

Feltham Hill Infant & Nursery School

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy (including safer recruitment, allegations against staff and low-level concerns)

The school has an explicit duty to safeguard and protect children from abuse and harm. The welfare and well-being of a child is paramount.

September 2023

Prepared by: Headteacher

Discussed with: Strategy SLT & safeguarding governor

Agreed with governors: FGB (Nov 2023)

Agreed with: All school staff (Sept 2023)

To be reviewed and updated: Sept 2024

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Headteacher Angela White
Deputy Safeguarding Leads: Deputy Head Felicity Sinclair, Year 2 Teacher Rebecca Maccaw

Designated Safeguarding Governor: Jane Kendall-Nicholas (Nov 2022)
Chair of Governors: Jane Kendall-Nicholas

School telephone: 020 8890 3814
School email: office@fhi.hounslow.sch.uk

Hounslow Children's Services: Front Door 020 8583 6600 (option 2)
childrensocialcare@hounslow.gov.uk or earlyhelp@hounslow.gov.uk

Head Operational Child Protection & Safeguarding:
Martin Forshaw 020 8583 3446 martin.forshaw@hounslow.gov.uk

Children Missing Education: Sandra Weir 020 8583 2768
sandar.weir@hounslow.gov.uk

LADO - 0208 583 5730
LADO@hounslow.sch.uk

Prevent Helpline - 020 7340 7264

Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

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

Legislation and statutory guidance

- This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). Leaders comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by the school's three local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- Part 1 of the schedule to the [Non-Maintained Special Schools \(England\) Regulations 2015](#), which places a duty on non-maintained special schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school

And:

- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages

affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there is evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment

- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination

And in early years:

- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

- **Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.
- **Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child, and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.
Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.
- **Neglect** is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

And for older siblings:

- **Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes** (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.
- **Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

See Appendix 1

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work

together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

- They are:
 - Hounslow safeguarding children's partnership (HSCP)
 - A clinical commissioning group for an area within Hounslow
 - The chief officer of police for a police area Hounslow
- **Victim** is a widely understood and recognised term, but leaders understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, leaders will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.
- **Alleged perpetrator(s)** and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, leaders will think carefully about what terminology is used (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. Leaders will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it.

Leaders are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances.

Leaders will ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

And will give special consideration to children who:

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

Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners.

The policy and procedures also apply to school trips and club providers.

And Acorns to Oaks breakfast and after school clubs for our pupils at Oak Hill.

- The school plays a crucial role in preventative education.
- This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny (prejudice against women)/misandry (prejudice against men), homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment.

This will be underpinned by schools:

- Behaviour including anti bullying policy
- Well-being support including enrichment

Planned teaching of personal social health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum in key stage 1 (KS1) which is weekly.

And teaches

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent - including healthy touch
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality - including everyone being included in their play
- Body confidence and self-esteem - being happy with themselves

- And personal social emotional development (PSED) curriculum in Early years
- As well as, PANTS assembly to teach safe and unsafe touch.

Advice for elder siblings and/or parents:

- How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour).
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable.
- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support.

All staff

All staff will read and understand Part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), (KCSE) in September or when they join the school and leaders will review this guidance annually.

They will sign online using iAM Compliant, to say that they have reviewed and understood this guidance. This record is monitored by the school business manager (SBM).

When appropriate, staff will reinforce the importance of online safety:

- Making parents aware that at times children will be working online.
- Reminding children the importance of not sharing their personal information.

All staff will also be aware of:

- School's system to support safeguarding including this child protection and safeguarding policy and the online system for reporting concerns, using Myconcern
- The staff code of conduct and grievance procedures policy.
- The behaviour including anti-bullying policy.
- The name and role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies.
- The online safety policy.
- Hounslow's procedures for children missing in education (CME).

Staff must also know:

- How to use Hounslow's Front Door - early help assessment process, known, as the common assessment framework.
- Their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.
- The process for making referrals by completing a child and family assessment notification (CFAN) online to Hounslow.
- Or referring to Richmond or Surrey, depending on the home address.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as, specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines).
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online.
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children.
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the strategy team.

The DSL is Angela White Headteacher.

- The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school.
- This includes online safety, and understanding monitoring processes on school networks to keep pupils safe online.

- During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Staff can also call the DSL's mobile to discuss concerns outside school hours.
- When the DSL is unavailable, the deputies: Felicity Sinclair, Deputy Headteacher and Rebecca Maccaw, Year 2 teacher will cover this role.

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

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour.
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at school.

The DSL will also:

- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns, as appropriate.
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident, as to how to access this support.
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search.

The governing body

The governing body will:

Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development.

- Evaluate and approve this policy annually, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and the school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a named governor (Jane Kendall-Nicholas/Chair of governors) to lead and to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board.
- This is always a different person from the DSL.
- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated (every 2 years) and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners.

Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, and review their effectiveness. This includes:

- Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training.
- Reviewing the [DfE's filtering and monitoring standards](#), and discussing with computing technician and service providers, what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards.

Make sure:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support.
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.
- The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors).
- That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised.

See appendix 3

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

- Alongside, the SBM, seek assurance that the other body has the appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed.
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate.
- The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate.

All governors will:

- Read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.
- Attend Hounslow governor safeguarding training.

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy including.

Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:

- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction.
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.

- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensuring that the DSL and deputies have appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate.
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the deputies on this, referring to the log.
- Undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training updated every 2 years

And in Early years:

- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable.
- Make sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person which will be the teacher.
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

Virtual school heads

Virtual school heads have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils with a social worker.

- They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, SENCOs, social workers, mental health leads and others.
- Felicity Sinclair (Deputy Headteacher) is the designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children.

Confidentiality

Strict confidentiality is important at all times.

Information must be shared with the three safeguarding partners and other agencies as appropriate.

Leaders should note that:

- Timely information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding.
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR (general data protection regulations) do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals, at risk,' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent: if it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.

Concerning older siblings:

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

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

The DSL should consider that:

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

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved.
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.
- The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputies).
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff.

Reporting ongoing low level safeguarding concerns

There may be many concerns which staff have noticed. This may be based on what the child has said.

- It may be an injury that is apparent.
- It might be behaviour that is observed.
- It might be changes in attitudes.
- It might be based on what an adult has said.
- It may be observed outside school.
- It could also be concerns that have accumulated over time.

- Concerns must be reported to the DSL or deputies.
- And then report the concern using 'My Concern', available on any desktop computer around the school.

Reporting attendance concerns

Persistent absenteeism (PA) is often linked to safeguarding.

- The receptionist/attendance officer will inform the Headteacher daily of children with high percentage of absence and if families cannot be contacted.
- Staff will report if there is notice of girls leaving the country.
- The receptionist/attendance officer has regular contact with the EWO and will notify them of families with regular absence.
- They will complete a child missing in education referral after 3 days, if the family cannot be contacted.
- It is also the responsibility of all adults working in a class to notice attendance patterns and issues.
- Staff must email the office and cc the Headteacher, to report children's patterns or frequencies of absences.

See appendix 5

Recognising abuse and taking action

Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

Please note in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean, "the DSL (or deputies)".

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

- Staff must make a referral to children's social care and/or call the police **immediately**, if they believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.
- **Anyone can make a referral.**
- See the front page of this policy, to call the Hounslow social services Front Door and submit a CFAN online.
- However, there are an increasing number of families from Richmond and Surrey.
- Make a referral to Surrey which is children's single point of access (C-SPA).
- Call 0300 470 9100 and email:

cspa@surrey.gov.uk

- Or to Richmond spa, call 020 8547 5008
- And complete an on-line referral:

referrals@achievingforchildren.org.uk

- Or staff can report directly to the local council:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

- Tell the DSL, as soon as possible, if you have made a referral including calling their mobile number.

If a child makes a disclosure to staff

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to staff, they should:

- Have another member of staff with them, if possible.
- Listen to and believe the child.
- Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions.
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset.

- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you.
Do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on.
- Do not promise to keep it a secret.

- Write up your conversation, as soon as, possible in the child's own words.
Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it.
- Report it to the DSL, verbally and then using myconcern.

- Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly.
- And tell the DSL, as soon as, possible that you have done so.
- Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

Bear in mind that some children may:

- Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Not recognise their experiences, as harmful.
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened.
- This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers.
- None of this should stop staff from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

See appendix 4

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

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

- FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences.
- It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.
- Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in.

See appendix 4

Any teacher who either:

Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18

and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

- Must immediately report this to the police, personally.

- This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.
- Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

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

- The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out.
- Staff should not examine pupils.
- **Any member of staff** who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must call or email Hounslow social services (see front page), if they have been unable to inform DSL.

See appendix 5

If there are concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or is in immediate danger)

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

- If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken.
- Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care.
- Staff can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000.
- Make a referral to Hounslow local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see front page).
- Share details of any actions you take with the DSL, as soon as, practically possible including calling their mobile.

See appendix 4

Early help assessment

If an early help assessment is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment, as appropriate.

- Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.
- In some cases, the DSL will be acting, as the lead practitioner.
- Leaders will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.
- The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving.
Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.
- In Hounslow, a family may be accepted for early help and then remain on a waiting list until they can be supported.
- Early help usually involves a family support worker (FSW) allocated to the family.

- This FSW will liaise with the DSL or deputy lead who is working with the family.
- Early help could include: behaviour support, improving bed time routines, improving attendance, financial or housing support.
- Hounslow also offers 123 magic to support parents with behaviour in the home.
This is an online parenting programme.
- The aim of early help is to prevent a family needing social care.

Making a referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support staff to do so.

- If staff make a referral directly, they must tell the DSL, as soon as, possible.
- The local authority will make a decision within 1 working days of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome.
- The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority, if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.
- If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow Hounslow's escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.
- On some occasions, the social care intake team will call the school for additional information.
- The headteacher may call the police if a child is not collected from school by 4.30pm, as this is a safeguarding issue.

Following a referral

- Families may go on to a child in need (CIN) or child protection (CP) plan or accepted for early help.
- The DSL allocates these families to themselves or a deputy.
- They will attend relevant meetings including: core group, network and case conference meetings.
- They will update the child's on-line records accordingly.
- They will regularly (daily where necessary), email the named social workers or managers where appropriate.
- They will ensure actions relating to school are followed.

Working Together for Child Protection

In Hounslow, there is a hub where professionals work together for child protection.

- There are representatives from health, education, police and social care at the hub.
- There will be emergency planning meetings with these professionals, if a concern is deemed to be serious.

- From this emergency planning meeting, professionals will decide in future action.
- This may include a child being removed from the home.

- In addition, all professionals and agencies are invited to attend all meetings with parents/carers.
- There is a named contact for issues concerning the prevent strategy and FGM.
- Social care also regularly contacts the school for a review which is called a welfare check.
- This will be part of their multi-agency assessment which will inform their decision from a referral from any agency.

Involving older siblings:

If staff have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL, first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay staff taking appropriate action being taken.

Staff should:

- Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care.
- Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above).
- Inform the DSL or deputy, as soon as, practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to.

- This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals, at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.
- Or Hounslow's Prevent team:
- Call Joan Conlon 078 1707 9190
- Or email:
joan.conlon@hounslow.gov.uk
- Or call Najeeb Ahmed 078 9054 0433
- Or email:
Najeeb.Ahmed@hounslow.gov.uk

- The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil.
- Staff can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk.
- Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if staff:

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

If staff have a concern about mental health

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

- Staff should be alert to behavioural signs, that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps to make a referral.
- If staff have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.
- This may involve a referral to: school nurse or child and adolescent mental health services (CAMH)s.
- Parents/carers may be advised to see their GPs who can also support with mental health concerns.
- There is further guidance from the department for education (DFE) [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) for more information.

Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer

If there are concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the Headteacher, as soon as possible.

- If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.
- The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures set out.
See appendix 3
- If there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).
- If an allegation is made, relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

In early years

- Where appropriate, the EYFS leader will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale.

Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

Leaders recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers.

- Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils.
- Leaders also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse.

- However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.
- Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns.

This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence.
- Could put pupils in the school at risk.
- Is violent.

- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol.
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as, indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes).

Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

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

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

- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate.
- If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator.
Leaders will ask the police if they have any questions about the investigation.

Creating a supportive environment in school and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

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

To achieve this, leaders will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images.
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders, for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils,

and initiation or hazing type violence (hazing refers to any activity expected of someone in joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them) with respect to boys.

- Ensure the curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent.
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using school's reporting systems.
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously.
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners.
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration.
- Leaders will also do all they can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed.
- And consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.

Ensure staff are trained to understand:

How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”.
- That if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report.

For example:

- Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to.
- A friend may make a report.
- A member of staff may overhear a conversation.
- A child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong.
- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.
- That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns.

- That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side.
- The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s).
- Leaders will provide support at the same time, as taking any disciplinary action.
- Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police.
- The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly.

Leaders will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

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

For Elder siblings:

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')

This is a suggested approach based on [guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety](#) for [all staff](#) and for [DSLs and senior leaders](#).

Staff responsibilities when responding to an incident

If staff are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), they must report it to the DSL immediately.

Staff must not:

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

Initial review meeting by DSL following an incident

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff, this may include the staff member who reported the

incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns.

This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

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

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

- The incident involves an adult.
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs).
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent.
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13.
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting, as suicidal or self-harming).
- If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care.
- The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks.

- They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).
- If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents/carers

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

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through the local community officer.

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded.

The record keeping arrangements are set out in this policy.

Curriculum coverage in secondary schools

Elder aged pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, as part of their school's sexual education, and computing programmes, where relevant.

This teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is.
- How it is most likely to be encountered.
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment.
- Issues of legality.
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation.

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward), such images.
- The receipt of such images.

Reporting systems for pupils concerning sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')

Where there is a safeguarding concern, leaders will try to take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

- Leaders recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, leaders will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse.
- Ensure school's reporting systems, are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils.
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

Online safety and the use of mobile technology

KCSIE says that school's policies on online safety and the use of mobile and smart technology should also be reflected in this child protection and safeguarding policy.

- Among other things, this should include filtering and monitoring on school devices and the school network.
- Leaders recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and leaders understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

To address this, school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors.
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones').
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community.
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate.

The 4 key categories of risk

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

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

To meet school's aims and address the risks above leaders will:

- Educate pupils about online safety, as part of the PSHE including RHE curriculum.

For example:

- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology.
- Keeping personal information private.
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online.
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim.

Also leaders will:

- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation.
All staff members will receive refresher training each academic year.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via school's website or communications sent directly to them.
- Leaders will also share clear procedures with them, so they know how to raise concerns about online safety.
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online.
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim.

Mobile phones and cameras

Leaders will make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras.

For example that:

- Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use, to non-contact time when pupils are not present.
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.

Leaders will also:

- Follow GDPR rules and regulations.
- **In Early years**, the use of mobile phones **and cameras** is reflected (as per paragraph 3.4 of the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)).
- Explain the sanctions leaders will use if there is a breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones.
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.

Notifying parents/carers

Where appropriate, the DSL or deputies will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers.

- The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.
- Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.
- If the DSL believes that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, they will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.
- In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, the DSL will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved.

- They will think carefully about what information is provided about the other child involved, and when.
- The DSL will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure school's approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s).

Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

Leaders recognise that pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges, and are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers.

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils.
- The potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours, such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

School offers extra well-being support for these pupils.

- This includes additional enrichment activities.
- And PSHE and PSED support, including working with support staff.
- Leaders also help pupils overcome any communication barriers they face.
- Any abuse involving pupils with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputy) and the SENCO.

Pupils with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs and if they are on a CIN or CP plan.

- Leaders recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as, potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.
- The DSL and deputies will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.
- This may include a teacher supervising a social worker visiting a pupil at school.

- Where leaders are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:
- Responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks.
- The provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

Leaders will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after children and previously looked-after children safe.

In particular, they will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements.
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads.
- There is a designated teacher, (Felicity Sinclair/Deputy Headteacher) who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with [statutory guidance](#).
- The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

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

Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with school's procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff.

- The Headteacher will contact the LADO.
- And investigate quickly.
- And make any decisions.

see appendix 3

Other complaints

Other low level complaints will be addressed by the Headteacher/DSL.

- They will inform staff of any actions they need to take.
- Early years providers also need to take into account requirements related to complaints, set out in the safeguarding and welfare section of the

statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (paragraph 3.75).

Whistle-blowing

Please refer to the school's whistle-blowing policy for concerns regarding the way the school safeguards pupils including poor or unsafe practice, or potential failures.

Record-keeping

Leaders will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

- All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded on school's online reporting system, myconcern.
- Myconcern then pops up as an alert for the DSL and the deputies. (Serious concerns/disclosures staff must have reported verbally first.)
- The DSL records every concern for every pupil onto a log. This log is held securely in a confidential shared drive.
- Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.
- The DSL uses this to decide action to take which may be a referral.
- If staff are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.
- All records are held in line with the records retention schedule.

A Myconcern record will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken.
- Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the deputy DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded, securely using Myconcern.

- If the forwarding school does not use myconcern, records will be forwarded securely, as soon as possible, and separately from the main pupil file.

To allow the new school to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- **5 days** for an in-year transfer,
- Or within the **first 5 days** of the start of a new term.
- In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school

and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

In addition:

Appendix 2

Sets out school's policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-employment checks.

See Appendix 3

Sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff

Training

All staff

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

This training will be regularly updated (every 2 years) and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered, as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning.
- Be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners.
- Include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities for staff around filtering and monitoring.

Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:

- Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment.
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.
- All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.
- Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).
- Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.
- Volunteers will receive appropriate training, as applicable.

The DSL and deputies

The DSL and Deputies will undertake Hounslow's leader child protection and safeguarding training every 2 years.

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

Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated.

This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as, providing strategic challenge.
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.
- As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

Recruitment - interview panels

At least one person conducting any interview for a post, at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training.

- This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

See appendix 2

Staff who have contact with pupils and families

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

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by a Senior Leader. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

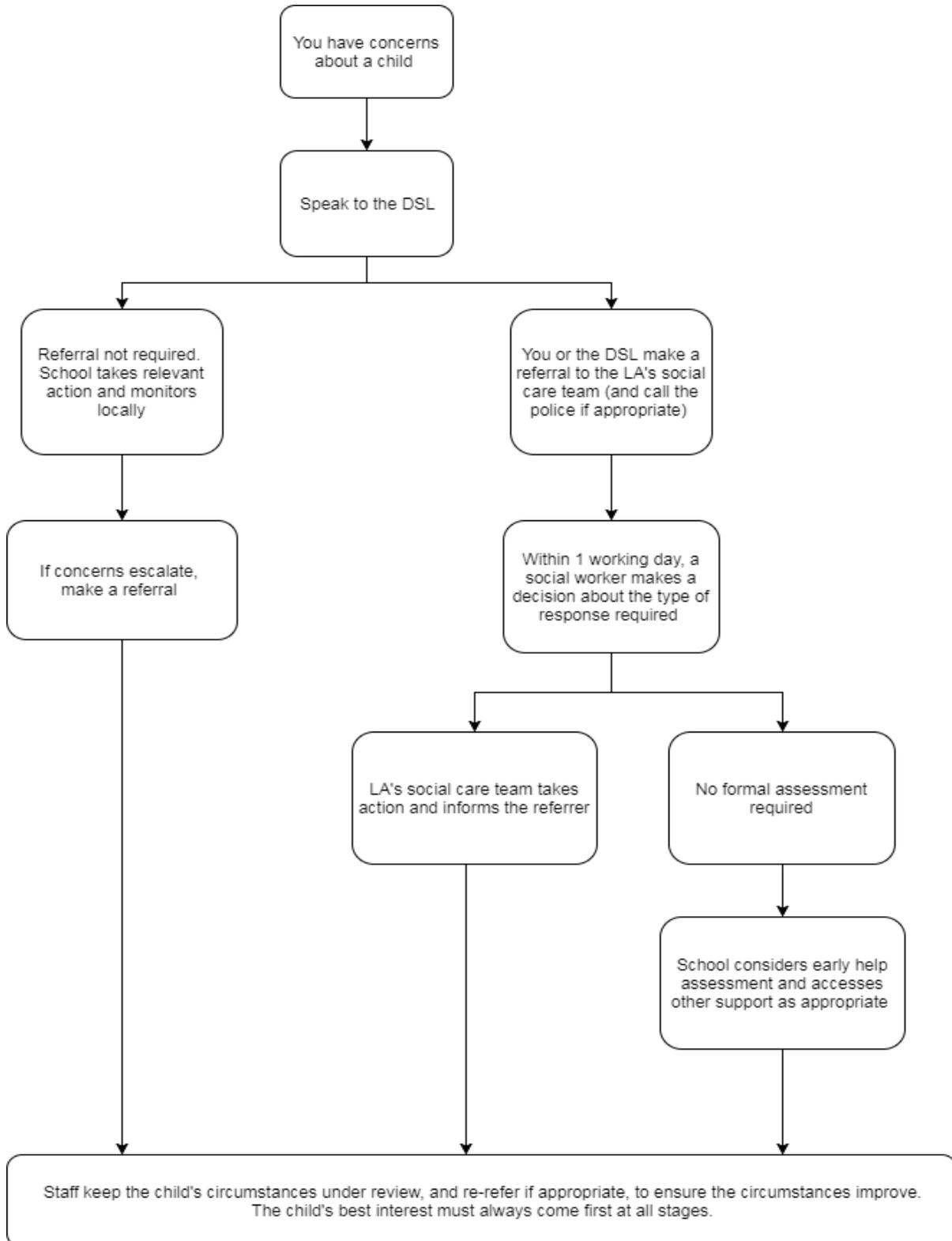
Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour including anti-bullying
- Staff code of conduct and grievance procedures
- Attendance
- Complaints
- Health and safety
- Online safety
- Equality
- PSHE and relationship and health
- Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Privacy notices
- Whistleblowing

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

(Note - if the DSL or deputies are not available, this should not delay action.)



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

Appendix 1: types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by 1 definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

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

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

Emotional abuse may involve:

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

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

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

- Neglect may occur during pregnancy, as a result of maternal substance abuse.

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

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers).
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 2:

The Safer Recruitment Policy

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

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

Advertising

When advertising roles, leaders will make clear:

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

Application forms

School's application forms will:

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

Shortlisting

School's shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

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

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

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
 - If they have a criminal history
 - Whether they are included on the barred list
 - Whether they are prohibited from teaching

- Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
- Any relevant overseas information
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

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

Seeking references and checking employment history

The school business manager (SBM) will obtain references before the interview.

- Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references school will:

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

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, leaders will:

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

Pre-appointment vetting checks

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

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks.

When appointing new staff, leaders will:

- Verify their identity.
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below).
- SBM will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service.
- The SBM will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken.
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available.
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.
- Verify their right to work in the UK.
We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards.
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate.

- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher.
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach.

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

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

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

Existing staff

In certain circumstances leaders will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff, as if the individual was a new member of staff.

These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more.

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

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left.

Agency and third-party staff

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

Contractors

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

This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity.
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children.
- SBM will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

As an Infant & Nursery school:

- For self-employed contractors such as sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.
- Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment.

- This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

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

- Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

As an Infant & Nursery school:

- In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

Leaders will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment

As an Infant & Nursery school:

- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment.

This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Governors

- All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.
- They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

Staff working in alternative provision settings

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

Appendix 3:

Allegations against staff (including low level concerns) policy

Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harms threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

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

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

If there is any doubt, as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, leaders will consult the local authority designated officer (LADO).

- Leaders will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.
- A 'case manager' will lead any investigation.
- This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.
- The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.
- Schools procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension of the accused will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal.

In such cases, leaders will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

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

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned.
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children.
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children.

- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted.
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the local authority.

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

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation.
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence).
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below.
- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police).
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action, as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies.
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place.

Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate.

- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, the DSL/Headteacher will make a risk assessment of the situation.
If necessary, the DSL will may make a referral to children's social care.

If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer.

- The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected.
Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details.
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate.
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.
- They can turn to for advice from a trade union representatives, or a colleague, or friend.
School will offer and pay for counselling.
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation, as soon as, possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable).
- The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing.
- Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice.
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child, no information will be shared regarding the staff member).
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

In early years:

- Leaders will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises

(whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations.

- This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

And for the rest of the school:

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

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

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

- We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome.
- The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation.
- We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required.
- We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary).
- When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

Leaders will deal with all allegations, as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week.
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days.
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days.
- However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

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

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

- If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.
- If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

- If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.
- The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps.
If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps.
If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it.

Confidentiality and information sharing

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

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

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared.

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

Record-keeping

- The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.
- The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation.
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved.
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.
- In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.
- Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry.
Leaders will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, leaders will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious.
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions.

Learning lessons

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

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff.
- The duration of the suspension.
- Whether or not the suspension was justified.

- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.
- For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

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

- Leaders will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.
- Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

The section is based on 'Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

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

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

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

Definition of low-level concerns

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

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority
- Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:
 - Being overly friendly with children
 - Having favourites
 - Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
 - Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
 - Humiliating pupils

Sharing low-level concerns

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

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others.
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns.
- Empowering staff to self-refer.
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage.
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system.
- The Headteacher/DSL has an open door policy, so available to staff.
- The staff code of conduct and grievance procedures policy, also says the importance of sharing concerns.

Responding to low-level concerns

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

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously.
- To the individual involved and any witnesses.
- The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's staff code of conduct and grievance procedures policy.
- The headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate the deputy headteacher/deputy safeguarding lead.
- The teacher maybe put onto a support plan where necessary.
- A member of SLT will model appropriate behaviour too.

- There are more procedures for responding to low-level concerns:

Keeping Children Safe in Education also links to this report for more information [Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: A guide for organisations which work with children](#)

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing.

- In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, school will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, leaders will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority.

- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school.
- Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

References

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

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

Appendix 4: Specific safeguarding issues

This appendix is mostly based on the advice in Keeping Children Safe in Education, and Hounslow safeguarding procedures.

Children missing from education

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues.

This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

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

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
 - Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
 - Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
 - Come from the families of service personnel
 - Go missing or run away from home or care
 - Are supervised by the youth justice system
 - Cease to attend a school
 - Come from new migrant families
-
- Leaders will follow our school's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future.
 - This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.
 - Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
 - If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries.
 - We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

Child criminal exploitation

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

- The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.
- The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual.
- It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education
- If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

- The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.
- The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual.
- Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused.
- They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.
- CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity.
- It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

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

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant.
- If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL.

- The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children.

- This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school.
- It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the 2.
- Schools must have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Leaders must recognise that even if there are no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening.

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

- **Bullying** (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- **Abuse** in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- **Physical abuse** such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- **Sexual violence**, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- **Sexual harassment**, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent**, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- **Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos** (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- **Upskirting**, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- **Initiation/hazing** type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).
- Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.
- If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in this policy, as appropriate.
- When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, leaders will consider their ages and stages of development.

- We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and will offer them appropriate support.

Domestic abuse

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members.

In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

- Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse.
- It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional.
- It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others for example, the impact of all forms of domestic abuse on children.
- Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

- Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.
- Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

- If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police should inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day.
- This is the procedure where police forces are part of [Operation Encompass](#).
- The DSL and a deputy receive a Merlin report following this.
- The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.
- The DSL will speak to the parent and make a referral to social care.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

- The DSL will be aware of contact details and inform Housing, where necessary.
- This will also be a reason for the DSL to refer to social care.
- And is often an action on a CIN or CP plan.

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

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

- Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.
- All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such.
- All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it.
- If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

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

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

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place.
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out.
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues.
- A girl:
 - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable.
 - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously).
 - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
 - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
 - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE.
 - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period.
 - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour.
 - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations.
 - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem.
 - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

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

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

A girl:

- Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM.
- Having limited level of integration within UK society.
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman".
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period.

- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM.
- Talking about FGM in conversation for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion).
- Being unexpectedly absent from school.
- Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.

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

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime.

- A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 1 or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage.
- Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.
- Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms.
- Leaders are aware of the '1 chance' rule, i.e. we may only have 1 chance to speak to the potential victim and only 1 chance to save them.
- If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place.
- They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

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

Preventing radicalisation

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.
- **Extremism** is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
- This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.
- **Terrorism** is an action that:
 - Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
 - Causes serious damage to property; or
 - Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system.
- The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.
- Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism.

- The DSL and/or deputies will undertake leaders Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.
- Leaders will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism.
- This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.
- We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place, and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.
- There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.
- Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves.
 - Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution.
 - Changes in friendship groups and appearance.
 - Rejecting activities they used to enjoy.
 - Converting to a new religion.
 - Isolating themselves from family and friends.
 - Talking as if from a scripted speech.
 - An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views.
 - A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others.
 - Increased levels of anger.
 - Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use.
 - Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions.
 - Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter.
 - Possessing extremist literature.
 - Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations.
 - Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination.
 - It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.
-
- If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow school's procedures set out in this policy.
 - Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.
 - Further information on the school's measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in the online safety policy.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex.
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally).
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.
- Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing.
- This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.
- If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse or neglect.
- Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

- Reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them.
 - Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt.
 - Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns.
 - Consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again.
 - Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence, and show sensitivity to their needs.
-
- Some groups are potentially more at risk.
 - Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours.
 - Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.
 - Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.
 - Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
-
- If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in this policy, as appropriate.

Serious violence

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

- Increased absence from school.
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups.
- Significant decline in performance.
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries.

- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above).

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- Being male.
- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school.
- Having experienced child maltreatment.
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.
- Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a pupil being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

The office staff are responsible for checking visitors.

- All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of SBM.
- Visitors are expected to sign the online register and wear a visitor's lanyard.
- The colour of the lanyard will determine if we have a DBS or not.
- A red lanyard shows no DBS check.
- Yellow lanyard shows that the SBM has checked the DBS.
- If the visitor is unknown to the setting, the SBM will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting.
- Visitors should be ready to produce identification.
- Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:
 - Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or
 - The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate).
- All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.
- Leaders will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the day, leaders will:

- Ensure the office staff have called all of the emergency contact numbers on the admission form.
- Email parents and their contacts too.

- And send a parent mail, if still no answer.
- The headteacher or deputy may call the police if a child isn't collected by 4.30.
- The DSL also may submit a referral to social care.

Missing pupils

School's procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.

If a child goes missing:

- After day 3 of no contact, the receptionist/attendance officer will submit a child missing in education (CME) form to the EWO.
- The EWO will then try and contact the family and keep school informed.
- This EWO will encourage the parents to bring their child back to school, once they have made contact.

Appendix 5: Reporting safeguarding concerns

Speak to DSL or deputy if concern is serious
Then select MyConcern icon on the desk top Log on Select reporting concerns and write.
Remember: Context What observed Child said
Also speak to parent/carers Report their response
Leaders will be notified electronically
Future concerns must be reported under the child's name

Appendix 6: Accepting the policy online

Feltham Hill Infant and Nursery School Record of Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

Log onto IAM Compliant

- **And select to say that you understand and accept:**
- **The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy - September 2023**
- **And understand that breaches of this policy can lead to disciplinary action.**