about a child's welfare, including where a child makes a disclosure, they must follow the school's child protection procedures and report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy, or a member of the Child Protection Team without delay. Concerns must always be acted upon immediately. Early information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding.

- The role of staff is to listen, record and report, not to investigate.
- Safeguarding decisions must always be made in the best interests of the child.
- Staff must respond to disclosures in a calm and supportive manner.
- The priority is to listen, reassure and take appropriate action in line with school procedures.

[7] Appendix 6: The Latymer School Safeguarding/Child Protection Team
[8] Appendix 7: MyConcern

Responding to a Disclosure

Staff must:

- listen carefully and allow the child to speak at their own pace
- take what the child says seriously
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing in speaking to an adult
- remain calm and avoid showing shock or disbelief
- use simple, open prompts where clarification is necessary
- explain that information will need to be shared with appropriate people to keep them safe (a need-to-know basis)

Staff must not:

- promise confidentiality or agree to keep secrets
- ask leading or suggestive questions
- interrupt or prevent the child from speaking
- investigate the concern or make assumptions
- express judgement about the child or others involved

Further detail regarding what actions should be taken when there are concerns about a child can be found in Appendix 5: Flowchart setting out the actions taken where there are concerns[9].

9.3 Reporting Concerns

Following a disclosure or where a concern arises, all staff must follow the school's safeguarding procedures and act without delay.

Safeguarding concerns may vary in level and urgency. Staff must use their professional judgement, recognising that all concerns must be taken seriously and acted upon in the best interests of the child.

Further guidance on the use of the school's recording system, including MyConcern, is provided in Appendix 7: 'MyConcern'[10].

a. Immediate danger or risk of harm:

If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, or if a concern requires an immediate response, staff must:

- speak directly in person to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, a deputy or a member of the Child Protection Team without delay
- take immediate action in accordance with school procedures where necessary, which may include contacting emergency services or local authority children's social care
- record the concern on MyConcern as soon as possible afterwards

[9] Appendix 5: Flowchart setting out the actions taken where there are concerns.
[10] Appendix 7: 'MyConcern'

b. Emerging or lower-level concerns:

Where a concern does not require an immediate response but indicates that a child may be in need of support or early help, staff must:

- record the concern on MyConcern as soon as possible
- follow the school's safeguarding procedures at all times
- not assume that another member of staff or professional will take action
- ensure that concerns are shared at an early stage where this is critical to safeguarding a child

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy, or a member of the Child Protection Team, should be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. In exceptional circumstances where they are unavailable, this must not delay appropriate action. Staff must seek advice from a member of the senior leadership team or, where necessary, local authority children's social care. Any action taken must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy as soon as possible.

9.4 Recording concerns

All concerns must be recorded on MyConcern as soon as possible. Staff must ensure that records are completed promptly and accurately, use the child's own words wherever possible, and clearly distinguish between fact, observation and professional opinion. Records must include the date, time and context of the disclosure, any questions asked and responses given, and details of actions taken. Staff must not delay recording or amend records once submitted.

Information Sharing:

Effective safeguarding relies on timely and appropriate information sharing. Staff must understand that early sharing of information supports accurate assessment and the provision of appropriate support. Information shared should be relevant, necessary, accurate, appropriately contextualised, and proportionate to the identified need or concern. Data protection must not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of safeguarding children. Where there is any doubt, staff must seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy. Concerns about sharing information must not override the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

10. Levels of Need and Early Help / Family Help

Family Help (also referred to as Early Help within statutory guidance) involves providing support as soon as a problem emerges.

10.1 Early Identification and Intervention

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from Family Help. Family Help involves providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any stage of a child's life, from early years through to adolescence. Early identification is essential to ensure that children receive the right help at the right time.

Staff must be aware that:

- children may need help at any stage
- concerns may arise from a range of factors affecting a child's welfare, development or

circumstances
- early intervention can prevent concerns from escalating into more significant safeguarding risks

All staff must:

- be alert to indicators that a child may benefit from support
- act on concerns without delay
- share information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy

Staff must recognise that no single practitioner will have a full picture of a child's needs. Effective safeguarding and early help require timely information sharing and coordinated multi-agency working. The school adopts a child-centered approach, recognising the importance of early identification and intervention in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

10.2 Graduated Safeguarding Response

Safeguarding concerns will be responded to through a graduated approach based on the level of need and risk. Staff must use professional judgement, supported by school procedures and local threshold guidance.

Concerns may fall within the following broad levels:

i. Family Help / Early Help support:

- Where a child may benefit from additional support to address emerging needs and prevent escalation

ii. Children in need (Section 17 of the Children Act 1989)

- Where a child requires services to maintain or achieve a reasonable standard of health or development

iii. Child protection (Section 47 of the Children Act 1989)

- Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm

iv. Children in care (Sections 20 and 31 of the Children Act 1989)

- Where the local authority has legal responsibility for the child

Staff must understand that:

- safeguarding concerns can change and escalate quickly
- children's needs must be kept under regular review
- early help can prevent escalation to statutory intervention

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy will make decisions about the appropriate level of intervention and referral, working in line with local safeguarding arrangements.

10.3 Early Help and Family Help Processes

All staff must be aware of the processes for community-based Family Help assessments and the thresholds for different levels of intervention.

Family Help includes community-based assessment and coordinated support delivered through multi-agency working. This may involve a range of professionals working together to assess need and provide appropriate support at the earliest stage.

Staff must understand:

- the criteria for referral to Family Help services at targeted early help level under sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004
- the criteria for referral to children's social care for assessment under Section 17 (children in need)
- the threshold for statutory child protection intervention under Section 47 (reasonable cause to suspect significant harm)
- the legal framework for Section 31 (care and supervision orders) and Section 20 (duty to accommodate a child)

Staff must also be aware of procedures relating to:

- abuse, neglect and exploitation
- children managed within the youth secure estate
- disabled children

Where a child does not meet the threshold for statutory intervention, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy will usually lead on liaising with other agencies and may initiate a Family Help assessment. Staff may be required to contribute to this process and, in some cases, act as the lead practitioner where appropriate.

All cases must be kept under constant review. If a child's situation is not improving or is deteriorating, a referral to local authority children's social care must be made without delay.

The school will work with safeguarding partners to ensure that children receive appropriate support at the right time. This reflects a coordinated safeguarding approach across Sections 7 and 8 of this policy, where early identification, timely reporting and effective intervention are central to safeguarding practice.

11. Safeguarding Processes

11.1 Referrals to Children's Social Care

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a referral to local authority children's social care, and where appropriate the police, must be made immediately. Referrals must follow the local referral process and be made without delay.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy will normally make referrals. However, all staff have a responsibility to act in the best interests of the child and may make a referral directly where necessary. This includes situations where there is an immediate risk of harm or where a delay may

place a child at further risk. Staff must not delay making a referral in order to seek further information.
Staff should follow national guidance, including when to contact the police, where a criminal offence may have been committed.

When making a referral, the school will provide as much relevant information as possible. This includes information about the child's circumstances, presentation, and any known risks. This supports children's social care assessments in building a full understanding of the child's needs. Assessments by children's social care will consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home. The school will contribute to this process by sharing relevant contextual information, including peer, community and online risks, to support an informed and coordinated safeguarding response.

11.2 Escalation Procedures

If, following a referral, a child's situation does not appear to be improving, staff must continue to raise concerns in line with school procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy will:

- review the case and consider whether further action is required
- liaise with children's social care and other safeguarding partners
- follow local escalation procedures where concerns are not being addressed

Staff must not assume that a referral will lead to appropriate action. Where there are ongoing concerns, the school will actively pursue a response to ensure that the child's needs are met and their safety is secured.

All concerns must remain under review. Where a child's situation does not improve or deteriorates, further referrals or escalation must be made without delay.

This section should be read alongside Sections 8 and 9, which set out the identification and reporting of concerns.

11.3 Supporting Children Subject to Plans

The school recognises its responsibility to support children who are subject to statutory plans, including:

- child protection plans
- child in need plans
- care plans for children in care

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy will:

- work collaboratively with children's social care and other agencies
- attend and contribute to meetings, including strategy discussions, child protection conferences and review meetings
- ensure that appropriate information is shared with partner agencies
- monitor the child's progress and welfare within the school

All staff must:

- be aware of children who are subject to safeguarding plans where this is relevant to their role
- provide support to meet the child's needs and promote their welfare
- report any concerns about the child's safety or wellbeing without delay

The school will maintain effective communication with parents and carers where appropriate, in line with safeguarding advice and guidance. Support provided by the school will be reviewed regularly as part of the multi-agency safeguarding process to ensure that it remains appropriate and effective.

12. Multi-Agency Working

12.1 Local Safeguarding Arrangements

The school recognises its responsibility to play a full and active role in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a shared responsibility, and the school will contribute to local arrangements in line with statutory guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Safeguarding partners, comprising the local authority, Integrated Care Board and the chief officer of police, hold shared and equal responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

These partners will make arrangements to work together with relevant agencies to identify and respond to the needs of children and families.

Relevant agencies are organisations and services whose involvement is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in line with local need.

The school will:

- be fully engaged in local safeguarding arrangements
- act in accordance with local safeguarding arrangements
- comply with local safeguarding policies and procedures

Where the school is named as a relevant agency, it has a statutory duty to co-operate with safeguarding partners and to work in accordance with the published arrangements. This includes participating in multi-agency processes and contributing to coordinated safeguarding responses. The school will provide information as requested by safeguarding partners to support safeguarding arrangements.

The governing body, senior leadership team, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies will ensure that they understand and follow local safeguarding arrangements and that these are reflected within school policies and procedures. Staff should be familiar with local threshold guidance and assessment protocols, as outlined in Section 10 of this policy.

12.2 Working with Safeguarding Partners

The school will work collaboratively with safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies to

safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This includes working with:

- local authority children's social care
- the police
- health services
- other education providers and relevant agencies

The school will:

- contribute to multi-agency assessments and plans
- provide information to support safeguarding decisions
- support coordinated interventions, including Family Help and statutory child protection processes
- attend and contribute to multi-agency meetings where required

When concerns about a child arise, the school will work with partners to ensure a coordinated approach. This includes contributing to assessments which consider harm both within and outside the home, ensuring that safeguarding responses take account of the full context of a child's life.

The school will also work with partners to provide a coordinated offer of Family Help where additional needs are identified, ensuring that children receive appropriate support at the earliest possible stage.

12.3 Information Sharing Between Agencies

Effective information sharing is essential for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The school recognises that timely and appropriate sharing of information between practitioners and agencies is critical to identifying, assessing and responding to risk.

The school will:

- share relevant information with safeguarding partners and other agencies where it is necessary to protect a child
- provide accurate and complete information to support assessments and decision-making
- ensure that information is shared in a timely manner

Staff must understand that:

- no single practitioner will have a full picture of a child's needs
- early information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding
- concerns must be shared even if they appear minor or incomplete

Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of safeguarding children. Information will be shared in line with data protection principles, but concerns about sharing information must not override the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where there is any uncertainty about information sharing, staff must seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

13. Information Sharing

13.1 Principles of Effective Information Sharing

The school has clear powers to share, hold and use information for safeguarding purposes. The governing body will ensure that clear arrangements are in place for information sharing within the school and with safeguarding partners, local authority children's social care and other relevant agencies.

Effective safeguarding relies on timely and appropriate information sharing. All staff must:

- share information promptly to support the identification and management of risk
- be proactive in sharing concerns at an early stage
- recognise that information sharing is essential whether concerns are emerging or a child is already known to services

Staff must understand that no single practitioner will have a full picture of a child's needs. Effective safeguarding requires timely and coordinated information sharing to support accurate assessment and the provision of appropriate support. Information shared should be relevant, necessary, accurate, appropriately contextualised and proportionate to the identified need or concern. Data protection legislation must not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of safeguarding children. Where there is any doubt, staff must seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy. Concerns about sharing information must not override the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

13.2 Data Protection and Safeguarding

The school processes personal data fairly, lawfully and securely in line with data protection legislation. Staff must understand that data protection laws support, and do not prevent, the sharing of information to safeguard children.

Staff must:

- understand the legal basis for sharing personal information for safeguarding purposes
- be confident that safeguarding provides a lawful basis to share special category personal data
- share information without consent where there is a lawful basis and it is necessary to protect a child

Information may be shared without consent where:

- it is not possible or appropriate to obtain consent
- seeking consent would place a child at risk

Information will be withheld where required by law, including where disclosure could place a child at risk in line with the serious harm test.

Where there is uncertainty, staff must seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

13.3 Confidentiality

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis to safeguard children.

Staff must:

- not promise confidentiality where there are safeguarding concerns
- only share information with those who need it to protect the child
- ensure records are accurate, secure and accessible only to authorised staff

Confidentiality must never prevent the sharing of information where this is necessary to safeguard a child.

13.4 Transfer of Safeguarding Information

When a child transfers to another setting, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the child protection file is transferred securely and promptly.

This will:

- take place as soon as possible and within required timescales
- be transferred separately from the main pupil file
- include confirmation of receipt by the receiving setting

Where appropriate, information will be shared in advance to support risk assessment and continuity of support. A direct discussion between Designated Safeguarding Leads will take place where there are concerns.

Where safeguarding information indicates risk to others or the child, for example carrying, threatening with or using a weapon, the receiving school should undertake a risk assessment and implement an appropriate safety and support plan.

Staff should also refer to national guidance on information sharing where further clarity is required.

14. Working with Parents and Carers

14.1 Partnership Working

The school recognises the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Effective safeguarding is built on open, honest and respectful relationships with families.

The school will:

- work collaboratively with parents and carers to support children's welfare and wellbeing
- keep parents informed of concerns about their child, wherever it is appropriate to do so
- involve parents in decision-making and support plans for their child

The school will always aim to:

- act in the best interests of the child
- take a child-centred approach to safeguarding
- ensure that children receive the right help at the right time

Parents and carers play a vital role in safeguarding. The school will support them in understanding:

- safeguarding processes and expectations
- how concerns will be managed
- how they can support their child's safety and wellbeing

Where appropriate, the school will work with parents and carers as part of a coordinated multi-agency response, including contributing to:

- Family Help assessments
- child in need plans
- child protection plans

The school will also maintain regular communication with parents and carers to support children's safety, including in relation to risks such as online safety.

Where appropriate, the views of the child will be considered when determining how and when to involve parents.

14.2 Circumstances When Parents May Not Be Informed

The school recognises that, in most cases, parents and carers should be informed when concerns arise about their child. However, there are situations where this may not be appropriate.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will determine whether it is appropriate to inform parents and carers, taking into account the best interests and safety of the child.

Parents and carers will not be informed where:

- informing them may place the child at increased risk of harm
- it may jeopardise a police or children's social care investigation
- there are concerns about abuse, neglect or exploitation involving a parent or carer

In such cases:

- advice will be sought from children's social care and/or the police
- decisions will be made in line with safeguarding procedures and professional guidance

Staff must not promise a child that they will keep information confidential if there are safeguarding concerns. Any concerns must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy, or a member of the Child Protection Team.

The school will ensure that:

- decisions about informing parents are clearly recorded
- actions are taken in line with safeguarding procedures

- the child's safety and welfare remain the primary consideration

Where appropriate, and once it is safe to do so, parents and carers will be involved in supporting their child.

15. Safeguarding Records

Accurate and timely record keeping is essential to effective safeguarding. All concerns, discussions and decisions, and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing.

The school will ensure that:

- all safeguarding concerns are recorded clearly and promptly
- records are factual, accurate and comprehensive
- decisions and actions are clearly documented, including the rationale

Records must include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- a record of actions taken, decisions reached and outcomes

Recording concerns in this way supports effective safeguarding practice and ensures that there is a clear audit trail, including in response to any future enquiries or complaints.

16. Child-on-Child Abuse (including Sexual Violence and Harassment)

16.1 Zero-Tolerance Approach

The school recognises that children are capable of abusing other children. Child-on-child abuse can occur both within and outside the school environment, including online.

The school adopts a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse. Such behaviour will never be tolerated or dismissed as:

- "banter"
- "just having a laugh"
- "part of growing up"
- "boys being boys"

Such attitudes can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny and an unsafe environment, and must always be challenged.

All concerns relating to child-on-child abuse will be:

- taken seriously
- acted upon without delay

- managed in line with safeguarding procedures

The school recognises that:

- child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator
- it may be unreported even where it is not visible
- it can take place in any setting, including online
- is preventable and that early identification, evidence-based intervention and support can prevent harmful behaviour escalating into abuse or violence.

All staff will maintain an attitude that “it could happen here” and remain vigilant to indicators of abuse.

16.2 Prevention and Culture

The school is committed to preventing child-on-child abuse through a whole-school approach which promotes:

- respect and positive relationships
- clear behavioural expectations
- a culture of safety, openness and trust

The school will:

- ensure that these systems are well promoted, easily understood and readily accessible to all pupils
- create an environment where children feel able to report concerns confidently, knowing they will be taken seriously
- challenge inappropriate behaviour at an early stage
- implement procedures designed to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse occurring

Staff will:

- recognise early indicators of abusive behaviour
- intervene promptly and proportionately
- avoid normalising harmful behaviours

The school recognises that child-on-child abuse is preventable. Early identification and timely intervention are essential in reducing the risk of escalation.

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

- bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying
- abuse within intimate personal relationships (teenage relationship abuse and child to parent or care giver abuse)
- physical abuse, including hitting, kicking, shaking, biting or causing physical harm
- serious physical assault or threats of harm
- harmful sexual behaviour, including sexual harassment, sexual violence and misogyny
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent

- the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or videos [11], including those generated using artificial intelligence (AI) such as deepfakes
- upskirting, which is a criminal offence
- initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals

The school recognises that:

- certain forms of abuse may disproportionately affect girls
- all forms of child-on-child abuse are unacceptable and will be treated seriously

16.3 Reporting and Responding

All staff must be clear about the school's procedures for responding to child-on-child abuse and their responsibility to act.

Where there are concerns about child-on-child abuse, or where a child may be at risk, staff must:

- take all concerns seriously
- act immediately in line with safeguarding procedures
- report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy, or to a member of the Child Protection Team, without delay

Staff must not:

- assume the concern is being managed by others
- dismiss or minimise the behaviour
- delay action pending further evidence

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy will:

- assess the nature and level of risk
- take appropriate action in line with safeguarding procedures
- make referrals to children's social care and/or the police where required
- ensure that all concerns are recorded, investigated and followed up

The school will ensure that:

- allegations of child-on-child abuse are clearly recorded
- appropriate action is taken in response to all concerns
- outcomes are monitored and reviewed

Support will be provided to:

- the victim, ensuring their safety, welfare and ongoing support
- the alleged perpetrator, recognising their safeguarding needs
- any other children affected

[11] Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK

The school will take a victim-centered and proportionate approach, ensuring that:

- the victim's voice is heard
- appropriate support is in place
- safeguarding measures are reviewed regularly

All responses will be:

- timely
- appropriate to the level of risk
- guided by professional judgement
- carried out in the best interests of the child

All staff must understand that concerns about child-on-child abuse must always be shared and acted upon. Early reporting and intervention are essential in preventing escalation and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children.

Further detail regarding Child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence can be found in Appendix: 8 Child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence (Part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026)[12].

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17. Online Safety and Filtering / Monitoring

17.1 Whole-School Approach to Online Safety

The school recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes protecting them from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Online safety is a key safeguarding priority and is a running and interrelated theme across all safeguarding policies, procedures and practice.

The school adopts a whole-school approach to online safety, which:

- protects and educates pupils, staff and the wider school community
- establishes effective mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate concerns where appropriate
- promotes safe and responsible use of technology

Online safety is reflected throughout:

- safeguarding policies and procedures
- curriculum provision, including RSHE
- staff training and development
- the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies
- engagement with parents and carers

The school recognises that online risks are broad, evolving and complex, and may include:

- **Content risks**: exposure to harmful or inappropriate content such as pornography, racism,

[12] Appendix: 8 Child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence (Part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026)

violence, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, extremism, and misinformation
- **Contact risks**: harmful interaction with others, including peer pressure, grooming, exploitation, or interaction with adults or AI posing as others
- **Conduct risks**: behaviour that may increase harm, including online bullying or the sharing of explicit content (including AI-generated images such as deepfakes)
- **Commerce risks**: Online scams, phishing and financial exploitation. Concerns about students or staff being at risk should be reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (https://apwg.org/).

The school will ensure that:

- pupils are supported to develop knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe online[13]
- staff remain vigilant to online risks and respond appropriately
- online safety is embedded consistently across all safeguarding practice

17.2 Filtering and Monitoring Systems

The school recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to limit children's exposure to harmful and inappropriate online material through the use of effective filtering and monitoring systems.

The governing body will ensure that[14]:

- appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place
- the school meets the Department for Education filtering and monitoring standards
- these systems are reviewed regularly, and at least annually
- checks are undertaken to ensure that systems are operating effectively across all devices and locations
- a record is maintained of all checks and reviews

The school will ensure that:

- harmful and inappropriate content is blocked without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning
- effective monitoring strategies are in place to identify safeguarding risks
- leadership and relevant staff understand the systems in place and how to manage them
- concerns identified through monitoring are escalated appropriately

Roles and responsibilities for filtering and monitoring systems will be clearly identified and assigned.

Filtering and monitoring arrangements will be informed by safeguarding risk assessments, including those required under the Prevent Duty.

In line with statutory expectations, the school will:

- review filtering and monitoring provision regularly
- assess systems against safeguarding risks, including those posed by emerging technologies

[13] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools
[14] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-core-standard

such as generative artificial intelligence[15]
- ensure systems are proportionate to the needs, age range and risks present within the school

The annual review of filtering and monitoring arrangements will be led by the responsible member of the senior leadership team, involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and IT support providers, include checks on all internet-enabled devices, and be formally recorded. The school will work with IT providers and follow national guidance to ensure that filtering and monitoring arrangements remain effective, proportionate and responsive to emerging risks.

17.3 Mobile Technology and Digital Behaviour

The school recognises the impact of mobile technology on safeguarding, wellbeing and learning. Clear expectations are in place to ensure that the use of mobile devices supports a safe and focused school environment.

The Latymer School operates a phone-free environment during the school day. Where pupils bring mobile devices onto the school site:

- devices must be switched off and secured in a Yondr pouch on entry
- pouches remain sealed throughout the school day
- pouches are opened at the end of the school day when leaving the site

The use of mobile phones during the school day is not permitted and will result in confiscation and appropriate sanctions.

The school's approach to mobile technology is underpinned by its commitment to:

- creating a calm, focused and safe learning environment
- reducing distractions and promoting attentive engagement
- supporting pupils to develop healthy relationships with technology
- providing a space where pupils can engage fully in learning, relationships and personal development

Pupils are supported to understand:

- safe and appropriate use of digital technology
- risks associated with online behaviour
- the importance of respectful and responsible digital conduct

Where pupils need to contact parents or carers during the school day, this will be facilitated through appropriate school systems.

The school promotes a culture in which:

- technology is used safely, responsibly and with awareness of risk
- safeguarding concerns linked to digital behaviour are identified and addressed promptly
- pupils understand their responsibility for their own online safety and behaviour.

[15] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education/generative-artificial-intelligence-ai-in-education

18. Teaching Safeguarding and Preventative Education

18.1 Curriculum Responsibilities

The school recognises its responsibility to ensure that children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. Teaching safeguarding is a key aspect of preventative education and forms part of the school's whole-school approach to safeguarding.

Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence/harassment, derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict.

The governing body will ensure that:

- safeguarding education is embedded across the curriculum
- pupils are equipped with the knowledge and skills to recognise risk and seek help
- teaching is tailored to the needs, age and stage of development of pupils

The school recognises that effective safeguarding education must:

- be inclusive and responsive to individual needs
- take account of the experiences and vulnerabilities of children, including those who have experienced abuse
- provide appropriate support for pupils with SEND and other additional needs

Safeguarding education is delivered through:

- a planned, progressive curriculum
- tutor and pastoral programmes
- wider curriculum opportunities

Staff will reinforce safeguarding messages across all aspects of school life to support pupils in understanding how to stay safe and make informed decisions.

18.2 Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)[16]

The school delivers a programme of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) as a central element of its preventative education approach.

The RSHE curriculum is:

- evidence-based
- age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate
- inclusive of all pupils, including those with SEND

The programme is delivered through a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE in regularly

[16] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education

timetabled lessons, alongside reinforcement across the wider curriculum[17].

Through RSHE, pupils will be supported to develop:

- the skills and values that underpin positive and healthy relationships
- an understanding of respect, boundaries, consent and kindness
- awareness of stereotyping, prejudice, equality and diversity
- confidence, body awareness and self-esteem

Pupils will also be taught:

- how to recognise and respond to abusive or unhealthy relationships, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- the nature and impact of sexual harassment and sexual violence, and why these are always unacceptable
- that abuse is never the fault of the victim and that support is available
- how, when and where to seek help and report concerns

Teaching will also address current safeguarding risks, including:

- online harms and digital behaviour
- the risks associated with sharing images, including AI-generated content such as deepfakes
- exposure to harmful content, including pornography, misinformation and harmful online influencers

The school will have regard to national guidance and resources to support the effective teaching of safeguarding.

18.3 Promoting Safe Behaviours

The school promotes a culture of safety, respect and responsibility through its approach to preventative education.

Preventative education is delivered as part of a whole-school approach, which:

- prepares pupils for life in modern Britain
- promotes high standards of behaviour and conduct
- establishes a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, racism, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence and harassment and all forms of discriminatory or harmful behaviour

The school will:

- promote safe, respectful and positive behaviours
- challenge all forms of harmful or discriminatory behaviour
- ensure pupils understand that harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment and violence, is never acceptable

Preventative education is supported by:

[17] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health

- the behaviour policy
- pastoral care systems
- safeguarding procedures
- staff modelling of respectful behaviour

The school will ensure that pupils:

- understand how to recognise risks and harmful behaviour
- know how, when and where to seek help
- feel confident that concerns will be taken seriously

The school recognises that preventative education is most effective when:

- it is consistent across all aspects of school life
- it is reinforced through relationships, culture and expectations
- pupils feel safe, respected and able to raise concerns

Filtering and monitoring systems will not unreasonably restrict the school's ability to teach safeguarding and online safety, ensuring that pupils receive a full and accurate understanding of risks and how to manage them.

19. Safer Recruitment and Selection

19.1 Recruitment Procedures

The school is committed to recruiting staff and volunteers who are suitable to work with children and who share the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Safer recruitment is a key element of the school's whole-school safeguarding approach. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to:

- deter unsuitable individuals from applying
- prevent inappropriate appointments
- ensure that all appointments are made in the best interests of children

The governing body will ensure that:

- safer recruitment practices are embedded within school procedures
- at least one member of any interview panel has completed appropriate safer recruitment training
- all staff involved in recruitment understand their responsibilities

Recruitment processes will:

- be transparent, consistent and fair
- explore applicants' suitability to work with children
- identify and address potential risks

The school will ensure that:

Advertising and application

- all recruitment materials include a clear statement of the school's commitment to

safeguarding
- roles clearly set out safeguarding responsibilities
- applicants are informed that safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- application forms require full employment history, explanations for gaps, and relevant personal information
- a curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of a full application form

Shortlisting

- shortlisting is carried out by at least two individuals
- employment history and any gaps are scrutinised
- an online search may be undertaken as part of due diligence
- shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a self-declaration regarding their criminal record and suitability to work with children, which will be reviewed and discussed at interview

References

- references are obtained and reviewed prior to interview wherever possible
- references are verified and compared against the application
- any concerns are explored and resolved before appointment

Selection

- structured interviews are used to assess suitability
- candidates' motivation to work with children is explored
- any inconsistencies, gaps or concerns are probed

The school will ensure that all recruitment decisions are clearly recorded.

The school will have regard to relevant legislation and guidance, including the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act[18], when considering disclosures.

19.2 Pre-Employment Checks

All appointments are subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks. No individual will be permitted to work in regulated activity unless all required checks have been completed.

The level of checks required will be determined by whether the role involves regulated activity with children.

The school will ensure that the following checks are carried out:

- verification of identity
- enhanced DBS check, including children's barred list information where the role involves regulated activity
- verification of the right to work in the UK
- verification of qualifications
- prohibition from teaching checks (where applicable)

[18] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/53

- section 128 direction checks for management positions (where applicable)
- checks relating to disqualification from childcare (where required)
- overseas checks for individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK
- verification of mental and physical fitness to carry out the role

Children's barred list checks will only be requested where the individual is engaging in regulated activity.

All offers of employment are conditional upon these checks being completed satisfactorily.

The school will:

- assess any disclosures on a case-by-case basis
- ensure decisions are proportionate, fair and in line with safeguarding priorities

Where necessary:

- a separate barred list check may be undertaken where an individual starts work before a DBS certificate is received
- appropriate supervision will be in place until all checks are complete

The school recognises that safer recruitment forms part of a wider safeguarding culture, and safeguarding vigilance continues following appointment.

The school will have regard to statutory guidance and information provided on GOV.UK in relation to DBS checks, the DBS Update Service and safer recruitment practice.

19.3 Single Central Record

The school will maintain a single central record (SCR) of all pre-employment checks, in line with statutory requirements.

The SCR will include:

- all staff, including temporary, agency and supply staff
- volunteers where appropriate
- members of the governing body
- contractors (where applicable)

The SCR will record whether the following checks have been carried out, and the date on which each check was completed:

- identity verification
- enhanced DBS check (and barred list check where applicable)
- prohibition from teaching check
- right to work in the UK
- qualifications check (where required)
- overseas checks (where applicable)

Where agency or third-party staff are used, the SCR will include:

- written confirmation that appropriate checks have been carried out
- the date this confirmation was received

The school will ensure that:

- the SCR is kept up to date and accurate
- it is available for inspection by relevant authorities
- records are maintained in line with data protection requirements

The school may record additional safeguarding information where appropriate, including:

- safeguarding training
- safer recruitment training
- checks on volunteers and visitors

The school recognises that accurate and comprehensive record keeping is essential to safeguarding and provides assurance that robust recruitment procedures are in place.

Further detailed guidance can be found in Part 3: Safer Recruitment of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026), alongside relevant guidance on GOV.UK, including information relating to DBS checks, the DBS Update Service and safer recruitment practice.

20. Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns About Adults

The school recognises that safeguarding concerns and allegations can arise in relation to adults working with children. The school will ensure that all concerns, regardless of size or seriousness, are managed appropriately, consistently and without delay.

Clear procedures are in place to manage concerns or allegations about:

- staff
- supply staff
- trainee teachers
- volunteers
- contractors

All staff must understand their responsibility to report concerns promptly and without delay in line with this policy.

20.1 Allegations That Meet the Harm Threshold

An allegation meets the harm threshold where an adult working with children has:

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

Where an allegation that meets the harm threshold is identified:

- it must be reported without delay to the Headteacher
- where the allegation concerns the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Chair of Governors
- where there is a conflict of interest, the concern must be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The Headteacher (or Chair of Governors where appropriate) will:

- consider the nature of the concern
- determine whether the allegation meets the harm threshold
- make an immediate referral to the LADO where required

The school will:

- act in accordance with local safeguarding procedures
- ensure allegations are managed in a fair, consistent and timely manner
- maintain confidentiality as far as possible
- ensure that the welfare of the child remains paramount

20.2 Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, about an adult's behaviour that:

- does not meet the harm threshold, but
- may indicate that the individual's behaviour is inconsistent with the school's expectations

All low-level concerns must be:

- shared promptly with the Headteacher (or relevant senior leader)
- recorded and reviewed
- managed in accordance with the school's low-level concerns policy and procedures (Model Code of Conduct (Incorporates a Protocol for addressing Low Level Concerns)

The school recognises the importance of a culture of openness, transparency and professional accountability, in which:

- staff feel confident to report concerns
- concerns are not minimised or dismissed
- patterns of concerning behaviour can be identified at an early stage

Low-level concerns will be:

- considered in the context of the staff code of conduct
- used to inform professional standards and safeguarding culture

20.3 LADO Involvement

The school will work in partnership with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)[19] in managing allegations that meet the harm threshold.

The LADO will be contacted:

- where an allegation meets the harm threshold
- where there is any uncertainty about how a concern should be managed
- where required under local safeguarding arrangements

The school will:

- follow advice provided by the LADO
- not undertake internal investigations before seeking advice from the LADO
- cooperate fully with external agencies, including children's social care and the police

Details of how to contact the LADO are readily available within the school.

20.4 Duty to Refer

The school recognises its legal duty to refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where appropriate.

A referral to the DBS will be made where:

- an individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (or would have been removed if they had not left), and
- the school believes the individual has:
    - caused harm to a child, or
    - posed a risk of harm to a child

The school will also consider whether a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) is required where a teacher has been dismissed or would have been dismissed for serious misconduct.

Referrals will be made:

- as soon as possible
- in line with statutory guidance
- with all relevant information provided

The school will have regard to guidance on GOV.UK in relation to DBS referrals and safeguarding duties.

Whistleblowing and Safeguarding Practice Concerns

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, potential safeguarding failures, or concerns about safeguarding practice within the school.

[19]Local Authority Designated Officer LADO (tel: 020 8379 4392/2850)

The school will ensure that:

- concerns can be raised without fear of disadvantage or reprisal
- appropriate whistleblowing procedures are in place
- concerns are taken seriously and addressed effectively

Where staff feel unable to raise concerns internally, they may use external routes, including:

- the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line

Further information is available in the Model Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures (The Reporting of Malpractice and Improper Conduct), which is published on the school website.

Further detailed guidance can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026), including Part 4: Allegations of Abuse Made Against Teachers and Other Staff.

21. Use of Reasonable Force

There are limited circumstances in which it may be appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children. 'Reasonable force' refers to a range of actions involving a degree of physical contact used to control or restrain a child in order to prevent harm to themselves or others. This may include, for example, guiding a child to safety, breaking up a fight, or restraining a child to prevent injury or serious damage.

Any use of force must be proportionate, reasonable, and applied for the minimum time necessary, taking into account the individual circumstances of the incident.

The decision to use reasonable force rests with the professional judgement of staff and should always be made in the best interests of the child and others involved.

The school does not operate a 'no contact' policy. Appropriate physical contact may be necessary to safely manage behaviour, prevent injury, or respond to immediate risk.

Staff must be particularly mindful when working with children with special educational needs and disabilities, mental health needs, or medical conditions, recognising that these pupils may be more vulnerable. Where possible, proactive and preventative approaches, including individual behaviour support plans, should be used to minimise the need for physical intervention.

Further guidance is provided in the school's Behaviour Policy and in statutory guidance on restrictive interventions.

22. Safeguarding in Alternative Provision and Use of Premises

The school recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extends beyond the immediate school environment. Where pupils access provision off-site, or where external organisations use school premises, the school will ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain robust and effective.

22.1 Alternative Provision

Where the school commissions Alternative Provision (AP) for a pupil, the school retains full

responsibility for the safeguarding and welfare of that pupil.

The school will ensure that:

- any placement is appropriate to the pupil's individual needs
- the provision is safe and suitable
- safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements

Prior to placement, the school will[20]:

- carry out appropriate due diligence
- obtain written confirmation that the provider has:
    - appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures
    - completed relevant safeguarding checks on all staff
- ensure the provider will share information where there are any changes that may impact safeguarding

The school recognises that pupils placed in alternative provision may have increased vulnerability to harm, and therefore robust oversight is essential.

The school will:

- ensure that it always knows where a child is during school hours, supported by accurate and up-to-date records, including:
    - the address of the provision
    - any satellite or subcontracted sites
- ensure that the pupil's attendance, safety and welfare are monitored

Placements will be:

- reviewed regularly (at least half-termly)
- assessed to ensure that:
    - the placement remains safe
    - the provision continues to meet the pupil's needs

Where safeguarding concerns arise:

- the placement will be reviewed immediately
- appropriate action will be taken, including termination of the placement where necessary

The school will have regard to national guidance[21][22] and standards when commissioning and reviewing alternative provision, and will not rely solely on external approval processes. The school remains ultimately responsible for the provision it commissions.

22.2 Use of School Facilities by External Organisations

Where services or activities are provided on the school site by external organisations:

[20] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-school-alternative-provision-voluntary-national-standards

[21] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision

[22] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school

- where these are under the direct supervision or management of school staff, the school's safeguarding arrangements will apply
- where services are provided independently by another organisation, the school will seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place

The governing body will ensure that:

- external organisations using school premises have:
    - appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures
    - safe recruitment and vetting processes
- providers have arrangements in place to liaise with the school on safeguarding and child protection matters where appropriate
- safeguarding requirements are clearly set out within any hire, lease or transfer of control agreement
- failure to comply with safeguarding requirements may result in termination of the agreement

The school will:

- satisfy itself that providers have appropriate arrangements in place
- seek assurance, including through review or inspection of safeguarding arrangements where appropriate
- ensure that there are clear lines of communication between the school and the provider
- take reasonable steps to verify that safeguarding expectations are understood and implemented

These expectations apply regardless of whether:

- the children involved are on the school roll, or
- the activities take place outside normal school hours

The school will have regard to relevant guidance on safeguarding in out-of-school settings when working with external providers.

Further detailed guidance can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

23. Training and Staff Development

The school recognises that effective safeguarding depends on staff having the knowledge, skills and confidence to identify and respond to concerns. The school will ensure that all staff receive appropriate, regular and up-to-date safeguarding training, in line with statutory requirements and local safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding training, online safety education, filtering and monitoring responsibilities, staff training and curriculum planning is integrated within the school's whole-school safeguarding approach, ensuring that training, policy, practice and curriculum are aligned.

23.1 Induction

All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction.

Induction will ensure that staff:

- understand the school's safeguarding and child protection policy
- are aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children
- know how to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns
- understand the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies
- are familiar with procedures for reporting concerns without delay

Induction training will include:

- safeguarding and child protection procedures
- staff code of conduct
- behaviour policy
- online safety, including awareness of risks and safe use of technology
- the school's approach to filtering and monitoring systems

All induction training will be:

- provided in line with advice from local safeguarding partners
- regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it remains current and effective

23.2 Ongoing Safeguarding Training

All staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection training, which is updated to ensure that knowledge remains current.

In addition:

- all staff will receive safeguarding updates as required, and at least annually
- updates may be delivered through:
    - staff briefings
    - email communications
    - e-bulletins
    - training sessions

Training will:

- reflect current safeguarding issues and risks
- include online safety, including emerging risks such as AI and digital harm
- ensure staff remain confident in recognising indicators of abuse and taking appropriate action
- be delivered in line with advice from local safeguarding partners

The school recognises the expertise developed by staff through training and experience. Staff will be supported to:

- contribute to safeguarding practice
- share knowledge and experience
- inform the development of safeguarding arrangements

Safeguarding training will be:

- aligned with the school's safeguarding policy and procedures
- integrated into wider staff development and curriculum planning

The school will have regard to the Teachers' Standards, ensuring staff maintain a safe learning environment and respond effectively to the needs of all pupils.

23.3 DSL and Leadership Training

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and any deputies will receive appropriate training to carry out their roles effectively.

This training will:

- be undertaken at appropriate intervals, in line with statutory guidance
- ensure that knowledge and skills are kept up to date
- ensure the DSL has the knowledge and skills required to:
    - manage safeguarding concerns
    - work effectively with external agencies
    - support staff in safeguarding practice

The DSL will:

- undergo regular training updates
- stay informed of developments in safeguarding, including emerging risks

The school will ensure that:

- safeguarding leadership is supported at senior level
- sufficient time, funding and resources are provided to enable the DSL to carry out their duties.

24. Monitoring, Review and Governance

The school recognises that effective safeguarding requires robust systems of monitoring, review and governance. Safeguarding is a strategic priority, and the governing body holds overall responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are effective and compliant with statutory requirements.

The governing body and school leaders will ensure that safeguarding policies, procedures and practice are:

- implemented effectively
- regularly reviewed
- responsive to emerging risks
- compliant with current legislation and statutory guidance

The governing body will ensure that safeguarding policies, procedures and training are effective and

comply with the law at all times[23].

24.1 Policy Review Cycle

The school will ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and updated as required to reflect:

- changes in legislation and statutory guidance
- local safeguarding arrangements
- emerging risks and safeguarding priorities
- lessons learned from safeguarding practice

The child protection and safeguarding policy will be:

- reviewed **at least annually**
- updated more frequently where required

All updates will:

- be approved by the governing body
- be communicated effectively to staff

The Headteacher will ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are:

- understood by all staff and consistently followed in practice
- implemented consistently in practice
- followed in all safeguarding matters

23.2 Monitoring Safeguarding Effectiveness

The school will maintain systems to monitor the effectiveness of its safeguarding arrangements.

Monitoring will include:

- review of safeguarding incidents and responses
- oversight of referrals and outcomes
- evaluation of safeguarding training and staff practice
- monitoring of attendance, behaviour and pastoral indicators
- review of safeguarding records and processes

The school will ensure that:

- safeguarding practice is regularly evaluated
- the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements is tested and assured
- improvements are identified and implemented
- safeguarding systems remain effective and responsive

[23] Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires governing bodies of maintained schools and colleges, in relation to their functions relating to the conduct of the school or the institution to make arrangements for ensuring that such functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are either pupils at the school or are receiving education or training at the institution.

The school recognises that safeguarding effectiveness is subject to external scrutiny. Safeguarding arrangements will be evaluated through inspection[24], and the school will ensure that it meets the expectations of the Education Inspection Framework (EIF).

25. Links with Other Policies

Safeguarding is a whole-school responsibility, and this policy should be read alongside other key school policies and procedures which support safeguarding and promote the welfare of children.

The school recognises that effective safeguarding requires coherent and consistent policy alignment, ensuring that safeguarding principles are embedded across all areas of school life.

Key Safeguarding-Related Policies

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy links to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour policy (includes the Exclusion Policy and Governor's Behaviour Written Statement)
  (including measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct) is reflected within:
  - Safeguarding Child Protection policy and procedures
  - Whistleblowing policy
- Safeguarding Child Protection policy and procedures
  (including child-on-child abuse, reporting procedures and safeguarding systems)
- Attendance policy
  (including safeguarding responses to children absent from education)
- Online Safety is addressed within:
  - Safeguarding Child Protection policy and procedures
  - Mobile phone policy
- Mobile phone policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability policy
- Relationships and Sex Education policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Health and Safety policy
- First Aid and Welfare policy and guidance
- Supporting Students with Medical Condition policy
- Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children policy
- Visiting Speakers policy
  (including safeguarding arrangements for external visitors)
- Safeguarding checks on adults who have contact with pupils

[24] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework

26. Safeguarding Framework and Compliance

This policy:

- reflects the school's whole-school approach to safeguarding, including child-on-child abuse
- aligns with systems for reporting and recording safeguarding concerns
- is consistent with statutory guidance and legislation
- has regard to locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

All staff are made aware of these policies as part of:

- safeguarding induction
- ongoing training and updates

The school ensures that:

- safeguarding policies are reviewed at least annually
- policies remain current and responsive to emerging risks
- policies are accessible to staff, pupils, parents and carers, including via the school website

Appendix 1: Indicators of abuse and neglect

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

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

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

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

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

A**ppendix 2: Role of the designated safeguarding lead**

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

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

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

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

Availability

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

To ensure continuity of safeguarding responsibilities, schools should implement robust cover arrangements for periods when the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave, or other circumstances. This could, for example, include a confidential shared mailbox or equivalent system to ensure that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored, and acted upon without delay.

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and

- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC - When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police

Working with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically
- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances, and
- work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.158 This includes:

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

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

Children who have or have had a social worker may be at greater risk of harm and require additional support.

Information sharing and managing the child protection file

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

Records should include:

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

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

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

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving particularly where the information would support an assessment of risk to others in the school as well as the individual pupil to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse, incidents that may indicate concerns about serious violence or harmful behaviours and/or details of those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives. It would be good practice for a conversation to take place between the designated safeguarding leads at both settings, where there are issues or concerns.

Raising awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff
- ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this

- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements, and
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff

Training, knowledge and skills

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

- understand the assessment process for providing family help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements159
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college
- can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses, and
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

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

Providing support to staff

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

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

Understanding the views of children

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

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

Holding and sharing information

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

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand relevant data protection laws, and
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc.

Appendix 3: Contextual Safeguarding[25]

Safeguarding incidents and behaviours may be associated with factors outside the home and can occur between children in community settings or online. This is known as contextual safeguarding. Children may be vulnerable to extra-familial harm in a range of environments, including:

- peer groups and friendship networks
- local communities and neighbourhoods
- transport routes and public spaces
- online platforms and digital environments

Extra-familial harm can take many forms and may include:

- child sexual exploitation
- child criminal exploitation
- serious youth violence
- abuse within intimate relationships
- exploitation linked to gangs or organised groups
- online abuse and exploitation
-

Staff should recognise that:

- different risks may occur at the same time and influence each other
- children may not recognise that they are at risk or may be unable to report harm
- factors such as age, disability, culture or communication needs may affect disclosure

The school will:

- work with safeguarding partners to understand local risks and trends
- share relevant information to support multi-agency assessment and planning
- consider the context in which incidents occur when responding to concerns
- support strategies that address risk beyond the home environment

A contextual approach to safeguarding recognises that effective intervention requires an understanding of the environments in which children live, learn and socialise. This approach supports early identification of risk and a coordinated response to safeguarding concerns.

[25] https://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/

Appendix 4: Vulnerable Groups

Some children are more likely to experience harm due to their circumstances. The following groups require particular awareness and consideration.

Children may be particularly vulnerable where they:

- have special educational needs or disabilities
- have a mental health need
- are young carers
- are frequently missing from education, home or care
- are at risk of exploitation, including criminal or sexual exploitation
- are at risk of serious violence or involvement in gang activity
- are affected by parental substance misuse, mental health needs or domestic abuse
- have a parent in custody or are affected by parental offending
- are misusing drugs or alcohol
- are at risk of so called honour based abuse, including forced marriage or female genital mutilation
- are privately fostered
- are experiencing homelessness or unstable housing
- are pregnant or a young parent
- have experienced suspension, exclusion or disrupted education

Staff should also recognise that:

- vulnerabilities may not be immediately visible
- children may experience more than one vulnerability at the same time
- some children may not recognise or report harm
- early signs of harmful or abusive behaviour may indicate a need for support

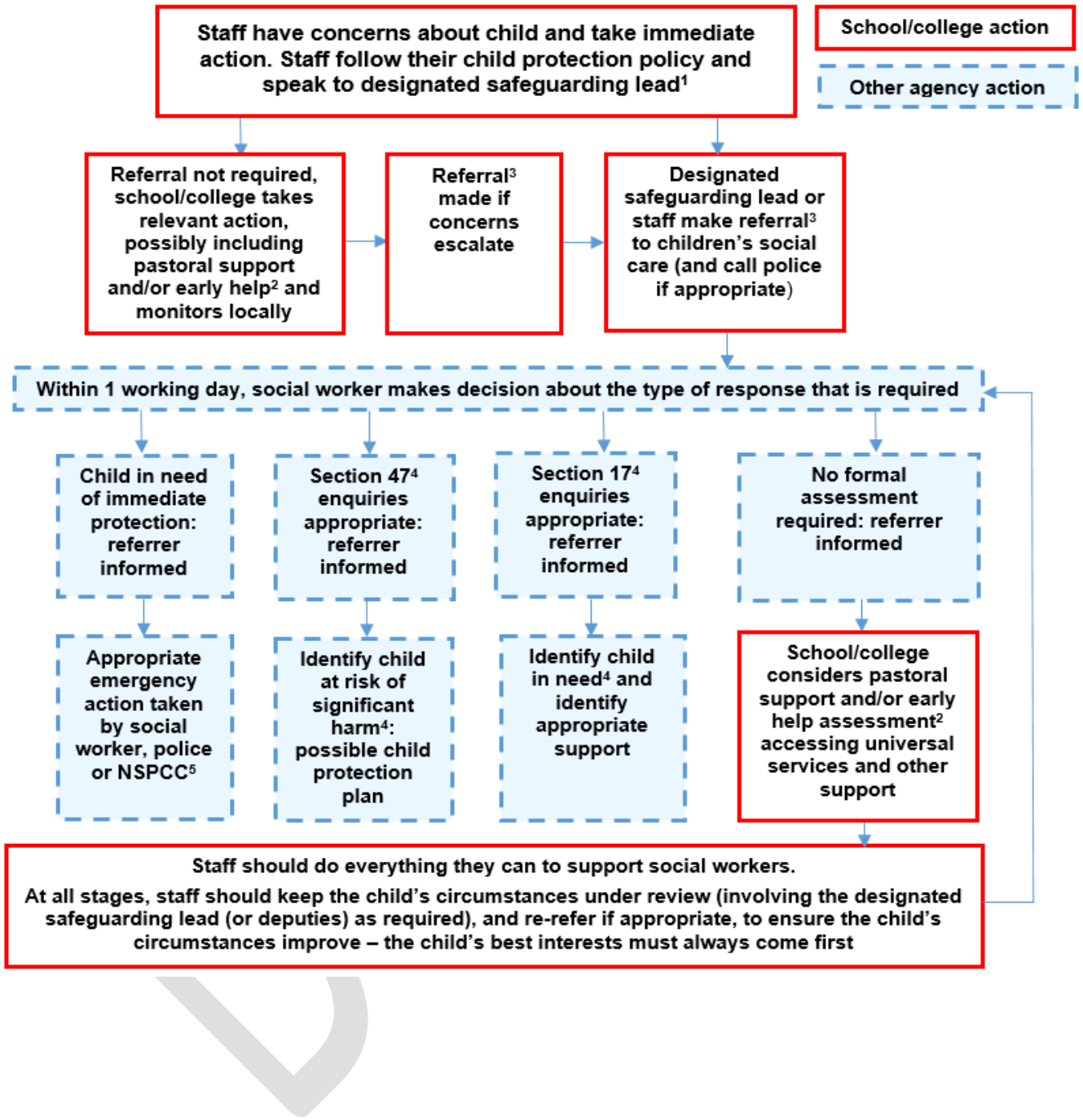
Additional consideration should be given to how barriers such as communication needs, disability, culture or language may affect a child's ability to disclose concerns.

The school will ensure that:

- staff are aware of these vulnerabilities
- appropriate support is in place
- safeguarding arrangements are adapted where necessary
- information is shared appropriately to support a coordinated safeguarding response

This appendix should be read alongside Section 8.3 and relevant sections of the policy relating to early help, multi-agency working and safeguarding procedures.

Appendix 5: Flowchart setting out the actions taken where there are concerns



[1] In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

[2] Family Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated Family Help, a family help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the Family Help process.

[3] Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. See Working Together to Safeguard Children.

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

[5] This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

Appendix 6: Safeguarding Protocol Flowchart

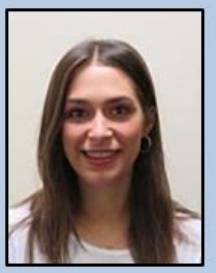


Appendix 7: The Latymer School Safeguarding/Child Protection Team

The Latymer School

SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION TEAM

Safeguarding officers:



Miss Letissier
Deputy Designated Officer



Mr. Pashley
Designated Safeguarding Lead



Mr. Wakefield
Deputy Designated Officer



Mrs. Baker



Mr. Bowman



Mrs. Brander



Miss Cobbett



Mrs. Farshi-Kaymer



Ms. Ferrcane



Ms. Kalaora



Mr. Ninkovic

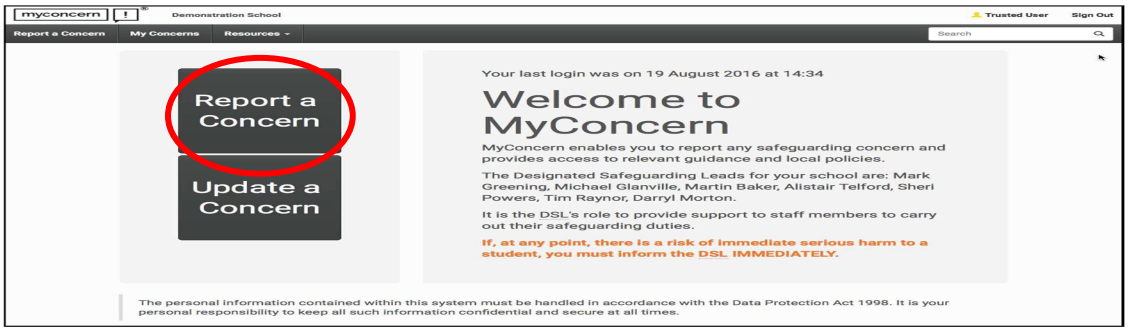


Mr. Savcenko

The above are the staff responsible for child protection/safeguarding issues.

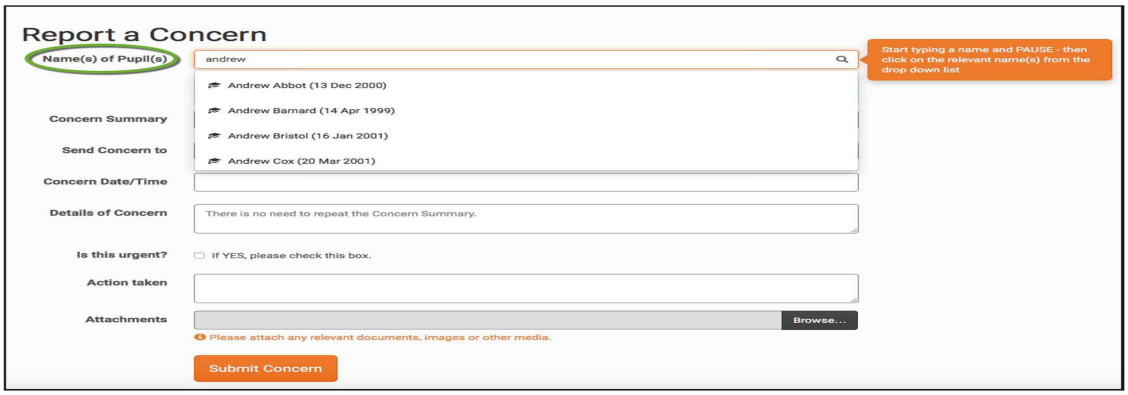
Appendix 8: 'MyConcern'

MyConcern - Reporting a Concern (User Guide)



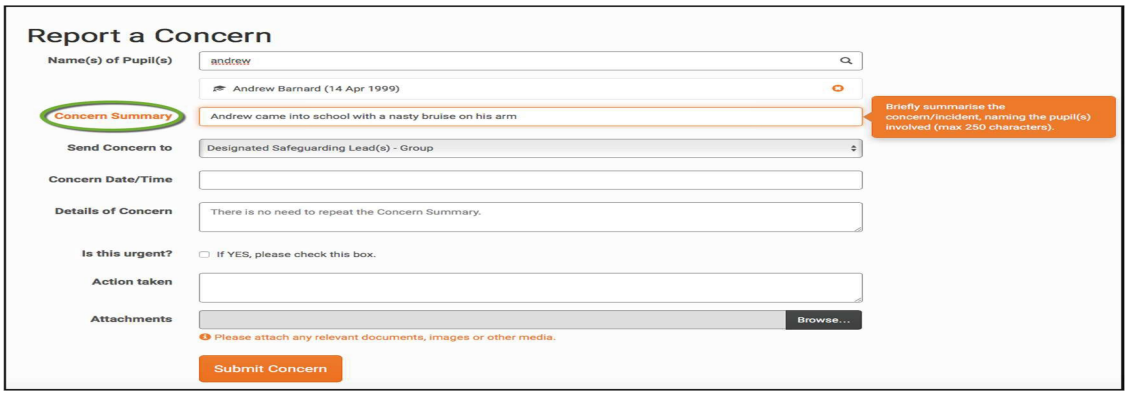
- Click on 'Report a MyConcern'

1.1 Name(s) of Pupil(s)



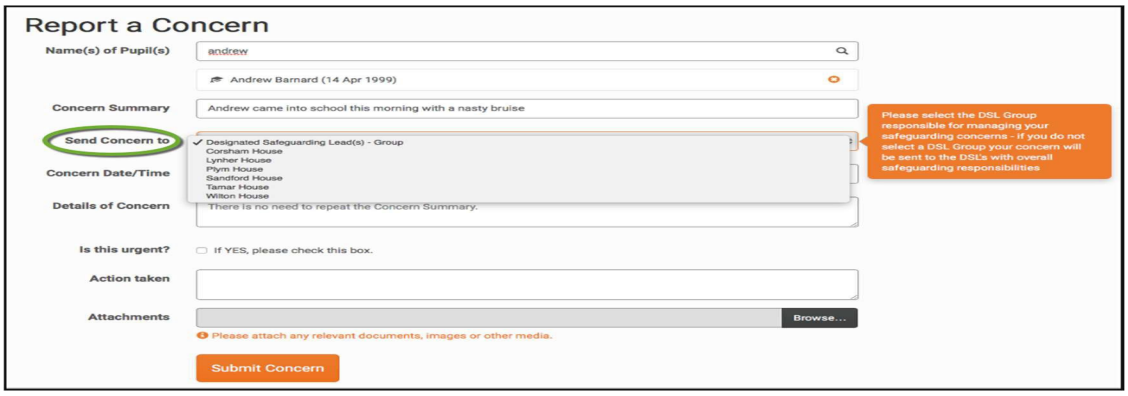
- Type a name into the text field - a drop-down list of pupil's names will appear
- Select the pupil linked to the concern
- Repeat if there is more than one pupil involved in the incident

1.2 Concern Summary



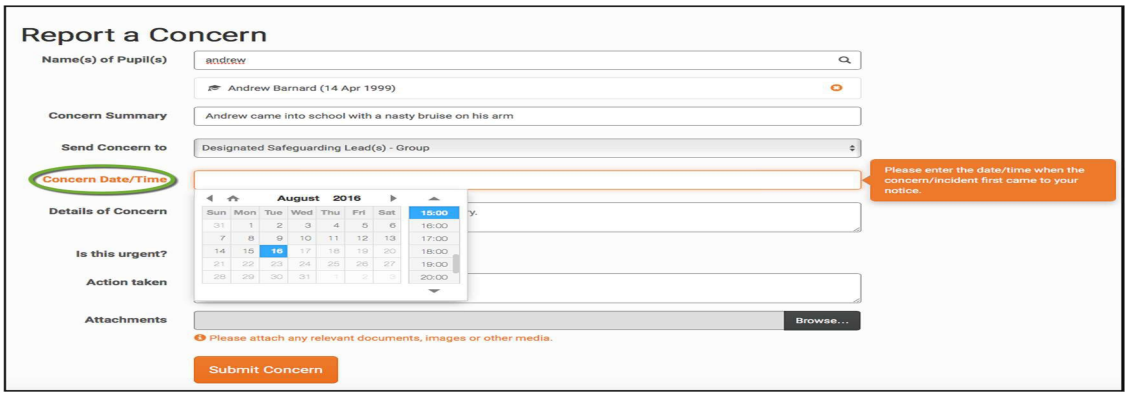
- Summarise the concern using only 1 line (helps compare concerns in the school and identify trends)

1.3 Send Concern To



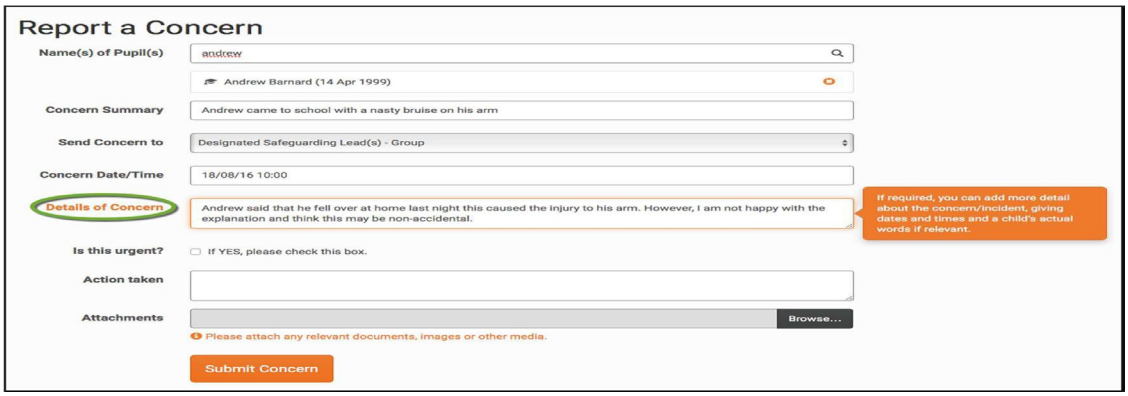
- Send concern to DSL (Senior Assistant Headteacher – Care, Guidance and Support)

1.4 Concern Date and Time



- Selects the time and date that the concern occurred from the pop-up calendar

1.5 Details of Concern



- As much relevant information as possible time and date of the incident and the actual words used by the pupil (if appropriate).
- No limit to the number of words that can be typed into this field

1.6 Action Taken



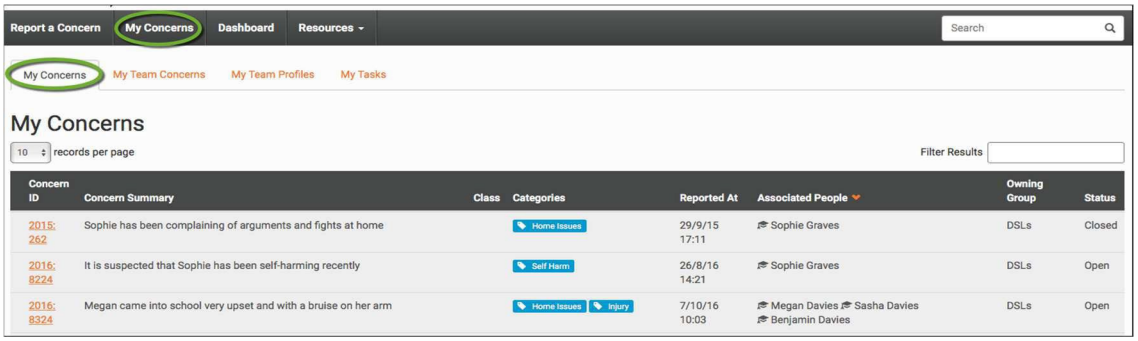
- Record any action already taken
- No limit to the text

1.7 Attachments & Submit

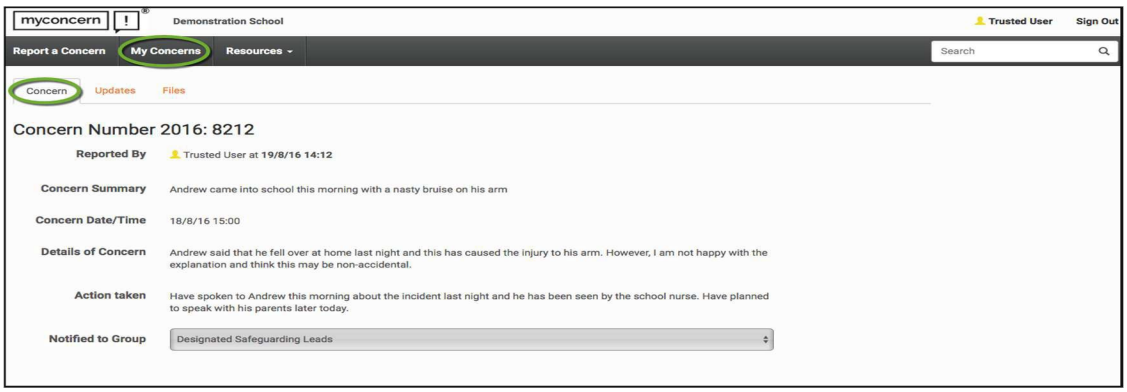


- Documents/relevant materials (such as photographs, screenshots or other images) can be uploaded

1.8 Viewing a concern



- Click on 'My Concerns' tab to view all of the concerns that you have recorded



- Click on specific concern hyperlink to view an individual concern

Appendix 9: Child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence (Part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2026)

526. This part of the statutory guidance outlines how schools and colleges should respond to all signs, reports and concerns of harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence. This includes incidents occurring outside of the school or college premises, and/or online (what to look out for and indicators of abuse are set out in Part one of this guidance). As set out in Part one of this guidance, all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here', and this is especially important when considering child-on-child abuse.

Understanding harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual harassment and sexual violence

527. HSB can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can occur also through a group of children towards a single child or towards another group of children. HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence, it can occur online or face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and is never acceptable. Schools and colleges should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence; that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "a part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios, a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it,
- recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported,
- recognising the escalatory nature of misogyny and the benefits of early identification to support their approach to minimising the risk of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence, and
- challenging behaviours, potentially criminal in nature, such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them, and
- taking a safeguarding approach in response to all incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual. All such incidents require a safeguarding response, with a proportionate approach that considers the age, development, and circumstances of the children involved, as well as any elements of coercion, exploitation or vulnerability.

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

529. Whilst any report of HSB, sexual harassment or sexual violence should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely girls will be the victims of sexual harassment and sexual violence and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with disabilities are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers[26].

[26] Jones, L et al. (2012) Prevalence and risk of violence against children with disabilities: a systematic review

530. Ultimately, it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

531. The umbrella term 'harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB) is widely used in child protection and applies **to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both.** HSB should always be considered within a child protection context.

532. Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum[27], continuum ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Behaviour that is problematic, abusive or violent is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. Advice on stages of typical sexual development and behaviour for different age groups can be found in Sexual development and behaviour in children | NSPCC Learning.

533. When assessing HSB, the ages and developmental stage of the children involved is critical. Sexual behaviour between children may be considered harmful if there is a significant age difference, typically more than two years' difference or if one is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child may also abuse an older child, especially if they hold power over them, e.g. due to a disability or physical size.

534. It is effective safeguarding practice for the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) to have a good understanding of HSB. This knowledge could form part of their safeguarding training and support preventative education, help implement effective safeguarding policies including a child protection policy and embed a whole school or college approach to safeguarding.

535.HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum[28]. Early intervention in inappropriate behaviour such as misogyny can help to prevent escalation to more serious abuse such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. Children who display HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma[29]. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Sexual harassment

536.Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' which can occur both online and off line and inside and outside of school or college. In this context it specifically relates to child-on-child sexual harassment. Such behaviour can:

- violate a child's dignity,
- make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and
- create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

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and meta-analysis of observational studies. The Lancet July 2012.

[27] https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/harmful-sexual-behaviour/understanding#skip-to-content

531. The umbrella term 'harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB) is widely used in child protection and applies to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both. HSB should always be considered within a child protection context.

[28] HSB framework and audit | NSPCC Learning discusses the continuum harmful behaviour can progress on (Hackett 2019 continuum model).

[29] Hackett et al 2013 study of children and young people with harmful sexual behaviour suggests that two-thirds had experienced some kind of abuse or trauma.

537. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, examples of sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothing or appearance and using sexualised names,
- sexual "jokes"or taunting,
- physical behaviour, such as deliberately brushing against someone, or interfering with someone's clothes. Schools and colleges should assess when such behaviour crosses into sexual violence–it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim,
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature,
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence[30]), and
- online sexual harassment, which may occur independently, or as a broader pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence[31]. This may include:

    - consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes[32] UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people provides detailed advice for schools and colleges.
    - sharing of unwanted explicit content
    - sexualised online bullying
    - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
    - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, and
    - coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

538. It is important that schools and colleges consider sexual harassment in broad terms. If left unchallenged, it can foster a culture that normalises inappropriate behaviour and increases the risk of leading to sexual violence.

Sexual violence

539. Schools and colleges should be aware that child-on-child sexual violence can and does occur, both inside and outside of school/college.

540. In this guidance, sexual violence refers to specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003[33]3 as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

[30] The Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 which amends the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to make upskirting a specific offence of voyeurism. The Act came into force on 12 April 2019.
[31] Project deSHAME from Childnet provides useful research, advice and resources regarding online sexual harassment.
[32] Taking and sharing nude photographs including those generated using AI of those aged under 18 is a criminal offence. UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people provides detailed advice for schools and colleges.
[33] Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Legislation.gov.uk).

Assault by penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE - Schools and colleges should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault).

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE – this could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party).

What consent is[34] Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity, and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice[35]:

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- the age of consent is 16[36]
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape

Preventing abuse

541. Effective safeguarding is demonstrated when schools and colleges are clear, in advance, about what local processes are in place and available support for incidents involving HSB, sexual harassment or sexual violence. It is important to review this information on a regular basis to ensure it is up to date. As such:

- if required, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should discuss the local response with police and local authority children's social care to inform the school or college's policies (particularly the child protection policy) and response, and
- the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) should be familiar with local

[34] Further information can be found at Rape Crisis

[35] PSHE Teaching about consent from the PSHE association provides advice and lesson plans to teach consent at Key stage 3 and 4.

[36] It is important to differentiate between consensual sexual activity between children of a similar age and that which involves any power imbalance, coercion or exploitation. Due to their additional training, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should be involved and generally speaking leading the school or college response. If in any doubt, they should seek expert advice.

specialist support services for all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) and know how to access them when needed.

Further details on specialist support and interventions can be found in Annex A.

What schools and colleges need to know in advance of responding to reports of HSB, sexual harassment and/or sexual violence

542. Schools and colleges should have clear, well-promoted, and accessible systems that enable children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be taken seriously (as outlined in Part two of this guidance).

543. Reports of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence are likely to be complex and may require swift, difficult professional decisions to be made. To respond to reports effectively, schools and colleges should invest in pre-planning, effective staff training and robust safeguarding policies, which will provide schools and colleges with the foundation for a calm, and considered approach when incidents arise.

544. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the school or college contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (and as summarised in Part two of this guidance).

545. This part of the guidance does not attempt to provide (nor would it be possible to provide) detailed guidance on what to do in any or every case. Instead, it provides principles of effective safeguarding practice and principles for schools and colleges to consider in their decision-making process.

546. Ultimately, any decisions are for the school or college to make on a case-by-case basis, led by the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) using their professional judgement, supported by external agencies, such as local authority children's social care and the police as needed.

547. The case studies included illustrate possible responses to incidents. These are not prescriptive but offer an insight into the range of options that are available to schools and colleges to respond to these reports.

Support for schools and colleges

548. Schools and colleges should not feel isolated when addressing incidents of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence. Support is available from a range of agencies and organisations.

549. Local authority children's social care and the police are key partners, especially where a crime may have been committed. Referrals to the police often follow a referral to local authority children's social care.

550. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should lead the school or college's response and should be familiar with the local referral process. For more on police referrals, see the section 'Reporting to the police' on paragraphs 586-596. Schools and colleges may also find the following resources helpful:

- **National Crime Agency's** CEOP Safety Centre offers support and reporting mechanisms for online sexual abuse.

- **NSPCC** helpline provides expert advice for professionals via 0808 800 5000 or help@nspcc.org.uk.
- Rape Crisis and The Survivors Trust provide specialist support for victims of sexual violence.
- **The Anti-Bullying Alliance** provides guidance for schools on Sexual and sexist bullying.

551. Online incidents of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence can be complex, often involving widespread abuse or harm on multiple social media platforms and repeated victimisation. Support is available from:

- **UK Safer Internet Centre** provides an online safety helpline for professionals at 0344 381 4772 or helpline@saferinternet.org.uk.
- **Childline/IWF** provide a free tool, Report Remove, for children to report nude or sexual images and/or videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online.
- **UKCIS** provides : Advice for education settings working with children and young people on handling reports of children sharing non-consensual nudes and semi-nudes and/or videos. See footnote 8 for more information.
- **National Crime Agency's** CEOP Education Programme provides resources for professional's and parents and carers on protecting children and young people from online child sexual abuse.
- **LGfL** provide education materials via 'Undressed' on how to teach young children about being tricked into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders.

Additional sources of support are listed in Annex A.

Responding to a report of HSB, sexual harassment and/or sexual violence

The immediate response to a report

552. Children may struggle to verbally disclose abuse. Instead, they may show signs or behave in ways that
signal distress, hoping that adults will notice and react. Disclosures may come indirectly for example, through a friend, an overheard conversation that suggests a child has been harmed, or noticeable changes to a child's own behaviour which may indicate that something is wrong. As outlined in Part one of this guidance, staff should act immediately on any concerns about a child's welfare, rather than wait to be told.

553. The way a school or college initially responds to a report from a child is incredibly important. A supportive and respectful response can empower victims to come forward, whilst a poor response may discourage further disclosures.

554. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside the school or college environment should be treated with equal seriousness. Victims should never be made to feel that they are causing a problem by reporting or ever be made to feel ashamed for coming forward. Staff should explain that the law exists to protect children and young people, not criminalise them, and should do so in such a way that is reassuring and avoids alarming or distressing them.

555. As per Part one of this guidance, all staff should be trained to manage reports appropriately. While local policies (and training) will guide specific procedures, best practice includes:

- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy)
- careful handling and management of reports that include an online element, including an awareness of guidance on searching screening and confiscation and UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. **Staff should not view or forward illegal images of a child.** The above advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the police for inspection
- not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) or local authority children's social care) to discuss next steps. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to
- recognising that a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be **anyone** within the school or college staff. Staff should recognise the significance of being chosen as a confidant and respond with empathy
- recognising that an initial disclosure may not reflect the full extent of abuse, and that trauma can impact memory meaning details may be affected
- keeping in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to disclosure especially for children with vulnerabilities related to disability, sex, ethnicity, or sexual orientation
- listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, avoiding judgement, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, and asking only open-ended questions - such as where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was
- considering the best way to record the report. Ideally, staff should wait until the end of the conversation to write a detailed summary, allowing the staff member to give the child their full attention. If notes are taken during the report, especially when a second staff member is present, care must be taken to remain engaged and not appear distracted. **It is essential a written record is made**
- record only what the child says, without interpretation or personal opinion. These notes may be used in statutory assessments and/or criminal investigations, and
- if the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), is not present during the report, they must be informed as soon as practically possible.

Considering confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality

556. Staff should never promise confidentiality when receiving a report, as it is highly likely that it will be in the best interests of the victim to seek advice from others in order to provide support and engage appropriate agencies.

557. Only essential staff and agencies should be involved – those directly supporting the child/ren or participating in any investigation.

558. If a victim requests confidentiality, there are no easy or definitive answers. Even without consent to share, staff may share information if a legal basis under UK GDPR applies, such as the public task basis which allows sharing to fulfil a legal duty. Advice should be sought from the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), who should consider:

- informing parents or carers, unless doing so increases the risk to the victim,
- referring to local authority children's social care if the child is at risk of harm, in immediate danger, or has been harmed, and
- reporting crimes such as rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault to the police. Even if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach, in these cases.

559. Ultimately, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should balance the victim's wishes with the duty to protect them and other children.
560. If the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) does make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or a report to the police against the victim's wishes, it should be handled with care. The decision should be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support offered.

561. Further guidance on confidentiality and information sharing is available from

Safeguarding Practitioners Information Sharing Advice and NSPCC: Information sharing and confidentiality for practitioners.

Anonymity

562. Where an allegation of sexual harassment or sexual violence is progressing through the criminal justice system, schools and colleges should understand the importance of anonymity, witness support, and the criminal process in general so they can offer support and act appropriately[37].

Relevant information can be found in: CPS: Safeguarding Children as Victims and Witnesses.

563. As part of good safeguarding practice, schools and colleges should take reasonable steps to protect the anonymity of all children involved. Amongst other things, this includes carefully deciding, based on the nature of the report, which staff need to know about the report and what support that will be provided for the children involved.

[37] It is not the role of schools and colleges to provide legal advice or support to victims, alleged perpetrators or parents in respect of a criminal justice process. Rather, schools and colleges should be aware of their own position and responsibilities.

564. Schools and colleges should also consider the potential impact of social media, which can spread rumours and compromise victims' identities. Guidance on managing these risks is available in paragraph 551 and in Childnet's cyberbullying guidance.

Risk and needs assessment[38]

565. Following a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should carry out an immediate risk and needs assessment. For a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment for a report of sexual violence should consider:

- the victim's safety and support needs
- potential other victims
- the alleged perpetrator(s)
- the wider school or college community, including staff and students, and any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms, and
- the location and time of the incident, with steps to improve safety in that area.

566. Risk and needs assessments should be recorded (paper or digital), regularly reviewed and used to inform ongoing safeguarding decisions. At all times, the school or college should be actively considering the risks posed to all their pupils and students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

567. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should engage with local authority children's social care and specialist services as needed. In cases of sexual violence, professional risk assessments by social workers or sexual violence specialists are likely to be required. The school or college's risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Professional assessments should be used to inform the school or college approach to supporting and protecting their pupils and students and updating their own risk assessment.

Action following a report of HSB, sexual harassment and/or sexual violence

What to consider

568. HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence can happen anywhere. All staff working with children should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns whether they occur online, offline, or outside of the school/college. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and should lead the initial response by the school or college considering:

- the victim's wishes regarding how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much

[38] Appendix 9: Child-on-child sexual abuse: risk and needs assessment and version record

control as reasonably possible regarding how an investigation will be progressed and what support they are offered, balanced against the school or college's duty to protect others,
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether HSB was displayed,
- the ages and developmental stages of the children involved,
- any power imbalance between the children such as differences in age, maturity, or social status. Consider if the victim has a disability or learning difficulty,
- whether the alleged incident was isolated or part of a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature),
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate
- relationships between children,
- importance of understanding intrafamilial harm and support for siblings if needed,
- any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff, and
- wider contextual concerns, including links to child sexual exploitation (CSE) or child criminal exploitation (CCE).

569. All staff should always act in the best interests of the child and follow general safeguarding principles. Immediate steps should be taken to support and protect the victim, the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other affected children.

Children sharing a classroom: Initial considerations when the report is made

Any report of sexual harassment or sexual violence is likely to be traumatic for the victim. Victims should be taken seriously, supported, and kept safe. They should never feel blamed, ashamed, or made to feel that they are causing a problem by making a report.

Reports of rape or assault by penetration are especially serious, and likely to be especially difficult for the victim, and close proximity to the alleged perpetrator(s) is likely to be especially distressing. While the school or college establishes the facts and liaises with local authority children's social care and the police, the alleged perpetrator(s) **should** be removed from any shared classes with the victim. The school or college should also **carefully** consider how to maintain a reasonable physical separation between the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) across school or college premises including before or after school-based activities, and on transport to and from the school or college, where appropriate. These actions are in the best interests of all children involved and should not be perceived to be a judgement on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator(s).

For other reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence, decisions about shared classes, proximity on site, sharing school or college premises and school or college transport, should be considered immediately.

All initial responses should be carefully evaluated and reflect the considerations outlined in paragraphs 561-562 including the victim's wishes, the nature of the allegations and the need to protect all children involved.

Options to manage the report

570. It is important that schools and colleges consider every report of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence on a case-by-case basis as outlined in paragraph 561. When to inform the alleged perpetrator(s) should be carefully considered. If a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police is being made, then, as a general rule, the designated safeguarding lead (or a

deputy) should consult with those agencies to determine next steps, including how and when to inform the alleged perpetrator(s) of the allegations. However, as per general safeguarding principles, schools and colleges should not delay taking immediate action to safeguard children.

571. There are four common scenarios for schools and colleges to consider when managing such reports:

1. Manage internally

572. In some cases, such as one-off incidents of HSB or sexual harassment, it may be appropriate for the school or college to manage the situation internally, using the behaviour policy and providing pastoral support, without involving statutory services.

573. Regardless of the response, schools and colleges should make clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence, that it is never acceptable, and will not be tolerated.

574. All concerns, discussions, decisions and their rationale should be clearly recorded either in writing or digitally.

Case study

A 12-year-old girl reported to the head of year that five boys in her friendship group were playing a game, which involved daring each other to use increasingly graphic sexually explicit language, describing what they would like to do to her. She was very upset but did not want to get anyone into trouble or everyone to know about it. She just wanted them to stop. She explained this to her head of year. The head of year explained to her that what she had experienced was extremely serious and reassured her that her reaction was completely understandable. He also explained that he would pass the report to the designated safeguarding lead to ensure records were updated. He explained he would be following the school's behaviour policy and would speak to the boys involved and their parents, making it clear that what they were doing was sexual bullying and harassment and taken extremely seriously. The girl's parents were contacted and given the opportunity to discuss the action the school planned to take.

Result: the boys were removed from the classroom and reprimanded with their parents present. It was made clear that the behaviour was unacceptable, and they received a punishment in line with the school's behaviour policy. They were also warned about the more severe consequences that would arise if the harassment continued.

2. Universal services and community based Early Help assessment

575. In line with managing internally, the school or college may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from other support. Universal services and community based Early Help play a crucial role in identifying emerging problems and providing support at an early stage. They are not an individual service, but a system of support delivered by local authorities and their partners working together and taking collective responsibility to provide the right provision in their area. This level of Early Help is provided through universal services and other voluntary and community services. This includes universal services such as education and health services, as well as support delivered through Best Start Family Hubs, youth services, after school clubs and housing provision. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the local Early Help process is and how and where to access support.

576. More information on community-based Early Help is set out in Part one of this guidance and in Working Together to Safeguard Children.

577. Community based Early Help will work best when placed alongside strong school or college policies, preventative education and engagement with parents and carers.

578. Schools and colleges, as relevant agencies, should be part of discussions with statutory safeguarding partners to agree the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, as part of the local arrangements. Safeguarding partners should publish a local threshold document which includes the process for the local community based Early Help assessment and the type and level of services to be provided, and designated safeguarding leads (and their deputies) will need to familiarise themselves with this document.

579. Community based Early Help and the option to manage a report internally do not need to be mutually exclusive: a school could manage internally and seek early help for both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s).

580. Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated.

581. All concerns, discussions, decisions and their rationale should be clearly recorded either in writing or digitally.

3. Referrals to Family Help – including targeted Early Help and local authority children's social care

582. Some children and families may require more targeted support than that offered at the universal and community based Early Help level. The Families First Partnership (FFP) Programme Guide provides a toolkit to assist safeguarding partners set up effective Family Help models to identify children and families who would benefit from more targeted support through Family Help. By Family Help, we mean both targeted early help and support and services delivered under s.17 of the Children Act 1989.

583. Targeted early help services delivered through Family Help are coordinated by a local authority and/or their partners to address specific concerns within a family. Examples of these include parenting support, mental health support, youth services, youth offending teams and housing and employment services. Targeted early help may be appropriate for children and families who have multiple and or complex needs. It is a voluntary approach, requiring the family's consent.

584. Practitioners who begin working with families at the targeted early help stage can continue to lead work with families if the child is later assessed to be a child in need as defined by Section 17 of the Childrens Act 1989.

585. Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, schools and colleges should make a referral to local authority children's social care.

586. At the point of referral to local authority children's social care, schools and colleges will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent

or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of local authority children's social care.

581. If a referral is made, local authority children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services.

588. Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the school or college (especially the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy)) should be working alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children that require support.

589. Schools and colleges should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a local authority children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school or college. It will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with local authority children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions the school or college takes do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk and needs assessment as per paragraphs 558-560 will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report, and all children at the school or college should be immediate.

590. In some cases, local authority children's social care will review the evidence and decide that a statutory intervention is not appropriate. The school or college (generally led by the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy)) should be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm or if circumstances change. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider other support mechanisms such as Family Help, specialist support and pastoral support.

591. Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated.

592. All concerns, discussions, decisions and their rationale should be clearly recorded either in writing or digitally.

4. Reporting to the police

593. Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to local authority children's social care (as above).

594. It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process.

595. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is that this should be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator(s) is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach. The following advice may help schools and colleges decide when to engage the Police and what to expect of them when they do:
<u>When to call the police</u>

596. Where a report has been made to the police, the school or college should consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff, and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator(s) and their parents or carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.

597. At this stage, schools and colleges will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school or college is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of local authority children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.

598. All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. The names and structures of these units are matters for local forces. It will be important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are aware of their local arrangements.

599. In some cases, it may become clear very quickly that the police (for whatever reason) will not take further action. In such circumstances, it is important that the school or college continues to engage with specialist support for the victim and alleged perpetrator(s), as required.

600. Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), it will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school or college take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

601. If a school or college has questions about the investigation, they should ask the police. The police will help and support the school or college as much as they can (within the constraints of any legal restrictions).

602. Whatever the response, it should be underpinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated.

603. All concerns, discussions, decisions and their rationale should be clearly recorded in either writing or digitally.

Considering bail conditions

604. The police will consider what action to take to manage the assessed risk of harm. This could involve the use of police bail with conditions, prior to a suspect appearing in court, or court bail with or without conditions after the first appearance.

605. Alternatively, the person suspected of an offence could be 'released under investigation' (RUI). People released under RUI will not necessarily have conditions attached to their release from custody and it is possible for a person on bail also to have no conditions.

606. Whatever arrangements are in place, the school or college will need to consider what additional measures may be necessary to manage any assessed risk of harm that may arise within their institution.

607. Particular regard should be given to the additional stress and trauma that might be caused to a

victim within the institution; the potential for the suspected person to intimidate the victim or a witness; the need to ensure that any risk management measures strike a balance between management of risk and the rights of an un-convicted person (e.g. rights to privacy, family life, etc).

608. Careful liaison with the police investigators should help to develop a balanced set of arrangements.

Managing any delays in the criminal process

609. There may be delays in any case that is being progressed through the criminal justice system. Schools and colleges should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and other children in the school or college. The risk and needs assessment as per paragraphs 558-560 will help inform any decision.

610. Considering any disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator(s) whilst an investigation is ongoing is discussed below in the alleged perpetrator(s) section.

611. Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), it will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school or college take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

612. If schools or colleges have questions about the investigation, they should ask the police. The police will help and support the school or college as much as they can (within the constraints of any legal restrictions).

The end of the criminal process

613. If a child is convicted or cautioned for a sexual offence, the school or college should update its risk and needs assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all the children at the school or college and, consider any suitable action in line with their behaviour policy. This process should include a review of the necessary actions to keep all parties safe and meet their needs. If the perpetrator(s) remains in the same school or college as the victim, the school or college should be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator(s) now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions the school or college thinks are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the lesson timetable of the perpetrator(s).

614. Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school or college. It will be important that the school or college ensures both the victim and perpetrator(s) remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).

615. If a case results in “no further action” by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or a not guilty verdict, the school or college should continue supporting both the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) for as long as is necessary. These outcomes will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated or was withdrawn does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. Schools and colleges should discuss any decisions with the victim in this light and continue to offer support. The alleged perpetrator(s) is/are also likely to require ongoing support for what will have likely been a difficult experience.

Case study

A 15-year-old girl disclosed to a pastoral lead that she had been sexually touched by a 15-year-old boy, on public transport on the way to school. The school made a referral to local authority children's social care on the same day, submitting a MARF (Multi Agency Referral Form) for both children. The MARF led to immediate police involvement. The school arranged for the boy to have an amended timetable so that he was not in any class with the girl. Specific teaching staff were briefed on the need to ensure the children were not together. The girl was given a trusted adult she could go to at any time. This staff member agreed she would meet with the girl every day and she supported her with break and lunchtime arrangements. The girl was able to suggest how she would feel safest at lunchtime.

At the end of the second day, another girl went to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and made a report about the same boy. She reported that he had sexually assaulted her in school three weeks before. The school submitted a MARF for the girl and a second MARF for the boy. The school knew the police were involved and that a MERLIN (a crime report involving a child) had been submitted, but they knew the police would not have the ongoing and detailed information held by the school about the boy. The school did not want either girl further distressed by possibly seeing the boy around school. The option choices and group sizes for the three children meant it was very difficult to educate separately. The school contacted another secondary school. The school links had been established as part of the In Year Fair Access Process (IYFAP) and made immediate arrangements for the boy to move to the other school so that his education was not disrupted. The boy remained at the new school for the duration of the investigation. The DSLs from both schools worked together with police and the children and ensured appropriate child protection information was shared so the receiving school was fully aware of the allegations. The boy received a caution, and the decision was made for him to remain at his new school where he engaged with a personalised RSHE plan. Parents were involved throughout. The children were at the centre of decision-making, often suggesting how they could be supported.

substantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

616. As set out in paragraphs 72-73 of this guidance, all concerns, discussions, decisions, and their rationale, should be clearly recorded in either writing or digitally. Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified, and addressed.

617. If a report is found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider whether the child and/or the person making the allegation needs support or may have been abused by someone else, and this was a cry for help. If so, a referral to local authority children's social care may be appropriate.

618. If a report is proven to be deliberately false or malicious, the school or college should consider any disciplinary action against the individual, in line with their own behaviour policy.

Ongoing response

Safeguarding and supporting the victim

619. The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should guide any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the victim:

- the needs and wishes of the victim should be paramount (along with protecting the child) in any response. It is important they feel in as much control of the process as is reasonably possible. Wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, should be able to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school or college is a safe space for them
- consider the age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegation(s) and the potential risk of further abuse. Schools and colleges should be aware that, by the very nature of sexual harassment and sexual violence, a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and alleged perpetrator(s)
- the victim should never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report
- consider the proportionality of the response. Support should be tailored on a case-by-case basis. The support required regarding a one-off incident of sexualised name-calling is likely to be vastly different from that for a report of rape
- schools and colleges should be aware that sexual assault can result in a range of health needs, including physical, mental, and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy. Children and young people that have a health need arising from sexual assault or abuse can access specialist NHS support from a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). SARCs offer confidential and non-judgemental support to victims and survivors of sexual assault and abuse. They provide medical, practical, and emotional care and advice to all children and adults, regardless of when the incident occurred, and
- it will be important in all scenarios that decisions and actions are regularly
- eviewed and that relevant policies are updated to reflect lessons learnt. It is particularly important to look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a pattern is identified, the school or college should decide on a course of action. Consideration should be given as to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur and where appropriate extra teaching time and/or staff training could be delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

620. Support can include:

- Family help and local authority children's social care as set out in Part one.
- Children and Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs) provide emotional and practical support for victims of sexual violence. They are based within the specialist sexual violence sector and will help the victim understand what their options are and how the criminal justice process works if they have reported or are considering reporting to the police. ChISVAs will work in partnership with schools and colleges to ensure the best possible outcomes for the victim.
- Police and social care agencies can signpost to ChISVA services (where available), or referrals can be made directly to the ChISVA service by the young person or school or college. Contact details for ChISVAs can be found at Rape Crisis and The Survivors Trust.
- Children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS) is used as a term for all services that work with children who have difficulties with their emotional or behavioural wellbeing. Services vary depending on local authority. Most CYPMHS have their own website, which will have information about access, referrals and contact numbers.
- The specialist sexual violence sector can provide therapeutic support for children who have experienced sexual violence. Contact Rape Crisis (England & Wales) or The Survivors Trust for details of local specialist organisations. The Male Survivors Partnership can provide details of services which specialise in supporting men and boys.

- The NHS – Help after rape and sexual assault - NHS (www.nhs.uk) provides a range of advice, help and support including advice about the risk of pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STI), reporting to the police and forensics.
- Rape and sexual assault referral centres services can be found at: Find a rape and sexual assault referral centre . Sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) offer medical, practical and emotional support. They have specially trained doctors, nurses and support workers. If children, young people, or their families are unsure which service to access, they should contact their GP or call the NHS on 111.
- Childline provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.
- Internet Watch Foundation works internationally to remove child sexual abuse online images and videos and offers a place for the public to report them anonymously.
- Childline / IWF: Remove a nude image shared online Report Remove is a free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online, to see if they can be removed from the internet.

Case study

A 15-year-old boy and girl who go to the same school had sex at a party and, without them knowing, other people at the party filmed it. The video was then uploaded to a site and shared around their school and other schools in the area.

Following this, the girl was sexually harassed at school being called a 'slag and a slut' during lessons. Other boys in the school began propositioning her in school and trying to touch her aggressively and inappropriately. A teacher who saw the sexual harassment in his class talked to the girl about how she was feeling and suggested she spoke to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). The DSL spoke to the girl and recorded the report, discussed her options about trying to get the video deleted from people's devices and the website it was on, and how to talk to her parents about what happened. The teachers and parents did not view the video, and this was communicated to the girl and boy.

Whilst in this case the boy was not harassed in the same way as the girl, the school recognised he was also a victim and spoke to him about his feelings and what could be done to support him. The teacher arranged a workshop as part of the RSHE curriculum for all Year 10s about respect, shame, consent, and their collective responsibility to challenge inappropriate sexual behaviour.

The parents of the girl and boy worked with the school and the police to get the content removed via the IWF and identify who recorded and distributed the video. Both the girl and boy were supported through the investigation with counselling.

Those responsible for harassing the girl and sharing the video received sanctions in line with the school behaviour policy.

621. Victims may not share everything at once and might disclose information gradually. It's important to keep communication open and supported. When it is clear that ongoing support is needed, schools and colleges should ask the victim whether they would like a designated trusted adult (for example, their form tutor or designated safeguarding lead or a deputy) to talk to about their needs. The choice of this adult should be the victim's (wherever reasonably possible) and should be respected and supported.

622. Children who have experienced sexual violence display a very wide range of responses to their experience, including in some cases clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses, or no overt signs at all. Schools and colleges should remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting

those signs and show sensitivity to the needs of the child (e.g. about attendance in lessons) irrespective of how overt the child's distress is.

623. Schools and colleges should avoid any actions that would isolate the victim, in particular from supportive peer groups. However, some victims may find it difficult to follow a full-time timetable and may wish to withdraw from certain lessons and activities. This should be based on the victim's needs, not for the convenience of managing the situation. If required, schools and colleges should provide a physical space for victims to withdraw to.

624. Schools and colleges may need to maintain protective and supportive measures for victims over an extended period. Schools and colleges should be prepared for this and should work with local authority children's social care and other agencies as required.

625. It is therefore important that the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) knows how, when, and where to seek support.

626. It is important that the school or college take all reasonable steps to protect the victim from bullying or harassment as a result of any report they have made.

627. Whilst they should be given all the necessary support to remain in their school or college, if trauma prevents the victim being unable to do this, alternative provision or a move to another school or college should be considered to enable them to continue to receive suitable education. This should only be at the request of the victim and following discussion with their parents or carers.

628. It is important that if the victim does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should take responsibility to ensure this happens (and should discuss with the victim and, where appropriate their parents or carers as to the most suitable way of doing this) as well as transferring the child protection file. Information sharing advice referenced at paragraphs 137-145 will help support this process.

Ongoing considerations: victim and alleged perpetrator(s) sharing classes

Paragraphs 545-548 consider the immediate response to a report. Once the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) has decided what the next steps will be in terms of progressing the report, they should **carefully consider** again the question of the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) sharing classes and sharing space at school or college. This will inevitably involve complex and difficult professional decisions, including considering their duty to safeguard children and their duty to educate them.

It is important each report is considered on a case-by-case basis and risk and needs assessments are updated as appropriate. As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, the best interests of the child should come first. In all cases, schools and colleges should follow general safeguarding principles as per this guidance.

Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the alleged perpetrator(s) should be removed from any classes they share with the victim. The school or college should also consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) a reasonable distance apart on school or college premises (including during before and after school-based activities) and on transport to and from school or college where appropriate. This is in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgement on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator(s). As per paragraphs 586 - 596, close liaison with the police is essential.

Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the school or college should take suitable action, if they have not already done so. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator(s) to remain in the same school or college would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or students).

Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school or college should, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion.149 Where the perpetrator(s) is going to remain at the school or college, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator(s) in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school and college premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.

In all cases, schools and colleges should record and be able to justify their decision-making.

Reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment will, in some cases, not lead to a report to the police (for a variety of reasons). In some cases, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or sexual harassment are reported to the police and the case is not progressed or are reported to the police and ultimately result in a not guilty verdict. None of this means the offence did not happen or that the victim lied. The process will have affected both victim and alleged perpetrator(s). Appropriate support should be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, schools and colleges should record and be able to justify their decision-making.

All of the above should be considered with the needs and wishes of the victim at the heart of the process (supported by parents and carers as required). Any arrangements should be kept under review.

Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s) and children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

629. The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator(s):

- The school or college will have a difficult balancing act to consider. On one hand, they need to safeguard the victim (and the wider pupil/student body) and on the other hand provide the alleged perpetrator(s) with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions. Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary.
- Consider the age and the developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s), the nature of the allegations and frequency of allegations. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/or negative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them.
- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The alleged perpetrator(s) may potentially have unmet needs (in some cases these may be considerable) as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other

children. HSB in young children may be (and often is[39]) a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. More information on HSB can be found at paragraphs 525-528. Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from local authority children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police..

- The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has developed a HSB toolkit, which amongst other things, provides support, advice and information on how to prevent it, links to organisations and helplines, resources about HSB by children, internet safety, sexual development and preventing child sexual abuse.
- The Lucy Faithfull Foundation in collaboration with the Home Office, has developed 'Shore Space', an online resource which works to prevent harmful sexual behaviour. Shore Space offers a confidential chat service supporting young people who are concerned about their own or someone else's sexual thoughts and behaviour.
- The NSPCC provides free and independent advice about HSB: NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour and NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework.
- Beyond Referrals | Contextual Safeguarding provides a school self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.
- Stop It Now – Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

630. It is important that the perpetrator(s) is/are also given the correct support to try to stop them re-offending and to address any underlying trauma that may be causing this behaviour. Addressing inappropriate behaviour, including sexism and misogyny, can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. Advice on behaviour in schools is clear that teachers can sanction pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them. If the perpetrator(s) is to be excluded the decision must be lawful, reasonable and fair. Further information about exclusions can be found in statutory guidance for schools: Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England.

631. School can be a significant protective factor for children who have displayed HSB, and continued access to school, with a comprehensive safeguarding management plan in place, is an important factor to consider before final decisions are made. It is important that if an alleged perpetrator does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs and where appropriate, potential risks to other children and staff. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should take responsibility to ensure this happens as well as transferring the child protection file. Information sharing advice referenced at paragraphs 137-145 will help support this process.

Sanctions and the alleged perpetrator(s)

Schools

632. With regard to the alleged perpetrator(s), advice on behaviour in schools is clear that teachers can sanction pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them. Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies and PRUs on exclusions can be found here.

[39] Hackett et al 2013 study of children and young people with harmful sexual behaviour suggests that two-thirds had experienced some kind of abuse or trauma.

633. Disciplinary action can be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or local authority children's social care are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not in itself prevent a school from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities, about what happened, and imposing a penalty accordingly. This is a matter for the school and should be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should take a leading role. The school should consider if, by taking any action, it would prejudice an investigation and/or any subsequent prosecution. Careful liaison with the police and/or local authority children's social care should help the school make a determination. It will also be important to consider whether there are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for the school to reach its own view about what happened while an independent investigation is considering the same facts.

Colleges

634. Whilst colleges are not under the same legal obligations as schools with regard to behaviour, the principles set out in paragraph 627 will still be relevant and should be applied to their decision-making process.

Discipline and support

635. Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary. The school or college should be very clear as to what its approach is. On the one hand there is preventative or forward-looking action to safeguard the victim and/or the perpetrator(s), especially where there are concerns that a perpetrator themselves may have been a victim of abuse; and, on the other, there is disciplinary action to punish a perpetrator for their past conduct. The school or college should be very clear as to which category any action they are taking falls or whether it is really both and should ensure that the action complies with the law relating to each relevant category.

Working with parents and carers

636. The school or college will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the parents or carers of the alleged perpetrator(s) when there has been a report of sexual violence (this might not be necessary or proportionate in the case of sexual harassment and should be considered on a case-by-case basis). The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk. Schools and colleges should carefully consider what information they provide to the respective parents or carers about the other child involved and when they do so. In some cases, local authority children's social care and/or the police will have a very clear view, and it will be important for the school or college to work with relevant agencies to ensure a consistent approach is taken to information sharing.

637. It is good practice for the school or college to meet the victim's parents or carers with the victim present to discuss what arrangements are being put in place to safeguard the victim and understand their wishes in terms of support they may need and how the report will be progressed.

638. It is also good practice for the school or college to meet the parents or carers of the alleged perpetrator(s) to discuss any arrangements that are being put into place that impact an alleged perpetrator(s), such as, for example, moving them out of classes with the victim and what this means for their education.
The reason behind any decisions should be explained. Support for the alleged perpetrator(s) should be discussed.

639. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) would generally attend any such meetings. Consideration to the attendance of other agencies should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

640. Clear behaviour policies and child protection policies, especially policies that set out the principles of how reports of sexual violence will be managed and how victims and alleged perpetrators are likely to be supported, that parents and carers have access to, will, in some cases, help manage what are inevitably very difficult conversations.

641. Parents and carers may well struggle to cope with a report that their child has been the victim of a sexual assault or is alleged to have sexually assaulted another child. Details of organisations that support parents are provided in Annex A. Schools and colleges should consider signposting parents and carers to this support.

Safeguarding other children

642. Consideration should be given to supporting children (and adult students) who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape and assault by penetration. Witnessing such an event is likely to be traumatic and support may be required.

643. Following any report of sexual harassment or sexual violence, it is likely that some children will take “sides”. The school or college should be doing all they can to ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s), and any witnesses, are not being bullied or harassed.

644. Social media is very likely to play a central role in the fall out from any incident or alleged incident. There is the potential for contact between victim and alleged perpetrator(s) and a very high likelihood that friends from either side could harass the victim or alleged perpetrator(s) online and/or become victims of harassment themselves. Specialist online safety support is discussed at paragraph 544.

645. School transport is a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s) following any incident or alleged incident. The school or college, as part of its risk and needs assessment, should consider any additional potential support needs to keep all of their children safe.

646. A whole-school or college approach to safeguarding, that makes clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence, that it is never acceptable, and it will be not tolerated. A robust preventative education programme will help to create an environment where all children at the school or college feel safe, supported, and respectful of their peers, especially when reports of sexual harassment or sexual violence are made.

647. It is important that schools and colleges keep their policies, processes, and curriculum under constant review to protect all their children. Reports of HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence (especially where there is evidence of patterns of behaviour) may point to environmental and or systemic problems that could and should be addressed by updating relevant policies, processes, or relevant parts of the curriculum. Alongside this, patterns identified in schools may also be reflective of the wider issues within a local area and it is good practice to share emerging trends with safeguarding partners.

Appendix 10: Child-on-child sexual abuse: risk and needs assessment and version record

1) “Child A” (victim) and “Child B” (alleged perpetrator) to signify the children involved, rather than saying “victim” and “alleged perpetrator”. We should avoid assigning guilt until a formal investigation has been conducted by the appropriate authorities.

(2) Consider each question/consideration from the perspective of both students and be sure to do this in collaboration with them. Also consider the impact on, and needs of, the wider school community, and record any concerns or actions in the most appropriate column.

(3) This RA should be completed in conjunction with the relevant multi-agency safeguarding team (MAST) when conducting this risk assessment and update it in response to any advice they provide. Some of the prompts may require input from other MAST agencies. Add specific questions and considerations based on the nature of each incident and on the advice provided.

(4) Keep track of the changes you make:

Create a new copy of the document

Update the version number at the top of the risk assessment

Record what has changed in the update log (at the end of the document)

Save the most recent version of the risk assessment in the appropriate places (for example, the child’s safeguarding file)

(5) This should be a living document – you may need to update it as often as daily based on conversations with, and feedback from, the children and parents involved, feedback from staff, guidance from the MAST, or information from the police and children’s social care.

Normal	Inappropriate	Problematic	Abusive	Violent
• Developmentally expected • Socially acceptable • Consensual, mutual, reciprocal • Shared decision making	• Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour • Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group • Context for behaviour may be inappropriate • Generally consensual and reciprocal	• Problematic and concerning behaviour • Developmentally unusual and socially • unexpected • No overt elements of victimisation • Consent issues may be unclear • May lack reciprocity or equal power • May include levels of compulsivity	• Victimising intent or outcome • Includes misuse of power • Coercion and force to ensure compliance • Intrusive • Informed consent lacking or not able to be freely given • May include elements of expressive violence	• Physically violent sexual abuse • Highly intrusive • Instrumental violence which is psychologically and/or sexually arousing to the child responsible for the behaviour • Sadism

Fig. 1 Adapted from ‘A continuum of children and young people’s sexual behaviours’ (Hackett, 2010)

Child-on-child sexual abuse: Risk assessment

AREA OF RISK	CONSIDERATIONS	CHILD 'A'	CHILD 'B'	NOTES	ACTIONS
Details of the incident Record details of the incident from the point of view of both children	How serious is the incident? Was it a crime? Do we need to make arrangements to limit contact between the children involved? (If the allegation relates to rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault, the answer is automatically yes) How did the school find out about it? Was it reported directly or by someone else with knowledge of the incident?			Use this column to record additional information that may be relevant For example, previous, unrelated behaviour incidents	
Social risks	Do the children share a peer group? Are people in their friend group likely to take sides? Do they both attend your school? Do other people know about the incident? Do those people understand: ○ Who they can talk to if they have concerns about the people involved, or about their own safety and wellbeing ○ The importance of confidentiality ○ If, and how, they may need to be involved in any further investigations Are they likely to be the subject of gossip, bullying or further harassment? Have there been previous incidents of sexually inappropriate behaviour within their peer group(s)? Do they risk being alienated from their friend group(s) as a result of this incident?				

AREA OF RISK	CONSIDERATIONS	CHILD 'A'	CHILD 'B'	NOTES	ACTIONS
Physical risks	Do they feel, or continue to feel, physically threatened by the other child? Do you have reason to believe they pose a continued risk to the safety and wellbeing of the victim, or other students and staff? Are they at risk of physical harm as a result of this incident (for example, bullying or 'retribution' by peers) Do they share classes/break times/etc.? Are they likely to come into contact with each other (or anyone else involved in/with knowledge of the incident) outside of school? How can such contact be limited?				
Environmental risks	Do they live in a home where violence or abuse has occurred? Do they live in or near an area or location known to police to be high risk for sexual harassment or assault? Are they active on social media? If so, how? Do they know how to protect themselves from online grooming? What activities do they take part in outside of school? Are parents clear about: o How the school (and partner agencies) are handling the incident? o Confidentiality? o The conduct expected of them while an investigation is ongoing?				

DATE	UPDATES MADE	REASONS FOR UPDATES	UPDATES MADE BY
	E.g, “Updated lunchtime arrangements”	E.g, “Feedback from Child A”	

Appendix 11: Additional advice and support (including Sexual violence and sexual harassment)

There is a wealth of information available to support schools and colleges. The following list is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point:

Abuse

Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse has introduced new resources to help education professionals identify and respond to concerns of child sexual abuse and abusive behaviours.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – DfE advice

Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance – Home Office advice

Faith based abuse: National Action Plan – DfE advice

Forced marriage resource pack

Disrespect NoBody campaign – GOV.UK – Home Office website

Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy – Home Office policy paper

Together we can stop child sexual abuse – HM Government campaign

Bullying

Preventing bullying including cyberbullying – DfE advice

Children missing from education, home or care

Children missing education – DfE statutory guidance

Children who run away or go missing from home or care – DfE statutory guidance

Missing Children and Adults strategy – Home Office strategy

Children with family members in prison

The Prisoners' Families Helpline offers free, confidential support and advice for families in England and Wales who are in contact with the criminal justice system.

Child exploitation

Modern Slavery: statutory guidance for England and Wales (under s49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015) and non-statutory guidance for Scotland and Northern Ireland (accessible version) - GOV.UK – Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance.

Interim guidance for ICTGs - Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service guidance

Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked – DfE and Home Office guidance

Care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery – DfE statutory guidance

Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims – Home Office statutory guidance

Child exploitation disruption toolkit – Home Office guidance

Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation – The Children's Society and Home Office

County Lines Toolkit For Professionals – The Children's Society in partnership with Victim Support and National Police Chiefs' Council

Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm – non-statutory guidance for local areas, developed by the Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme, funded by the Department for Education and supported by the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Justice

What is county lines and child criminal exploitation? - Missing People advice

SafeCall - Missing People - SafeCall is a national free, confidential and anonymous helpline and support service for young people and family members that are affected by missing, county lines and criminal exploitation. Confidential support and webinars are also available to professionals.

County Lines Support and Rescue | Catch22 - A specialist support and rescue service for young people and their families who are criminally exploited through county lines. (The service currently operates from London, Merseyside, the West Midlands, West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester.)

Confidentiality

Gillick competency Fraser guidelines – Guidelines to help with balancing children's rights along with safeguarding responsibilities.

Drugs

From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives – Home Office strategy

Honest information about drugs – Talk to Frank website

Drug and Alcohol education – teacher guidance & evidence review – PSHE Association

Honour or faith-based abuse, including FGM and forced marriage

Female genital mutilation: information and resources – Home Office guidance

Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance – DfE, Department for Health, and Home Office

Forced marriage – Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) resources

Forced marriage – Government multi-agency practice guidelines and multi-agency statutory guidance

FGM resource pack – HM Government guidance

Health and well-being

Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience – Public Health

England

Supporting pupils at schools with medical conditions – DfE statutory guidance

Mental health and behaviour in schools – DfE advice

Overview - Fabricated or induced illness – NHS advice

Homelessness

Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government guidance

Information sharing

Government information sharing advice – Guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

Information Commissioner's Office: Data sharing information hub – Information to help schools and colleges comply with UK data protection legislation including UK GDPR.

Online safety advice

Childnet – Provides guidance for schools on cyberbullying

Educateagainsthate – Provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

London Grid for Learning – Provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements#

NSPCC E-safety for schools – Provides advice, templates, and tools on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

Safer recruitment consortium – 'Guidance for safe working practice', which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective

Searching screening and confiscation – Departmental advice for schools on searching children and confiscating items such as mobile phones

South West Grid for Learning – Provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements

Online Safety Audit Tool – From UK Council for Internet Safety to help mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct mentees and provide ongoing support, development and monitoring

Online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform – DCMS advice

A business guide for protecting children on your online platform – DCMS advice

UK Safer Internet Centre – Provides tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online

Understanding and responding to AI-generated child sexual abuse material: guidance from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Education programme in collaboration with the Internet Watch Foundation.

Financially motivated sexual extortion (FMSE): guidance for education settings on FMSE from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Education programme.

Online safety relating to remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

Guidance Get help with remote education – Resources and support for teachers and school leaders on educating pupils and students

Departmental guidance on safeguarding and remote education – Including planning remote education strategies and teaching remotely

London Grid for Learning – Guidance, including platform-specific advice

National Cyber Security Centre – Guidance on choosing, configuring and deploying video conferencing

UK Safer Internet Centre – Guidance on safe remote learning

Online safety – support for children

Childline – For free and confidential advice

UK Safer Internet Centre – To report and remove harmful online

content CEOP Safety Centre – to report online child sexual abuse

Online safety - parental support

Childnet – Offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, and to find out where to get more help and support

Commonsensemedia – Provides independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents

Government advice – About protecting children from specific online harms such as child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying

Internet Matters – Provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world

How Can I Help My Child? – Marie Collins Foundation – Sexual abuse online

London Grid for Learning – Provides support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online

Stopitnow resource from The Lucy Faithfull Foundation – Can be used by parents and carers who are concerned about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour (not just about online)

CEOP Education – Provides information, guidance and resources for support for parents and carers, helping them to protect their child(ren) from online sexual abuse

Parentzone – Provides help for parents and carers on how to keep their children safe online

Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents – This is the Children's Commissioner's parental guide on talking to their children about online sexual

harassment

2019 UK CMOSs' advice - UK CMO commentary on screen time and social media map of reviews - GOV.UK

Private fostering

Private fostering: local authorities – DfE statutory guidance

Radicalisation

Prevent duty guidance – Home Office guidance

The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation - DfE advice

Educate Against Hate website – DfE and Home Office guidance

Prevent for FE and Training – Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources – Resources by London Grid for Learning

Managing risk of radicalisation in your education setting – DfE advice

Serious violence

Serious violence strategy – Home Office strategy

Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention – Home Office

Youth Endowment Fund – Home Office

Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges – Home Office advice

Tackling and girls strategy – Home Office strategy

Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims – Home Office guidance

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Specialist organisations

Barnardo's – UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services.

Lucy Faithfull Foundation – UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse. They work with families affected by sexual abuse and also run the confidential Stop it Now! Helpline.

Marie Collins Foundation – Charity that, amongst other things, works directly with children, young people, and families to enable their recovery following sexual abuse.

NSPCC – Children's charity specialising in child protection with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse.

Rape Crisis – National charity and the umbrella body for their network of independent

member Rape Crisis Centres.

UK Safer Internet Centre – Provides https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online.

Harmful sexual behaviour

Rape Crisis (England & Wales) or The Survivors Trust – For information, advice, and details of local specialist sexual violence organisations.

NICE guidance – Contains information on, amongst other things: developing interventions; working with families and carers; and multi-agency working.

HSB toolkit – The Lucy Faithfull Foundation – designed for parents, carers, family members and professionals, to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. It has links to useful information, resources, and support as well as practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour and provide safe environments for families.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation also run shorespace.org.uk which provides a safe and anonymous place for young people to get help and support to prevent harmful sexual behaviours.

NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour and NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework – Free and independent advice about HSB.

Contextual Safeguarding Network – Beyond Referrals (Schools) – Provides a school self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools.

Preventing harmful sexual behaviour in children - Stop It Now – Provides a guide for parents, carers and professionals to help everyone do their part in keeping children safe, they also run a free confidential helpline.

Support for victims

Anti-Bullying Alliance – Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.

Rape Crisis – Provides and signposts to a range of services to support people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence.

The Survivors Trust – UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.

Victim Support – Supporting children and young people who have been affected by crime. Also provides support to parents and professionals who work with children and young people – regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was.

Childline – Provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.

Toolkits

NSPCC – Online Self-assessment tool to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.

NSPCC – Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse.

NSPCC also provide free and independent advice about HSB: NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework

Safeguarding Unit, Farrer and Co. and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire – Peer-on-Peer Abuse toolkit provides practical guidance for schools on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to peer-on-peer abuse.

Contextual Safeguarding Network – Self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB and levers for addressing HSB in schools.

Childnet - STAR SEND Toolkit – Equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Childnet - Just a joke? – Provides lesson plans, activities, a quiz and teaching guide designed to explore problematic online sexual behaviour with 9-12 year olds.

Childnet - Step Up, Speak Up – A practical campaign toolkit that addresses the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13-17 years old.

NSPCC - Harmful sexual behaviour framework – An evidence-informed framework for children and young people displaying HSB.

Farrer & Co: Addressing child on child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges – This resource provides practical guidance for schools and colleges on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to child-on-child abuse.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

London Grid for Learning-collection of advice – Various information and resources dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people – Advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or videos.

Support for parents/carers

National Crime Agency's CEOP Education Programme – Provides information for parents and carers to help protect their child from online child sexual abuse, including #AskTheAwkward - help to talk with your children about online relationships – Guidance on how to talk to their children about online relationships

Appendix 12: Specific Safeguarding Issues

Further detailed guidance can be found in Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

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

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. This may involve an exchange for something the child needs or wants, or for the financial advantage or status of the perpetrator and may be facilitated through violence or the threat of violence. Exploitation can be carried out by individuals, groups or organised networks, and children may come to identify with those exploiting them. Most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. It can affect children of any gender and may involve movement of children for the purpose of exploitation, which may constitute trafficking or modern slavery[40].

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. This may involve an exchange for something the child needs or wants, or may occur for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, including increased status.

CCE may be perpetrated by individuals, groups or organised criminal networks and can involve violence, coercion, or the threat of violence. Children may be moved or trafficked for the purpose of exploitation, which may constitute modern slavery.

Examples include:

- county lines[41] activity involving the movement of drugs or money
- forced involvement in theft, robbery or anti-social behaviour
- carrying weapons
- involvement in violence

Children may become trapped through debt, coercion or threats to themselves or their family. They may come to identify with those exploiting them and may not recognise their situation as abuse.

Children who are criminally exploited are victims, even where they appear to be offending. It is not possible for a child to give informed consent to their exploitation.

Indicators may include unexplained money or possessions, association with older individuals or gangs, significant changes in behaviour, frequent absence from education, or involvement in violence.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes

[40] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims/modern-slavery-statutory-guidance-for-england-and-wales-under-s49-of-the-modern-slavery-act-2015-and-non-statutory-guidance-for-scotland-and-northe

[41] County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". Links to the Home Office's County Lines advice is provided within the serious violence information in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)

advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the child needs or wants (e.g. money, gifts, affection, status), or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex.

CSE can be perpetrated by individuals, groups or organised networks, and may involve violence, coercion or intimidation. It can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence. In some cases, children are moved or trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, which may constitute modern slavery.

CSE can occur:

- in person or online
- within peer relationships or through organised exploitation
- through grooming processes, including via social media or other online platforms

Perpetrators may:

- use coercion, threats, violence or deception
- exploit a child's vulnerabilities, including emotional needs, isolation or low self-esteem
- build relationships to gain trust before exploiting the child

Children who are victims of CSE:

- may not recognise they are being abused
- may believe they are in a consensual or romantic relationship
- may appear to cooperate with the perpetrator
- may be reluctant to disclose due to fear, shame or emotional attachment

Children involved in CSE should always be recognised as victims of abuse, regardless of the nature of the relationship or their behaviour.

Indicators of CSE may include:

- unexplained gifts, money or possessions
- association with older individuals or unknown adults
- going missing from home or education
- significant changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- sexualised behaviour or language that is inappropriate for age
- misuse of alcohol or drugs
- disengagement from education or family

Technology is often a significant factor in CSE. Abuse may occur:

- through online grooming
- via the sharing of sexual images or videos
- through live streaming or exploitation via digital platforms
- through the non-consensual sharing of images, including those generated or manipulated using AI

CSE may occur alongside other safeguarding issues, including child criminal exploitation, domestic abuse, and serious violence.

Any concerns relating to CSE must be treated as serious safeguarding matters. Staff should act immediately and report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy.

Children Missing or Absent from Education

Children who are missing education, or who are absent from education for prolonged periods or on repeated occasions, are at significant risk of harm.

This includes risks linked to:

- child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- neglect
- serious youth violence

Absence from education can be an indicator that:

- safeguarding concerns are emerging
- a child is already experiencing harm
- vulnerability is increasing

Absence may increase safeguarding risks both within the family and in the wider community. Schools play an important role in identifying patterns of absence and taking prompt action. Early identification is critical in preventing risks from escalating.

Repeated absence, unexplained absence, and children missing education should always be viewed as potential safeguarding concerns and acted upon immediately.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can involve a wide range of behaviours, including psychological, physical, emotional, sexual, emotional, financial abuse and coercive or controlling behaviour. It may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents.
Children may be victims of domestic abuse in their own right. They may:

- witness abuse
- experience the effects of abuse
- be directly harmed
- experience abuse in their own relationships

Domestic abuse can have significant and long-term effects on a child's emotional wellbeing, behaviour, development and ability to learn.

Children living in households where domestic abuse occurs may experience fear, trauma, and instability, and may be at increased risk of other forms of harm.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a form of abuse involving procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

FGM is illegal in the UK and has serious and long-term physical and psychological consequences.

There is a mandatory reporting duty[42] for teachers where FGM is disclosed or identified in girls under 18.

Indicators may include disclosure, difficulty walking or sitting, prolonged absence, or avoidance of physical activity.
FGM is often linked to cultural practices but must always be treated as abuse.

All concerns must be treated as urgent safeguarding matters.

Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Abuse

Forced marriage occurs where a child does not freely consent and pressure, coercion or abuse is used. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in the UK.

Honour-based abuse is a form of abuse and may involve violence, threats or controlling behaviour. It is often linked to cultural or family expectations, but abuse must not be justified or minimised on these grounds.
Although girls are more commonly affected, boys can also be at risk.

Children may be at risk of being taken abroad or subjected to pressure from family members. Forced marriage and honour-based abuse may occur alongside other forms of abuse, including domestic abuse and coercive control.
Indicators include fear of family members, sudden behavioural changes, discussion of travel, or withdrawal from support networks.

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (chapter 8 provides guidance on the role of schools and colleges) and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage -
they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 02070080151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk.

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause achild to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence ,threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Staff should be aware that discussing concerns with family members may increase risk and should always follow safeguarding procedures.

These are serious safeguarding concerns and must be reported immediately.

Mental Health

The school recognises that mental health concerns may be an indicator of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and in some cases may constitute a safeguarding concern where a child is at risk of

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

harm. This may include self-harm, suicidal ideation, or making plans to end their life. Mental health difficulties may also be an indicator that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health condition. However, school staff are well placed to observe children on a day-to-day basis and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health difficulty or may be at risk of developing one. Staff are well placed to identify children who may be struggling with their mental health or contemplating suicide and to ensure appropriate support and intervention. Any interventions offered by the school will be evidenced as safe, effective and appropriate for the child's age, need and stage of education.

Where a child is experiencing difficulties with their mental health, including self-harm, eating disorders, or suicidal thoughts, there are often warning signs that staff may be able to recognise. These may include:

- significant or sudden changes in behaviour
- ongoing difficulty sleeping
- withdrawing from social situations or friendships
- loss of interest in activities they previously enjoyed
- physical signs of self-harm or signs of neglect

Not every child who displays these behaviours will have a mental health condition or be at risk of suicide. However, staff should recognise that these behaviours may indicate that a child is experiencing emotional distress or may require additional support.

Early identification and response are essential. Staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions but should act on any concerns and ensure appropriate support is provided. Education staff play a key role in identifying children who may be struggling and ensuring that they receive timely support and, where necessary, vital early intervention.

If staff have concerns about a child's mental health that also constitute a safeguarding concern, they must follow the school's safeguarding procedures and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy immediately.

If staff believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, they should contact emergency services by calling 999 or take the child to Accident and Emergency (A&E) without delay. If a child requires urgent mental health support but is not in immediate danger, appropriate services such as NHS 111 should be used, selecting the mental health option where appropriate.

Mental health concerns should always be considered within the wider context of safeguarding and child protection and alongside any other potential risks to the child.

Modern Slavery and Trafficking

Modern slavery and trafficking involve the recruitment, movement or control of a child for the purpose of exploitation.

This may include:

- sexual exploitation
- criminal exploitation
- forced labour

Children may be moved within or across local areas and may be controlled through violence, coercion, debt or intimidation.

Children who are trafficked or exploited are victims of abuse and should be treated as such, even where they appear to be involved in criminal or exploitative activity. Children may not recognise that they are being exploited or may not identify themselves as victims.

Modern slavery and trafficking are often closely linked to child criminal and sexual exploitation. Indicators may include unexplained travel, absence from education, fear of certain individuals, or signs of control by others.

Online Risks and AI-Generated Harm

Children face a wide range of online risks, which may occur alongside offline harm.

These include:

- exposure to harmful or inappropriate content
- harmful interactions with others online
- behaviours that increase risk, such as sharing images
- financial exploitation or scams

Emerging risks include AI-generated harm, such as deepfakes, manipulated images, and online exploitation through digital technologies.

Online harm can occur simultaneously with offline abuse, and children may also harm other children online.
Staff should remain alert to signs of online harm and respond in line with safeguarding procedures.

Serious Violence

Serious violence is a significant safeguarding concern and may involve physical assault, use or threat of weapons, and gang-related or organised violence.

Serious violence is often associated with other safeguarding issues, including criminal exploitation, bullying and peer conflict.

The school recognises that serious violence, including the carrying or use of weapons, presents a significant safeguarding risk.

Children may be both victims and perpetrators of serious violence, and their behaviour should be understood in the context of possible exploitation or vulnerability.

Staff should also consider the wider context in which serious violence may occur, including peer relationships, community influences and online activity. Relevant information must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that risks are fully understood and addressed.

Risk factors include:

- prior involvement in offending or violence

- repeat absence or exclusion
- association with individuals involved in criminal activity

Indicators may include unexplained injuries, aggressive behaviour, possession of weapons, and fear of certain individuals or locations.

All staff must be alert to indicators of serious violence and must report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy, including where a pupil:

- is suspected of carrying a weapon
- has made threats involving a weapon
- has expressed an intention to use a weapon or engage in violent behaviour

Staff should be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in violence and report concerns immediately.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will take appropriate action in response to such concerns, including:

- undertaking a risk and needs assessment (assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns)
- implementing measures to reduce risk and maintain safety (safety plan)
- working proactively to de-escalate potential conflict
- making referrals to children's social care and/or the police where required

The school recognises that concerns relating to serious violence must always be treated as safeguarding matters and not solely as behavioural issues.

All such concerns will be managed through safeguarding procedures, recognising that early identification and intervention are essential to prevent escalation.

Radicalisation and the Prevent Duty

Radicalisation[43] is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Radicalisation is a safeguarding issue and should be treated in the same way as other forms of harm.

The Prevent Duty is part of the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities. Schools are required to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Schools have a duty under the Prevent Duty to safeguard children from the risks of radicalisation, promote fundamental British values, and respond appropriately to concerns.

The Prevent duty forms part of the school's wider safeguarding and early help responsibilities.

Some children may be more vulnerable to radicalisation due to personal, social or contextual factors. Children may be influenced by peers, family members, or online content, including exposure to extremist material, which may play a significant role.

There is no single indicator of radicalisation, and concerns should be considered in context. Indicators may include changes in behaviour or beliefs, expression of extremist views, increased

[43] As defined in the Government's Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales.

isolation, or engagement with extremist content.

Radicalisation may occur alongside other safeguarding concerns.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and any deputies should be familiar with local procedures for making a Prevent referral and with statutory Prevent guidance. They should also understand the school's responsibilities in relation to leadership, partnership working, staff capabilities, and reducing permissive environments.

Channel[44]

Where appropriate, concerns may require referral to the Channel programme. Channel is a voluntary, confidential, multi-agency programme which provides early support to individuals identified as being at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Referrals are assessed and, where appropriate, considered by a multi-agency panel to determine the level of risk and the support required. Consent is required for an individual to receive support through Channel.

Where a child is receiving support through Channel, the DSL should consider how information is shared appropriately, including with a new school or college where relevant, to ensure continuity of safeguarding support.

Staff should not seek to investigate concerns but should report them in line with safeguarding procedures.

Radicalisation should be treated as a safeguarding concern, and all concerns must be reported immediately.

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- Prevent awareness e-learning offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- Prevent referrals e-learning supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.

Educate Against Hate is a government website designed to support school and college teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges.

These may include:

- barriers to communication, which may make it difficult to report concerns
- assumptions that behaviours are related to their condition rather than possible abuse
- increased isolation from peers
- greater vulnerability to bullying or exploitation

[44] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance

- dependence on adults, which may increase risk

Children with SEND may be disproportionately impacted by abuse, may not always recognise when they are being harmed, and may not always understand that what is happening to them is abuse.

Staff should ensure that safeguarding concerns relating to children with SEND are carefully considered and not overlooked.

Additional support and appropriate communication strategies may be required to ensure that children with SEND are safeguarded effectively.

Substance Misuse

Substance misuse, including the misuse of drugs, alcohol or other substances, can place children at increased risk of harm and exploitation.

Substance misuse may:

- be a coping mechanism for underlying trauma, abuse or neglect
- increase vulnerability to exploitation, including CCE and CSE
- impair judgement and increase risk-taking behaviours

Indicators may include changes in behaviour, attendance issues, secrecy, or association with high-risk peer groups.

Staff should treat concerns about substance misuse as potential safeguarding concerns and respond appropriately.

Appendix 13: Useful Phone Numbers

Police:	999 or 101 (non-urgent)
Enfield Children's Social Care:	020 8379 2507 (Mon-Thurs: 9 am-5 pm; Fri: 9 am- 4.45 pm). Out of office hours call: 020 8379 1000 (select option 2).
Enfield MASH / Referral:	020 8379 5555 or 2507 or 2618
SAFE:	020 8702 4070
Enfield CAMHS:	
Main CAMHS:	020 8702 5100
SAFE team:	020 8702 4070
Barnet CAMHS:	020 8702 4500
Haringey CAMHS:	020 8702 3400
Barnet Children's Social Services (MASH):	020 8359 4066
Haringey Children's Services (MASH):	020 8489 4470 (Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 5pm; Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm) Or: 020 8489 0000
Hackney Children's Service:	020 8356 2444 or 020 8356 2710
Islington Children's Social Services:	020 7527 7400; 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, or 020 7226 0992 at all other times.
Waltham Forest Children's Service:	020 8496 2310 or 020 8496 3000
Domestic Violence National Helpline:	0808 200 247
Forced Marriage Unit:	020 7008 0151
Karma Nirvana (forced marriage and honour crimes) Friday 9am to 5pm)	0800 5999 247 (Monday to
Honour Violence Helpline:	0800 599 9247
NSPCC:	0800 800 5000
Childline:	0800 1111
Stop it now:	0800 1000 900