Model Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

[Insert setting name and logo]

[Adapt policy for your setting]

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Approved by:** |  | **Date:** |
| **Last reviewed (date):** |  | |
| **Next review due (date):** |  | |

# Important contacts

| **Role/organisation** | **NAME AND Contact details** |
| --- | --- |
| **Headteacher** |  |
| **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** |  |
| **Deputy DSL** |  |
| **Named person for Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers (Headteacher)** |  |
| **SENDCo / Inclusion Manager** |  |
| **Lac / PLAC Lead** |  |
| **CiN / CP Lead** |  |
| **E-safety co-ordinator** |  |
| **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** | 020 8379 4392 |
| **Chair of Governors** |  |
| **Safeguarding Link Governor** |  |
| **Channel Helpline** | 020 7340 7264 |

# Aims

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| **We believe that all children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect.**  Although reporting concerns can be uncomfortable for staff, and be unpleasant for families, as a school we recognise that it is better to help children, young people, and their families early, before issues escalate and become more damaging.  Because safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility, all staff are committed to recognising and reporting all concerns relating to child well-being and are vigilant in spotting signs of abuse and maltreatment.  As such, we promise to:   * + Be observant and alert to signs of abuse   + Be curious and question explanations given by parents / children / staff   + Be compassionate, honest, and clear   + Ask for support when we feel at the limit of our experience / patience / skills   + Understand and follow school policies and procedures   + Work together with other agencies when appropriate to make sure that support for children, young people and families is effective and helps improve outcomes. |

Children and young people learn and thrive best when they are healthy, safe, and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

This schoolaims to offer an environment where children feel welcome, safe, stimulated and where children are free to enjoy learning and developing in confidence.

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at this school.

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# 2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2), and the [Governance Handbook](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our three local safeguarding partners (see section 3).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

* Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
* [The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/2680/contents/made), 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
* [The Children Act 1989](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41) (and [2004 amendment](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents)), 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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/9/part/5/crossheading/female-genital-mutilation), 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](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
* [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/53), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
* Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/schedule/4), which defines what ‘regulated activity’ is in relation to children
* [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance), 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](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents), 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](https://www.echr.coe.int/Pages/home.aspx?p=basictexts&c) (ECHR)
* [The Equality Act 2010](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race).
* [The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
* The [Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/794/contents/made) (referred to in this policy as the “2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations”) and [Childcare Act 2006](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents), 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](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2)

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# 3. Definitions

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** means:

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

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

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

**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.

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

**Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following three **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and 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:

* The London Borough of Enfield
* North Central London Integrated Care Board
* The Metropolitan Police Commander for Enfield and Haringey

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

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

# 4. Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children’s diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

* Have special educational needs 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
* 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

# 5. Roles and responsibilities

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

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

* Behaviour policy
* Pastoral support system
* Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education

5.1 All staff

All staff will:

* Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education’s statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2), and review this guidance at least annually
* Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance
* Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they will be interacting with online)
* Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

* Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identityof the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), the behaviour policy, the online safety policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
* The early help assessment process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
* The process for making referrals to local authority children’s social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
* What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
* The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, 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

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety, including understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

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

* Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
* Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
* Contribute to the assessment of children
* Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children’s social care, 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 our school
* The DSL will also:
* Keep the headteacher informed of any issues
* Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
* Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children’s social care colleagues to prepare the school’s policies
* Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
* Be aware that children must have an ‘appropriate adult’ to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

5.3 The governing board

The governing board 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 at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
* Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school’s local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
* Appoint a governor 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 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](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges), and discussing with IT staff 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
* Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
  + Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
  + Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
  + Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

The chair of governors will act as the ‘case manager’ in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate.

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

5.4 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 has 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 DSL on this
* Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
* Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
* Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones and cameras in the setting

# 6. Confidentiality

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding and the fear of sharing information must not be allowed to prevent the promotion of the welfare of any child. The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe

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

The government’s [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice) 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.

# 7. Recognising abuse and taking action

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

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

Make a referral to children’s social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.**

Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

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

* Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
* Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
* Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
* Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
* 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
* Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. 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 you from having a ‘professional curiosity’ and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

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

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

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as ‘female genital cutting’, ‘circumcision’ or ‘initiation’.

**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 our local safeguarding procedures.

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

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

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

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. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children’s social care directly, if appropriate (see ‘Referral’ below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

**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 acting as the lead practitioner.

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

**Referral**

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

If you make a referral directly, you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The local authority will make a decision within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

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

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first 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 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](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance), the government’s programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children’s social care team.

The 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. You can also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk). Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

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

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

7.6 If you have a concern about mental health

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

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

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

If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

7.7 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor

If you have 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.

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

If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils.

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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

* Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
* Could put pupils in the school at risk
* Is violent
* Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
* Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse 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:

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

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

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

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

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, considering whether:

* Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will 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 us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

7.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (‘sexting’)

**Your responsibilities when responding to an incident**

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

You must **not**:

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

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

**Initial review meeting**

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 SEN)
* 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 Safer Schools officer or the local neighbourhood police (101).

**Recording incidents**

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

**Curriculum coverage**

[Edit to include details of your setting’s curriculum]

7.10 Reporting systems for our pupils

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

* Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse
* Ensure our 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

# 8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

[Adapt to refer to your setting’s online safety policy. For EYFS providers, you must also add details to cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in your setting]

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

To address this, our school aims to:

* Have robust processes in place, including filtering and monitoring systems, 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
* Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
* Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

**The 4 key categories of risk**

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

* **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, 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; and
* **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

8.1 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

The school recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse and/or expose pupils to harmful content.

The school will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our behaviour policy.

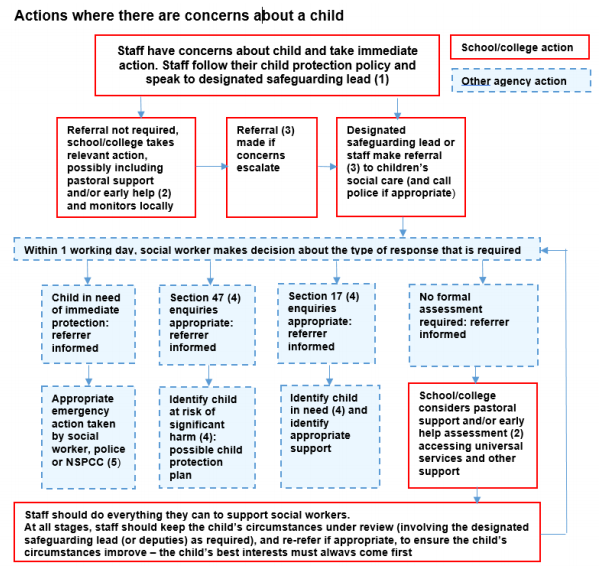
**9. DSL Decision-Making**

Once concerns are identified and shared with DSLs, DSLs and involved staffwilldecide together how best to proceed to support the child and to mitigate the risk. DSLs can consult with MASH at any point.

Options for action are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Pastoral Care** | [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) acknowledges the casework that schools undertake on a pastoral level. This includes managing any support for the child internally via the school’s own pastoral support processes. If pastoral staff are engaged, they must work alongside safeguarding staff, and DSLs would take the lead on decisions about progressing a case. |
|  |  |
| **Early Help (MASH)** | Schools can refer children and families for early help assessment and support, with the informed consent of parents. |
|  |  |
| **Referral to statutory services (MASH)** | A referral must be made to MASH/children’s social care (and if appropriate the police) immediately if the child is:   * A child in need; defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled * Suffering, or likely suffering, harm. |
|  |  |
| **Allegation of harm to a child by a practitioner** | If the alleged harm to a child is caused by a practitioner or a volunteer, the headteacher should be notified immediately and LADO should be consulted. |

Following several cases nationally where senior leaders in schools failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) emphasises that any member of staff must contact and/or make a referral to Children’s Social Care if they are concerned about a child.



**Referrals**

[Children’s Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub | Safeguarding Enfield](https://www.enfield.gov.uk/safeguardingenfield/making-a-safeguarding-referral/childrens-multi-agency-safeguarding-hub) is Enfield’s single point of referral to social care for concerns regarding children, young people and vulnerable adults:

* Early Help (parental consent needed)
* Child in Need
* Child Protection
* Adult Safeguarding

Referrals to the MASH should be made immediately when there is a concern that the child is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so. It is good practice to notify MASH by phone and/or email to discuss the situation prior to sending a written referral. This will help determine the level of intervention and will also give children’s social care and the police time to decide to come and see the child that same day in school, if deemed necessary.

In this schoolthe DSL ordinarily takes responsibility for the referral process, in consultation with staff who know the child. Still, there are circumstances where another member of staff must refer without delay:

* If for some reason (e.g., during the summer break), the DSL is not available, the referral should be made without delay by any other member of school staff
* If you disagree with your DSL’s decision not to refer a case to MASH, it is your responsibility to refer the case, and to respectfully inform the DSL that you are doing so.

Should another member of staff refer instead, the DSL must be consulted and updated as soon as possible.

# 10. Notifying parents or carers

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

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children’s social care to make sure our 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 is 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 is 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)

# 11. Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and are three 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 disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
* Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges

We offer additional pastoral support for more vulnerable pupils.

# 12. Pupils with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We 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 all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil’s safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about:

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

# 13. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

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

* Appropriate staff have relevant information about children’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

We have appointed a designated teacher who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with [statutory guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children).

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

# 14. Record-keeping

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

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

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

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records 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 DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main pupil file.

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

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

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.

# 15. Training

15.1 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 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, if applicable.

15.2 The DSL and Deputy DSLs

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least 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.

15.3 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.

15.4 Safer Recruitment

We follow Safer Recruitment guidelines, in line with our Safer Recruitment Policy.

At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken Safer Recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

15.5 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.

# 16. Links with other policies

[Adapt for the named policies within your setting]

This policy links to the following school policies and procedures:

* Behaviour Policy
* Safer Recruitment Policy
* Staff Code of Conduct
* Complaints Policy
* Whistleblowing Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* Attendance Policy
* Online Safety Policy
* Mobile Phone Use Policy
* Equality Policy
* Relationships and Sex Education Policy
* First Aid Policy

# 17. Monitoring arrangements

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