Believe Grow Achieve

Copmanthorpe Primary School

Inspiring Everyone to Thrive

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Also Including: Safer Recruitment Policy and Allegations Against Staff Policy

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Important Contacts

Copmanthorpe Child Protection and Safeguarding Advice

Contact List – September 2026

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Luke Dancer Headteacher	01904 554535 head.copmanthorpeprimary@york.gov.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Jeanette France Assistant Headteacher Ash Talbot Assistant Headteacher Emma Wooldridge – SENCo Maria Scott – ELSA	jfrance@copmanthorpeprimary.co.uk atalbot@copmanthorpeprimary.co.uk ewooldridge@copmanthorpeprimary.co.uk mscott@copmanthorpeprimary.co.uk
Designated Link Safeguarding Governor	Emily Buchanan	ebuchanan@copmanthorpeprimary.co.uk
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)		01904 551900 0300 131 2131 (out of hours emergency) e-mail: mash@york.gov.uk
Children's Services	Referral & Assessment Manager or Duty Social Worker	01904 551900 0845 0349417 (after 5pm)
Attendance Advisor	Mark Smith	01904 555187 e-mail: mark.smith@york.gov.uk
Safeguarding Advisor	Sophie Cole	sophie.cole@york.gov.uk 01904 555
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Michelle Turner	01904 551783 e-mail: lado@york.gov.uk **NB only email using a secure 'york.gov.uk' email account**
City of York Council ICT officer	Leigh Farrow	01904 554377 email: leigh.farrow@york.gov.uk

Copmanthorpe Primary School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors to share this commitment.

All staff refers to all adults, volunteers (including governors) or students on placement, working in any capacity in the school or in activities organised by the school which brings them in to contact with pupils of the school.

Child Protection refers to the multi-agency arrangements to identify and protect children who are or may be at risk of or suffering significant harm.

Safeguarding refers to the protection, safety and promotion of the welfare of all pupils including when in off-site provision or activities and using ICT. This includes the building of resilience and awareness of risk through the formal and informal curriculum.

Child is any pupil under the age of 18.

Glossary

- DSL Designated Safeguarding Lead
- DDSL Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- SENCo Special Education Needs and Disabilities Coordinator
- DT Designated Teacher for Looked After and previously Looked After Children.
- PSHE Personal, social, health and economic education
- RSE Relationships, sex and health education
- KCSIE Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2026)

Visitors to school

All visitors must sign in on arrival and wear the appropriate visitor lanyard at all times while on the school premises.

Red – Visitor
A visitor who has signed in but may not have undergone an enhanced DBS check. Red-lanyard visitors must be appropriately supervised and must not be left unsupervised with children.

Yellow – Supply staff
Supply staff whose agency or employing organisation has confirmed that the appropriate safeguarding and pre-employment checks have been completed. Identity will be checked on arrival.

Orange – School volunteer
A volunteer who has completed the school's induction and for whom the school has undertaken the appropriate safeguarding checks for their role. Where a volunteer is undertaking regulated activity, the school will obtain an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information in accordance with Part 3 of KCSIE. Volunteers who are not in regulated activity will be subject to a written risk assessment to determine the appropriate level of checks and supervision.

Black – School governor
A member of the governing body who has completed the school's induction and the required safeguarding checks, including an enhanced DBS check. Governors will normally be accompanied or supervised when visiting the school unless their role and the activity being undertaken make this unnecessary.

For other visitors attending in a professional capacity, the school will check their identity and obtain assurance that appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed by their employer, where required. The school will use professional judgement to determine whether other visitors require supervision.

All contractors must follow the school's signing-in arrangements and will be subject to the appropriate safeguarding arrangements and checks in accordance with Part 3 of KCSIE.

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

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

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, and has regard to the *Maintained Schools Governance Guide*. We comply with this guidance and with 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, 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 one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regard 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, as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Crime and Policing Act 2026, which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination

- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which 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

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

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

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

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

Making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes refers to the creation, sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images by young people under the age of 18. The term 'images' includes all visual content, such as photographs, videos and livestreams. Images may be taken by the child themselves, taken or created by another person, digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including what are sometimes described as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes'.

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 local authority (LA)
- Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

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

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

4. Equality statement

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children in recognising or disclosing concerns. 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 (see section 10)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation or because they are questioning their gender
- 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 drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues or domestic abuse
- Are at risk of exploitation, modern slavery or trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation
- Are at risk of radicalisation, FGM, forced marriage or other honour or faith-based abuse
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- 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
- Have been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, are on a part-time timetable, are at risk of permanent exclusion or are accessing alternative provision

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 creating a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence/harassment, derogatory behaviour and other forms of physical violence and conflict. This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour policy
- Pastoral support system
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
    - Healthy and respectful relationships
    - Boundaries and consent
    - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
    - Body confidence and self-esteem
    - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
    - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support
    - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

5.1 All staff

All staff will:

- Read and understand Part One of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, and review this guidance at least annually
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to confirm that they have read and understood 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, including the sites they may need to access and who they may interact with online
- Provide a safe and supportive environment in which all pupils feel able to speak out and share 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 identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the behaviour policy, online safety policy and the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education
- The role of universal services and community-based early help, and the targeted early help level of Family Help, including their role in identifying children who may benefit from support, liaising with the DSL and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification, assessment and intervention
- 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, neglected or exploited, 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, neglect and exploitation, as well as specific safeguarding issues such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), modern slavery, serious violence, county lines, FGM and radicalisation
- The school's procedures for recording safeguarding concerns and passing information to the DSL or a deputy in accordance with the school's recording systems
- New and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm
- The importance of reassuring children who report abuse 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 the home, at school and online
- The fact that children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, or are perceived by other children to be, can be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying
- The particular safeguarding considerations relating to children who are questioning their gender, as set out in KCSIE
- That mental health difficulties can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation and can also develop into safeguarding concerns
- That a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

Section 16 and Appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is **Luke Dancer (Headteacher)**. The DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. This responsibility is explicit in the DSL's job description.

During term time, the DSL or a deputy will always be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Where the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave or other circumstances, clear cover arrangements will be in place to ensure that safeguarding concerns can be raised, monitored and acted upon without delay.

Outside of term time, appropriate safeguarding cover arrangements will be in place for any school activities. The DSL will monitor the school email account [head.copmanthorpeprimary@york.gov.uk]. This account is not monitored continuously during school closure periods and urgent safeguarding concerns should therefore be referred directly to City of York Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01904 551900 ([mash@york.gov.uk]).

When the DSL is absent, the deputy designated safeguarding leads will provide cover. The deputy DSLs are **Mrs Jeanette France (Assistant Headteacher), Miss Ashley Wilkinson (Assistant Headteacher), Emma Wooldridge (SENCo) and Maria Scott (ELSA)**. Deputy DSLs are trained to the same standard as the DSL. While safeguarding activities may be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and cannot be delegated.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support needed to carry out the role effectively, including to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding 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
- Make referrals, as appropriate, to local authority children's social care, the Channel programme, the Disclosure and Barring Service and/or the police, and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Understand the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at the school

The DSL will also:

- Keep the headteacher informed of safeguarding issues as appropriate
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers where appropriate
- Liaise with the three safeguarding partners and work with other agencies in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children*
- Understand the local criteria for action and assessment protocols for referrals to Family Help and local authority children's social care
- Understand and support the school with regard to the requirements of the Prevent duty and provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- Understand the risks associated with online safety, including generative artificial intelligence, and work with relevant staff to ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements are in place

- Have a good understanding of the local response to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence and know how to access appropriate specialist support for children involved

- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

- Promote the educational outcomes of children who have experienced or are experiencing safeguarding or welfare issues by sharing relevant information appropriately with staff

The full responsibilities of the DSL are set out in **Annex B of KCSIE – Role of the designated safeguarding lead**. The DSL and all deputy DSLs will read and follow this guidance.

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 the school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

- Appoint a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This will always be a different person from the DSL

- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety and an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, at induction. This training will be regularly updated and will be in line with advice from the safeguarding partners

- Ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety, as required and at least annually

- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and that a review of their effectiveness is carried out at least once every academic year. This includes:

    - Ensuring the review is carried out by the member of the senior leadership team responsible for filtering and monitoring, with the support of the DSL and IT support

    - Ensuring checks establish that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations and that a record of these checks is kept

    - Ensuring that the leadership team and relevant staff are aware of the filtering and monitoring provision in place, understand their roles and responsibilities and know how to escalate concerns

    - Reviewing the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards and discussing with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards

The governing board will make sure:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their role, including sufficient 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 responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place

- The school has procedures to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations about staff, including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors, including concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure

- This policy reflects the fact that children with SEND or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline, and that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation

Where another body is providing services or activities, regardless of whether the children attending these services or activities are on the school roll, the governing board will:

- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and 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 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' where an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see Appendix 3).

All governors will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which will be regularly updated, to equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge and assurance that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.

Section 15 of this policy contains information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

5.4 The headteacher

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

- Ensuring that staff, including temporary staff, trainee teachers and volunteers:

    - Are informed of the school's systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction

    - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning the identification, recording and referral of concerns relating to abuse, neglect and exploitation

- Communicating this policy to parents and carers when their child joins the school and making it available via the school website

- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training, resources and support and that robust cover arrangements are in place when the DSL is unavailable

- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against another member of staff, trainee teacher or volunteer, where appropriate (see Appendix 3)

- Making decisions regarding low-level concerns, where appropriate, in accordance with the procedures set out in Appendix 3 and KCSIE
- 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 within the school and ensuring that the school's arrangements are consistent with its safeguarding responsibilities

5.5 Virtual school heads

Virtual School Heads have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker. Recognising attendance as a key factor in safeguarding, Virtual School Heads should work with local authorities to set and report on ambitious targets to improve the attendance of these children.

Virtual School Heads should identify and engage with key professionals who work with children with a social worker, including DSLs, headteachers, governors, SENCOs, social workers and mental health leads, helping them to understand their role in improving outcomes for these children.

Virtual School Heads also have a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children in kinship care.

6. Confidentiality

Safeguarding records are confidential and are stored securely, with access restricted to those staff who need the information in order to safeguard children. Further advice about how the school manages personal information can be obtained from the school's Data Protection Officer at schoolsDPO@veritau.co.uk or on 01904 554025.

The following principles apply:

- Timely and appropriate information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm
- The Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- Where it is necessary to share special category personal data for safeguarding purposes, information may be shared without consent where there is a lawful basis to do so, including where it is not possible or reasonable to obtain consent, or where seeking consent would place a child at risk
- Information should only be shared with those who need it for safeguarding purposes, and the amount of information shared should be proportionate to the purpose
- Staff should never promise confidentiality to a child who makes a disclosure or reports abuse, neglect or exploitation, as information may need to be shared in order to safeguard them or others
- If a child asks the school not to share information about sexual violence or sexual harassment:
    - There is no definitive answer, as information may still lawfully be shared without consent where another legal basis under UK GDPR applies
    - The DSL or a deputy will balance the child's wishes against the duty to protect them and other children
    - Parents or carers should normally be informed unless doing so would place the child at greater risk
    - Where 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

    - Reports of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault should be referred to the police. Where the alleged perpetrator is under the age of criminal responsibility, the starting principle of referral to the police remains

- Where the DSL or a deputy makes a referral to children's social care or a report to the police against the child's wishes, the decision will be explained sensitively and appropriate support will be offered
- Regarding anonymity, staff will:
    - Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal justice process where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment progresses through the criminal justice system
    - Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of children involved in reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment
    - Carefully consider which staff need to know about the report and the support required by the children involved
    - Consider the potential impact of social media in spreading rumours or exposing the identity of children involved
- Staff should follow the government's *Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers*, including the seven golden rules for information sharing
- If staff are unsure whether information should be shared, they should seek advice from the DSL or a deputy. Information-sharing decisions should be recorded where appropriate, including the rationale for decisions made

Confidentiality and information sharing are also addressed in this policy in relation to record-keeping in Section 15 and concerns or allegations about staff in Appendix 3.

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

All staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery, and to remain alert to children who may benefit from support through universal services, community-based early help or Family Help.

Staff should be particularly alert to a child who:

- Is disabled
- Has special educational needs, whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- Is a young carer
- Is bereaved
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement, association with organised crime groups, county lines or serious violence
- Is frequently missing or goes missing from education, home or care
- Has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of permanent exclusion or is accessing alternative provision
- Is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery or trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- Is living in family circumstances presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues or domestic abuse
- Is misusing alcohol or other drugs themselves

- Is experiencing mental health difficulties
- Is at risk of honour or faith-based abuse, including female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Is viewing problematic or inappropriate online content or developing harmful or inappropriate relationships online
- Has returned home to their family from care

Staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap. Children can be at risk of harm inside or outside the home, in school, in the community and online. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or a deputy.

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

In this and subsequent sections, references to the DSL should be taken to mean “the DSL or a deputy DSL”.

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

If a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, staff must act immediately.

If there is an immediate risk of harm to a child, contact the police on **999**.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a referral should be made to local authority children’s social care. In York, referrals are made through the **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**.

Anyone can make a referral. Staff do not need to wait for the DSL to make a referral where they believe immediate action is required. If a member of staff makes a referral directly, they must inform the DSL as soon as possible.

City of York MASH contact details

Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm:

- Telephone: **01904 551900**
- Email: **mash@york.gov.uk**

Outside office hours, at weekends and on public holidays, contact the Emergency Duty Team:

- Telephone: **0300 131 2131**
- Email: **edt@northyorks.gov.uk**

Where the threshold for statutory intervention is met, professionals should complete the **MASH contact form** and submit it to MASH. Referrals should include clear information about the concerns and risks, details of support already provided, relevant assessments, plans and reviews, the support or intervention being sought and confirmation of consent or a clear rationale where consent has not been obtained.

The school follows the **City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership’s Continuum of Need and Threshold Guidance** and locally agreed referral procedures. Most children and families will have needs that can be met through universal services and early help. MASH should be contacted where there is reasonable cause to suspect significant harm or where a child’s needs have escalated beyond what universal services and early help can safely meet.

Staff must record the concern, decisions made and action taken in accordance with the school’s safeguarding recording procedures and notify the DSL as soon as possible.

The school’s safeguarding responsibility does not end once a referral has been made. The DSL will ensure that the outcome of the referral is followed up and that the school continues to support the child and family and work with other professionals as appropriate.

Where there is disagreement between professionals about the response to a safeguarding concern, the school will follow the **City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership’s escalation procedures**.

Staff should seek advice from the DSL where they are uncertain about the appropriate response or threshold. **Uncertainty about thresholds must never result in a child being left at risk or necessary action being delayed.**

City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership – Report a concern about a child or young person

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

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

- Listen carefully and take what they say seriously. Give them time to talk freely, respond with empathy and avoid showing shock, disbelief or judgement
- Recognise the significance of the child choosing you as someone they trust to speak to
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling you, that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. They should never be made to feel that they are creating a problem or feel ashamed for making a disclosure
- Use the child's own language and ask only open-ended questions where clarification is necessary. Avoid leading questions. Staff may ask whether the child has been harmed and what the nature of that harm was
- Be aware that an initial disclosure may not reflect the full extent of the abuse, neglect or exploitation and that trauma can affect a child's memory and their ability to recall details
- Explain what will happen next and that the information will need to be shared with those who need to know in order to safeguard them. Never promise confidentiality
- Wherever possible, give the child your full attention and make a detailed written record as soon as possible after the conversation. Record what the child has said using their own words and do not add interpretation, assumptions or personal opinion
- Record the concern on CPOMS as soon as possible and alert the DSL. Where CPOMS is not available, make a written record and pass this to the DSL without delay
- Where appropriate, make a referral directly to local authority children's social care and/or the police in accordance with Section 7.1 and inform the DSL as soon as possible
- Share information only with those who need to know in order to safeguard the child or progress the concern

Staff should be aware that some children may:

- Not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, neglected or exploited
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated, ashamed or threatened
- Experience additional barriers to disclosure because of factors including disability, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation or language
- Communicate concerns indirectly through their behaviour, presentation or changes in their wellbeing

None of these barriers should prevent staff from exercising professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. Staff should consider how trusted relationships can be developed that enable children to communicate concerns and feel confident that they will be heard.

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

Female genital mutilation (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 is a form of child abuse with long-lasting and harmful consequences. It may also be referred to as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

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

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 has 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 personally report this to the police. This is a mandatory statutory duty.

Unless they have been specifically advised not to disclose the information, the teacher should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve local authority 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 girl under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow the school's local safeguarding procedures.

The mandatory reporting duty for teachers does not apply where a pupil is at risk of FGM or where FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff must not examine pupils to determine whether FGM has taken place.

Any member of staff who suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM, or suspects that FGM has been carried out, must speak to the DSL and follow the school's 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)

If you have a concern about a child's welfare, you should act on it immediately.

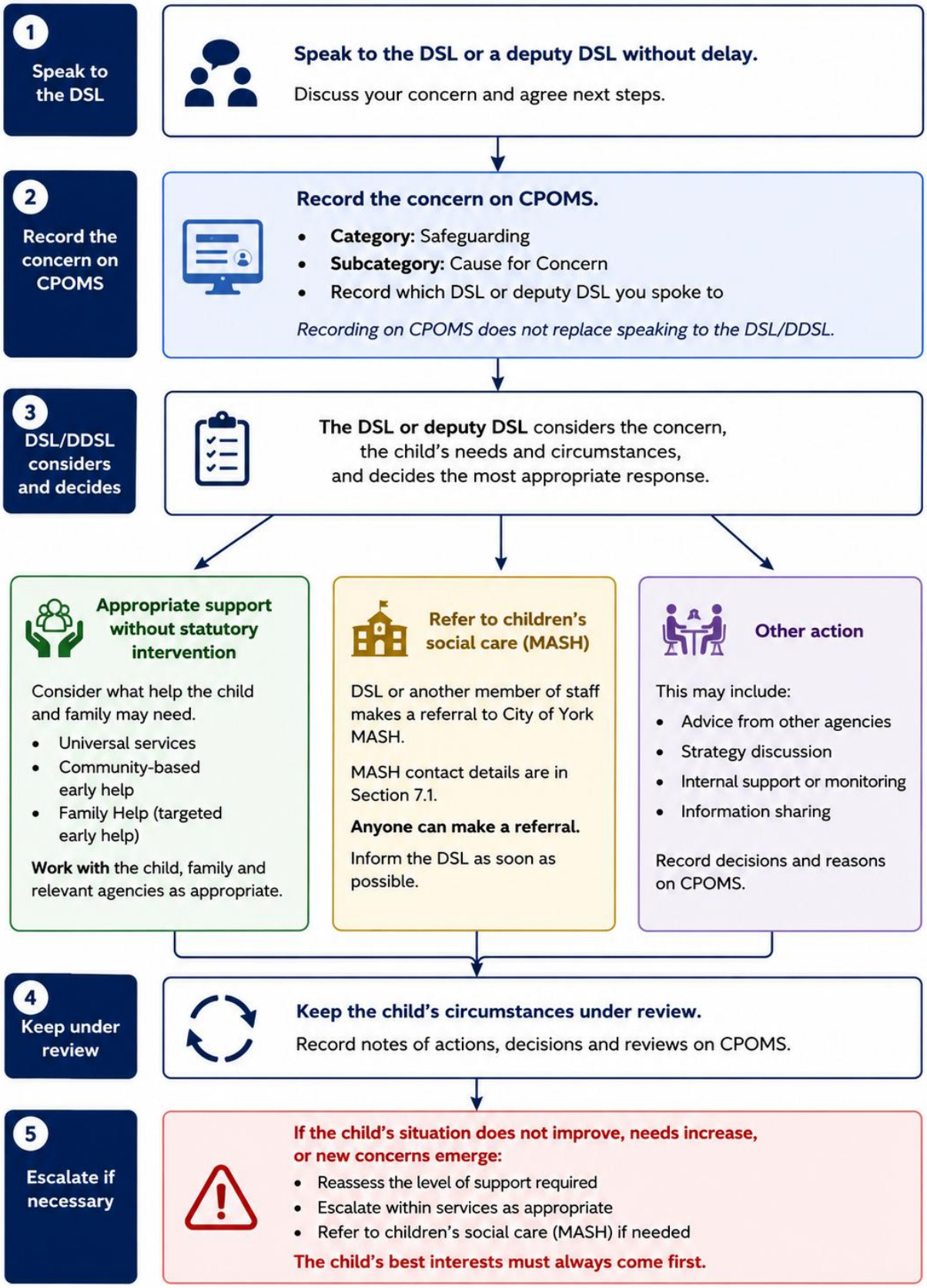
Staff must speak directly to the DSL or a deputy DSL about any safeguarding concern without delay. The concern must then be recorded on CPOMS under **Safeguarding – Cause for Concern**, including a record of which DSL or deputy DSL the concern was shared with. Recording a concern on CPOMS does not replace the requirement to speak directly to the DSL or a deputy DSL.

If the DSL or a deputy DSL is not immediately available, this must not delay appropriate safeguarding action. Where necessary, staff should speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Where appropriate, staff can make a referral directly to local authority children's social care and/or the police. Any action taken must be shared with the DSL as soon as possible.

Figure 1 below provides a summary of the safeguarding pathway to follow when a member of staff has concerns about a child's welfare. It should be read alongside the procedures set out in Sections 7.1 and 7.4. The flowchart is intended as a quick reference; safeguarding decisions should always be based on the individual circumstances of the child.

If there is an immediate risk of harm, staff must follow Section 7.1 without delay.

Figure 1: Safeguarding concerns – action and referral pathway



Support before statutory intervention

Any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention. Depending on the child's needs and circumstances, this may include support from universal services, community-based early help or the targeted early help level of Family Help.

Where additional support is appropriate, the DSL will generally take the lead in liaising with other agencies. Staff may be required to contribute to assessments, plans and multi-agency work and, where appropriate, may act as the lead practitioner.

The school will work in accordance with the City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership's current local threshold guidance and assessment protocols when identifying the appropriate level of support.

The DSL will ensure that cases are kept under review. Where a child's circumstances do not improve, their needs increase or new safeguarding concerns emerge, the school will reconsider the level of support required and, where appropriate, make a referral to local authority children's social care.

Family Help

Where a child and family require targeted multi-agency support, the school will work with the family and relevant agencies in accordance with York's local Family Help arrangements.

Staff should understand the local criteria for accessing Family Help and the role they may be expected to play in supporting an assessment and subsequent plan.

The school will work collaboratively with children, families and other professionals, sharing information appropriately and ensuring that the child's wishes and feelings are considered when determining what support is required.

Where consent is required, this should be sought from parents or carers. However, staff must not allow concerns about consent to prevent information being shared or action being taken where there is a safeguarding concern or where seeking consent would place a child at increased risk.

Referral to children's social care

If it is appropriate to refer a child to local authority children's social care, the DSL will normally make the referral or support a member of staff to do so.

Anyone can make a referral. If a member of staff makes a referral directly, they must inform the DSL as soon as possible.

The referral process and current City of York MASH contact details are set out in Section 7.1 of this policy.

Within one working day of receiving a referral, local authority children's social care should acknowledge receipt and decide what response is required.

If the referrer does not receive information about the outcome of the referral, they should follow this up with children's social care.

If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, school staff will do everything they can to support that assessment, with support from the DSL as required.

If, following a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL or the person who made the referral will follow local escalation procedures to ensure that concerns have been addressed and appropriate action is being taken.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and the reasons for those decisions will be recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding recording procedures.

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism

If a member of staff has concerns that a child may be susceptible to radicalisation or at risk of being drawn into terrorism, they should follow the school's normal safeguarding procedures and speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

If the DSL is unavailable, this must not delay appropriate action. Staff should speak to a deputy DSL or member of the senior leadership team and, where appropriate, seek advice from local authority children's social care or make a referral directly. The DSL must be informed as soon as possible of any action taken.

The DSL will consider the level of risk and determine the appropriate action. This may include making a Prevent referral. Where appropriate, a child may be considered for support through Channel, the multi-agency safeguarding programme that provides support to people who are susceptible to radicalisation and at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Where a concern about extremism relates to an education setting, staff and governors can also report it to the Department for Education's Counter-Extremism service:

- Telephone: 020 7340 7264
- Email: counter.extremism@education.gov.uk

This service is not for emergencies.

Where there is an immediate threat to life or a crime is in progress, call the police on 999.

Information about possible terrorist activity can also be reported to the police Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321.

7.6 If you have a concern about mental health

All staff should be aware that mental health difficulties can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Mental health difficulties can also themselves develop into safeguarding concerns.

Staff should be alert to changes in a child's behaviour, presentation, attendance or wellbeing that may indicate that they are experiencing mental health difficulties or are at risk of developing them.

Where there are serious concerns, including self-harm, eating disorders or suicidal thoughts or behaviour, staff should consider whether there is a safeguarding risk and ensure appropriate action is taken.

If a mental health concern is also a safeguarding concern, staff must take immediate action in accordance with Section 7.4 of this policy and inform the DSL.

If a mental health concern is not considered to be a safeguarding concern, staff should record the concern on CPOMS and speak to the DSL or other appropriate member of staff so that the child's needs can be considered and appropriate support put in place.

Where appropriate, the school will work with parents and carers and relevant health, education and other professionals to ensure that the child receives appropriate support.

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 that they may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns or allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.

The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures set out in Appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where 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.

Where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken within the necessary timescale (see Appendix 3 for more detail).

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing other children. Child-on-child abuse can happen both inside and outside school and online. 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 recognise that child-on-child abuse may be gendered in nature and that some forms of abuse disproportionately affect particular groups of children. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Child-on-child abuse can take many forms. This can include, but is not limited to:

- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
- physical abuse, such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- upskirting
- initiation and hazing-type violence and rituals
- exploitation, including children being forced or encouraged to use or distribute drugs or alcohol.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils or behaving inappropriately towards them will be dealt with under the school’s behaviour policy. However, this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply where behaviour raises safeguarding concerns.

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

Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence

The school recognises that harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) can occur between children of any age and sex and can involve individuals or groups of children. It can occur face-to-face or online and may be physical, verbal or both.

Sexual behaviour exists on a continuum. Staff should be alert to behaviour that is developmentally inappropriate, problematic or abusive and recognise that harmful sexual behaviour may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence. Early identification and appropriate intervention are important in preventing behaviours from escalating.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence. Such behaviour is never acceptable and will not be tolerated or dismissed as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or similar.

Staff should challenge inappropriate sexualised behaviour and language. This includes behaviours such as sexualised comments, grabbing, touching, pulling down clothing, lifting skirts and other behaviour that may be harmful, inappropriate or potentially criminal. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviour risks normalising it and creating an unsafe culture.

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

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil, or a member of staff otherwise becomes aware of possible child-on-child abuse:

- Staff must take the concern seriously, reassure the child that they are being taken seriously and that they are not creating a problem by reporting it.
- Staff must record the concern on CPOMS and speak directly to the DSL or a deputy DSL without delay. Staff should not investigate the allegation themselves.
- The DSL will consider the circumstances of the case, the needs and wishes of the children involved and the level of risk. Where appropriate, the DSL will make a referral to local authority children’s social care and/or the police.
- The DSL will consider whether a risk assessment and support plan are required for the children involved, including the child who has experienced the alleged behaviour, the child who is alleged to have displayed the behaviour and any other children affected.
- Risk assessments will consider the needs of all children involved and any locations or circumstances in which further harm could occur, including classrooms, social times, school transport and online contact.
- Appropriate pastoral, safeguarding and, where necessary, specialist support will be considered for all children involved.
- Where appropriate, the school will work with parents and carers and relevant external agencies.

Where an incident may constitute a criminal offence, the school will consider whether a report to the police is required. Where the police or local authority children’s social care are involved, the DSL will liaise closely with them when considering the school’s response and any action required to safeguard the children involved.

Where there are delays in an external investigation, the school will continue to take appropriate action to safeguard and support the children involved.

All allegations, discussions, advice, decisions and actions taken will be recorded on CPOMS in accordance with the school’s safeguarding recording procedures.

Responding to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence

When responding to a report, the DSL will consider:

- the wishes of the child who has experienced the alleged behaviour

- the nature of the alleged incident, including whether a crime may have been committed
- the ages and developmental stages of the children involved
- any power imbalance between the children
- whether the incident is a one-off or forms part of a pattern of behaviour
- whether there are ongoing risks to the child who has experienced the behaviour, the child alleged to have displayed the behaviour or other children
- any wider safeguarding concerns
- the context in which the alleged incident occurred, including whether it took place online or outside school.

The school will consider the needs of both the child who has experienced the behaviour and the child who is alleged to have displayed it. A child displaying harmful or abusive behaviour may themselves have unmet needs or have experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation or trauma. Appropriate support will be considered alongside any disciplinary action.

The school will also consider whether other children have witnessed or otherwise been affected by the incident and whether they require safeguarding or pastoral support.

Where appropriate, consideration will be given to intra-familial harm and any support required for siblings.

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 creating a supportive environment where children feel confident in reporting incidents and concerns.

To achieve this, we will:

- challenge any form of derogatory, discriminatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between children
- recognise and respond to harmful sexual behaviour at an early stage and not wait for behaviour to escalate
- ensure our curriculum helps pupils understand healthy and respectful relationships, appropriate behaviour, personal boundaries and consent
- ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems, as described in Section 7.10
- ensure staff reassure children who report abuse that they are being taken seriously
- be alert to reports or patterns of behaviour that may point to environmental, cultural or systemic problems that could be addressed through changes to policies, processes, staff practice or the curriculum
- consider whether incidents may reflect wider safeguarding issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- consider the role of social media and online communication in incidents and their aftermath, including potential contact between the children involved and their peers

- support children who have witnessed or otherwise been affected by child-on-child abuse
- consider intra-familial harm and any necessary support for siblings.

Staff will be trained to understand:

- how to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour and how to respond to concerns and reports
- that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, this does not mean it is not happening, and staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
- that if they have concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told
- that children may not always make a direct report and may communicate concerns in other ways, including through changes in their behaviour or presentation
- that a friend may make a report, a member of staff may overhear a conversation or a child’s behaviour may indicate that something is wrong
- that some children may face additional barriers to reporting abuse because of their age, vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, communication needs or other circumstances
- that a child displaying harmful behaviour towards another child may themselves be in need of safeguarding or support
- the important role all staff have in preventing, identifying and responding to child-on-child abuse
- that they should speak directly to the DSL or a deputy DSL without delay if they have safeguarding concerns
- that social media and online communication may play a significant role in an incident or its aftermath.

Disciplinary action and safeguarding

Safeguarding and disciplinary responses will be considered alongside one another. The DSL will lead the safeguarding response and work with relevant senior leaders when considering any action under the school’s behaviour policy.

The school will provide appropriate support at the same time as considering or taking disciplinary action. Disciplinary action will not be used as a substitute for an appropriate safeguarding response.

Disciplinary action may be taken while other investigations, including police investigations, are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not, in itself, prevent the school from reaching its own conclusion about what happened and taking appropriate action.

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

- taking action could prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution, in which case the school will liaise with the police and/or local authority children’s social care
- there are circumstances that would make it unreasonable for the school to reach its own conclusion about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing
- any proposed action is necessary and proportionate and takes account of the safeguarding needs of all children involved.

Throughout the school's response, the priority will be to safeguard and support the children involved, minimise the risk of further harm and ensure that appropriate action is taken.

7.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes means the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by children and young people under the age of 18. This can include images shared through social media, messaging services, gaming platforms, forums or directly between devices.

This also includes digitally manipulated images and pseudo-images, including images created or altered using artificial intelligence (AI), deepfake technology or other image-generation or editing tools, which appear to show a real child nude or semi-nude.

All incidents involving the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes will be treated as safeguarding concerns and dealt with in accordance with this policy and the current UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance, *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people*.

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, including digitally manipulated or AI-generated 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 child to share or download it. If you have already viewed the imagery accidentally, you must report this to the DSL
- Delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it
- Ask the child or children involved to disclose detailed information about the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the children involved or their parents or carers unless directed to do so by the DSL
- Say or do anything that could blame or shame any child involved.

You should explain to the child that you need to report the incident and reassure them that they have done the right thing by speaking to you and that they will receive appropriate support.

These expectations reflect the current UKCIS guidance for frontline staff.

Initial review by the DSL

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review with appropriate members of staff. This may include the member of staff who received the disclosure and members of the safeguarding or senior leadership team.

The initial review will consider:

- Whether there is an immediate risk of harm to any child
- Whether a referral needs to be made to the police and/or local authority children's social care
- Whether it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard a child. In most circumstances, imagery should not be viewed

- What further information is required to determine the most appropriate response
- Whether the imagery has been shared more widely and through which services or platforms
- Whether action is required to have the imagery removed from devices or online services
- Any relevant information about the children involved that may influence the risk assessment, including age, vulnerability and SEND
- Whether coercion, pressure, grooming, blackmail, exploitation or harmful sexual behaviour may be involved
- Whether the imagery has been digitally manipulated or generated using AI
- Whether another school, college, setting or agency needs to be contacted
- Whether and when parents or carers should be informed.

The DSL will use professional judgement and the current UKCIS guidance when determining the appropriate response. The welfare and protection of the children involved will be the primary consideration.

Referral to the police and/or children's social care

A referral will be made to the police and/or local authority children's social care immediately where there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

This will include consideration of referral where:

- An adult is involved
- There is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, pressured, blackmailed, groomed or exploited
- There are concerns about a child's capacity to understand or consent, including where this may be affected by age, SEND or other vulnerabilities
- The imagery depicts sexual acts that are unusual for the child's developmental stage or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and a child depicted is under 13
- There are abusive or aggravating circumstances
- The DSL believes that a child is at immediate risk of harm as a result of the incident, including where there are concerns about self-harm or suicidal thoughts or behaviour.

Where an adult has shared nude or semi-nude imagery of a child, this will be treated as child sexual abuse and referred to the police as a matter of urgency.

Where none of these circumstances apply, the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other appropriate staff where necessary, may decide that the incident can be managed without referral to the police or children's social care. Any such decision will be based on the individual circumstances, the needs of the children involved and the current UKCIS guidance, and the rationale will be recorded.

The school recognises the importance of safeguarding children without unnecessarily criminalising them and will ensure that its response is proportionate to the circumstances of the incident.

Further review by the DSL

Where a decision has been made not to refer immediately to the police or children's social care, the DSL will undertake any further review necessary to establish the facts and assess the risks.

This may include speaking with the children involved where appropriate. Staff will take care not to conduct an investigation that could compromise any subsequent police or social care investigation.

If, at any point, information emerges that indicates that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to local authority children's social care and/or the police as appropriate.

The DSL will keep the situation under review and ensure that appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support is provided to all children involved.

Informing parents and carers

Parents and carers will normally be informed at an early stage and involved in the process so that they can support their child.

Parents or carers will not be informed where there is good reason to believe that doing so would place a child at increased risk of harm or otherwise undermine their safety. In these circumstances, the DSL will seek advice from local authority children's social care or other relevant agencies as appropriate.

The reasons for any decision not to inform parents or carers will be clearly recorded.

Referring to the police

Where police involvement is required, the DSL will make or support the appropriate referral.

In an emergency, where there is an immediate risk to life or serious harm, the police should be contacted on **999**.

For non-emergency police contact, **101** should be used.

Where appropriate, referrals may also be made through the local safeguarding arrangements set out in Section 7.1 of this policy.

Recording incidents

All incidents involving the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including digitally manipulated or AI-generated imagery, will be recorded on **CPOMS**.

Records will include the concern reported, relevant discussions, advice received, decisions made, actions taken and the reasons for those decisions.

The record-keeping arrangements set out elsewhere in this policy also apply to these incidents.

The imagery itself must **not** be copied, uploaded to CPOMS or otherwise stored as part of the safeguarding record.

Curriculum coverage

The school recognises that education has an important role in preventing harm and enabling children to recognise unsafe or inappropriate behaviour, understand healthy relationships and know how and where to seek help.

Pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through the school's **Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum**, including the Jigsaw programme, alongside relevant learning within computing and other areas of the curriculum.

Teaching is age appropriate and progressive and supports pupils to develop their understanding of:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Personal boundaries and consent
- Privacy and the safe use of technology
- Appropriate and inappropriate sharing of images and information
- Pressure, coercion and manipulation
- How images and information shared online can be copied, altered and distributed
- The risks associated with requesting, creating, sharing or forwarding nude or semi-nude imagery
- Digitally manipulated, deepfake and AI-generated imagery
- How to recognise unsafe or abusive online behaviour
- How and where to report concerns and seek help for themselves or a friend.

The curriculum is adapted where appropriate to reflect pupils' age, developmental stage, SEND and the needs of the school community.

The school uses the most current Jigsaw materials and reviews curriculum content to ensure that teaching reflects emerging safeguarding risks, developments in technology and current statutory guidance.

Where appropriate, external resources and organisations may be used to complement the school's curriculum. These may include resources from organisations such as the NSPCC and UK Safer Internet Centre and input from appropriate safeguarding partners.

Staff delivering RSHE will consider potential sensitivities and the individual experiences of pupils when planning and delivering learning. Pupils will be reminded regularly of the trusted adults and reporting routes available to them in school.

The school will keep its safeguarding curriculum under review and will adapt teaching in response to emerging local or national safeguarding concerns.

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 all pupils, including those with SEND or communication needs

- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously and that they can safely express their views and give feedback
- Ensure children know that they can report a concern to any member of staff. This may be through informal conversations, using our 'worry box' or speaking with one of our ELSAs
- Ensure children are made aware of how they can talk to trusted adults within school through our RSHE curriculum, including Jigsaw, and assemblies
- Ensure children understand that staff cannot promise confidentiality where information needs to be shared in order to keep them or another child safe.

Staff will be aware that children may not always feel able to make a direct disclosure and may communicate concerns in different ways. Staff should therefore remain alert to changes in a child's behaviour, presentation or wellbeing that may indicate that something is wrong.

8. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

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

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes, including appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, in place to safeguard pupils, staff, volunteers and governors when using technology
- Protect and educate the whole school community in the safe, responsible and appropriate use of technology, including emerging technologies such as generative artificial intelligence (AI)
- Maintain a mobile phone-free environment for pupils throughout the school day, in accordance with statutory guidance, with appropriate exceptions and reasonable adjustments where necessary
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate online safety 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, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories and content generated or manipulated using AI
- **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, including 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 our aims and address the risks above, we will:

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. This will include:
    - The safe and responsible use of the internet, social media, technology and AI
    - Keeping personal information private
    - Understanding how online content, including AI-generated or manipulated content, may be inaccurate, misleading or harmful
    - How to recognise unacceptable, abusive or harmful behaviour online

    - Understanding the risks associated with sharing images and information online
    - How to report online concerns, including cyber-bullying, whether a child experiences it themselves or witnesses it happening to somebody else
    - Where and how pupils can seek help for themselves or a friend
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues, including cyber-bullying, online radicalisation, the safeguarding implications of emerging technologies including generative AI and the expectations, roles and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring. All staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and online safety updates throughout the year and training at least annually.
- Educate and support parents and carers in relation to online safety through the school website, communications and other appropriate opportunities. We will ensure that parents and carers know how to raise concerns about online safety.
- Ensure staff are aware of the school's expectations and restrictions regarding the use of personal mobile phones, cameras and other devices. Staff may bring personal phones to school but their use must be limited in accordance with the school's policies and Staff Code of Conduct. Staff must not use personal devices to take photographs or recordings of pupils.
- Maintain a mobile phone-free school day for pupils. Pupils will not have access to mobile phones during the school day, including during lessons, between lessons, at breaktimes or at lunchtimes. Where pupils bring a mobile phone to school, it must be handed in on arrival and will be stored securely for the duration of the school day. Phones will be returned to pupils at the end of the school day. Any exceptions or reasonable adjustments required for individual pupils will be considered in accordance with the school's Mobile Phone Policy.
- Ensure pupils, parents and carers, staff, volunteers and governors understand the school's expectations regarding acceptable use of the internet, school IT systems and mobile and smart technology.
- Apply appropriate sanctions where pupils breach the school's policies relating to acceptable use of technology or mobile phones, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and other relevant policies.
- Ensure relevant staff understand the powers available to schools to search, screen and confiscate items, including electronic devices, in accordance with statutory guidance. Any decision to search a pupil or electronic device will be made in accordance with that guidance and the school's safeguarding and behaviour procedures.
- Have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place to limit children's exposure to harmful and inappropriate online material through the school's IT systems. These arrangements will take account of the school's circumstances, the needs and age range of pupils, the four categories of online risk and developments in technology, including generative AI.
- Ensure that a member of the senior leadership team has responsibility for ensuring that the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements are reviewed. The DSL, IT staff and/or external IT provider will support this work as appropriate.
- Review the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements at least annually. This will include checking that filtering and monitoring systems are working effectively across internet-connected devices and relevant locations used by the school. Appropriate records of reviews and checks will be maintained and action taken where weaknesses or concerns are identified.
- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, including how to report concerns where they believe inappropriate content is accessible, appropriate content is being blocked or filtering and monitoring arrangements may not be operating effectively.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an appropriate risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community, including emerging online and technological risks.

- Provide safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety, to staff throughout the year as appropriate so that they continue to have the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- Review this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including its provisions relating to online safety, at least annually and update our procedures and implementation as necessary.

This section summarises our approach to online safety and the use of mobile technology. Further detail is set out in the school's Online Safety Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and relevant acceptable use agreements.

8.1 Artificial intelligence (AI) Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are increasingly widespread and accessible. The school recognises that AI can have legitimate and beneficial uses, including supporting teaching and learning and helping schools to protect and safeguard pupils. However, the use of AI can also create or increase safeguarding risks.

These risks may include exposure to harmful or inappropriate content, the generation or manipulation of sexual or abusive imagery, bullying, harassment, grooming, misinformation and the creation of realistic but false images, audio or video, sometimes referred to as deepfakes. AI may also be used to manipulate genuine images or create harmful content involving identifiable children or adults.

The school's filtering and monitoring arrangements apply to the use of AI and will take account of developments in AI technology and associated safeguarding risks.

Pupils will be taught, in an age-appropriate way, about the safe and responsible use of AI, including that AI-generated information may be inaccurate or misleading and that images, audio and video may have been generated or manipulated.

Any use of AI to access, create or distribute harmful or inappropriate content, bully or harass others or otherwise place a child at risk will be addressed in accordance with this policy and the school's Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy. Where the use of AI gives rise to a safeguarding concern, staff must follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report the concern to the DSL.

Staff must use AI tools responsibly and in accordance with school policies. They must be particularly mindful of data protection, confidentiality, intellectual property and safeguarding requirements and must not enter personal, special category or confidential information about pupils, families or staff into AI systems unless the use of that system has been appropriately approved by the school.

Any new AI tool proposed for use by the school should be considered appropriately before use, including its safeguarding, data protection, privacy and security implications. Where necessary, an appropriate risk assessment and/or data protection impact assessment will be completed.

9. Notifying parents or carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss concerns about a child with their parents or carers. The DSL will normally lead on decisions about sharing information with parents or carers where there is a safeguarding concern.

Other staff should only discuss safeguarding concerns with parents or carers following consultation with the DSL, unless there is an immediate need to take action to safeguard a child.

Where there is reason to believe that informing a parent or carer may place a child at additional risk of harm, prejudice an investigation or otherwise not be in the child's best interests, the school will seek advice from local authority children's social care and/or the police as appropriate before sharing information.

Where there has been a report of child-on-child sexual violence, the school will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's parents or carers and the parents or carers of the alleged perpetrator(s). In cases involving sexual harassment, whether and how parents or carers are involved will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The exception is where there is reason to believe that informing a parent or carer would place a child at additional risk.

The school will carefully consider what information is shared with the respective parents or carers about the other child or children involved and when it is appropriate to do so. Where local authority children's social care and/or the police are involved, we will work with them to ensure a consistent approach to information sharing.

The DSL, along with relevant agencies where appropriate, will:

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, normally with the victim present where appropriate, to discuss the arrangements being put in place to safeguard and support the child, understand their wishes regarding support and explain how the report will be progressed
- Meet with the parents or carers of the alleged perpetrator(s) to discuss the support being provided and any arrangements being put in place that affect their child, including the reasons for those decisions and any implications for their education
- Consider signposting parents and carers to appropriate sources of support where necessary

The DSL or a deputy will generally attend these meetings. The involvement of other agencies will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

All decisions about notifying parents or carers will be made with the **best interests and safety of the child as the primary consideration**.

11. Pupils with a social worker

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs, including because of abuse, neglect, exploitation and/or complex family circumstances. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as 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 safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable children.

Where the school is aware that a child has a social worker, the DSL will hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This will be considered as a matter of routine.

Where a child needs a social worker, this will inform decisions about:

- Safeguarding, including responding to unauthorised absence or a child missing education where there are known safeguarding risks
- Promoting the child's welfare, including considering appropriate pastoral and/or academic support alongside action by statutory services

The school will work collaboratively with social workers and other professionals and will share relevant information appropriately to support effective safeguarding and promote the child's welfare and educational outcomes.

12. Looked-after and previously looked-after children

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep looked-after and previously looked-after children safe and to promote their welfare and educational outcomes.

In particular, we will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about a child'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 the name and contact details of the relevant Virtual School Head
- Appropriate information is shared between the DSL and the designated teacher so that the safeguarding and educational needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are considered together

We have appointed **Luke Dancer, Headteacher, as the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children**. The designated teacher is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after 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 the Virtual School Head to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Work with relevant professionals to ensure that the educational needs of looked-after children are reflected in their Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- Consider, with the Virtual School Head and other relevant professionals, how Pupil Premium Plus funding can be used effectively to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their PEPs
- Promote high expectations for looked-after and previously looked-after children and ensure that appropriate support is in place to help them achieve their potential

13. Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

We recognise that pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender, or who are perceived to be, can be particularly vulnerable to bullying and other forms of harm. Any concerns about a child's welfare should be acted upon in accordance with this policy.

We recognise that risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to create a culture where all pupils feel able to speak openly with trusted members of staff and are confident that their concerns will be taken seriously.

Children who are questioning their gender may need sensitive and thoughtful support from the school. When considering how best to support an individual child, the school will focus on the child's specific circumstances, their safeguarding and wellbeing and what is in their best interests.

Where a child is questioning their gender or requests support with social transition, the school will take a careful and considered approach. Decisions will not be made on a one-size-fits-all basis and will take account of the child's age, individual circumstances and any wider vulnerabilities or safeguarding concerns.

Parents and carers should be involved in decisions about support wherever possible. The school will seek the views of parents or carers unless there is a genuine safeguarding reason why doing so would place the child at risk of significant harm.

Where a family has received relevant clinical advice, the school will take this into account when considering how best to support the child. Particular caution should be exercised in relation to social transition for pre-pubertal children and appropriate clinical advice should be considered where available.

The school will consider any request relating to social transition in light of its safeguarding duties and its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998. This includes requests relating to names, pronouns, uniform or other aspects of social transition. Decisions will be based on the individual circumstances and best interests of the child, while also considering the rights, safety and welfare of other pupils.

The school will take appropriate action to prevent and respond to bullying, harassment or discrimination. See our Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy for further information.

Any safeguarding concerns arising in relation to a child who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender must be reported to the DSL in accordance with this policy. Appropriate pastoral support, including ELSA support where appropriate, will be considered according to the individual needs of the child.

14. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

14.1 Complaints against staff

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

14.2 Other complaints

Other complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy, including where appropriate the procedures relating to persistent or vexatious complaints and harassment.

14.3 Whistle-blowing

The school follows the City of York Council Whistleblowing procedures.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding provision. Such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Staff should raise safeguarding concerns in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy. Concerns about safeguarding practice within the school should normally be raised with the DSL, a deputy DSL, the headteacher or another appropriate member of the senior leadership team.

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with the school, or feels that their genuine safeguarding concerns are not being addressed, they may use other whistleblowing channels.

The NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line is available to staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally, or who have concerns about the way a safeguarding concern is being handled by the school:

- Telephone: **0800 028 0285**
- Email: **help@nspcc.org.uk**

Staff may also seek general advice about whistleblowing and, where appropriate, raise concerns with a relevant prescribed person or body.

Staff who raise genuine concerns in the public interest are protected by law from being treated unfairly or losing their job as a result of making a qualifying whistleblowing disclosure.

15. Record-keeping

We will hold records in accordance with our records retention schedule and relevant data protection requirements.

We use CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System) to record and manage safeguarding and child protection concerns. Records are stored securely and access is restricted to authorised staff through appropriate security measures, including two-factor authentication.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded in writing. If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to record something, they should discuss this with the DSL.

Records should 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

Safeguarding and child protection records will be kept confidential and secure and will only be accessible to those who have a professional need to see them. Where information is shared, this will be done in accordance with relevant information-sharing and data protection requirements.

Child protection records will be retained in accordance with the school's records retention schedule and current statutory guidance. Child protection files will normally be retained until the child's 25th birthday. Where records relate to child sexual abuse, they will be retained until the child's 75th birthday.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school or college, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is transferred to the new setting as soon as possible, securely and separately from the main pupil file.

The child protection file should be transferred:

- Within **5 days** for an in-year transfer
- Within the **first 5 days of the start of a new term**

The DSL will ensure that the transfer is secure and that confirmation of receipt is obtained from the receiving school or college.

Where concerns are significant or complex and/or children's social care or other agencies are involved, the DSL will consider whether it is appropriate to speak to the DSL at the receiving school or college and share relevant information in advance. This will enable the receiving setting to make any necessary preparations to safeguard and support the child.

The school will share relevant safeguarding information with appropriate agencies and professionals where necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Information sharing will be carried out in accordance with statutory guidance, data protection legislation and local safeguarding procedures.

In addition:

- Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically in relation to recruitment and pre-appointment checks
- Appendix 3 sets out our policy on record-keeping in relation to safeguarding concerns and allegations made against staff

16. Training

16.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction. This will include information about the school's safeguarding systems, the child protection and safeguarding policy, staff behaviour/code of conduct, the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs, whistleblowing procedures and online safety.

All staff will be required to read **Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education** and will be supported to understand and discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.

Safeguarding and child protection training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach, wider staff training and curriculum planning
- Be in line with advice from the safeguarding partners
- Include online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to filtering and monitoring
- Enable staff to identify children who may need help, support or protection and understand how to respond to safeguarding concerns
- Ensure staff understand the processes for community-based early help and statutory intervention, including how and when to make a referral
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards, including the expectations that teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment and have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils

All staff will receive appropriate Prevent awareness training to enable them to identify children who may be susceptible to radicalisation or at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to understand how to respond to concerns.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety, as required and at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. These may be provided through staff meetings, training sessions, emails, e-bulletins or other appropriate means.

Staff will receive appropriate training and guidance on the school's filtering and monitoring systems so that they understand their role, know how to report concerns and can act appropriately when safeguarding concerns arise through the use of technology.

Contractors, agency staff and other adults working within the school will receive appropriate safeguarding information and training according to their role and responsibilities.

Volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding training and information according to their role.

16.2 The DSL and deputies

he DSL and deputy DSLs will undertake safeguarding and child protection training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their roles. This training will be updated at least every two years.

In addition to formal training, the DSL and deputies will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually, for example through e-bulletins, meetings with other DSLs, local safeguarding updates and taking time to read and understand safeguarding developments.

The DSL and deputies will also undertake appropriate Prevent awareness training. This will include developing an understanding of the risks of radicalisation, relevant extremist and terrorist ideologies, how to make Prevent referrals and how to work with Channel and other relevant agencies.

The DSL and deputies will maintain an up-to-date understanding of local safeguarding arrangements, including opportunities for training provided by the safeguarding partners, and will ensure that relevant developments are communicated to staff.

16.3 Governors

All governors will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction. This training will be regularly updated to ensure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including providing appropriate 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
- Understand their responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring and the school's approach to online safety

As the Chair of Governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' where an allegation is made against the headteacher, they will receive appropriate training in managing allegations for this purpose.

16.4 Recruitment – interview panels

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

Safer recruitment training will cover, as a minimum, the relevant requirements set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education** and will have regard to local safeguarding procedures.

See Appendix 2 of this policy for further information about our safer recruitment procedures.

16.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families

Staff will have access to appropriate support and supervision in relation to their safeguarding responsibilities.

Where staff are involved in safeguarding or child protection matters, appropriate support will be provided by the DSL or a deputy DSL. This may include opportunities to discuss concerns, reflect on safeguarding practice and receive advice or guidance.

Where appropriate to an individual's role, more regular or formal supervision arrangements may be put in place to provide support, coaching and training and to allow for confidential discussion of sensitive issues.

17. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **at least annually** by Luke Dancer, Headteacher, and updated sooner where necessary to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, local safeguarding arrangements, emerging safeguarding issues or lessons learned.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

18. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside the following school policies and procedures:

- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Single Equality Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy
- SEND Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children Policy
- Privacy Notices
- City of York Council Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures
- Anti-Bullying Policy

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

Appendix 1: types of abuse

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

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

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

Emotional abuse may involve:

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

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. 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**

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

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

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

- **Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment**
- **Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger**
- **Ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate caregivers**
- **Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment**

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

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

Safer Recruitment Policy

Recruitment and selection process

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with 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

Our application forms will:

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

Shortlisting

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

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

We will also consider carrying out a search, via an online search engine, as part of our due diligence on shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online which we may wish to explore with the applicant at interview. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that these searches may be carried out as part of the school's due diligence process.

Seeking references and checking employment history

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

When seeking references we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/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, we 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

We will record the required recruitment and vetting checks in the school's single central record (SCR), in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education. The SCR will record whether the relevant checks have been carried out or certificates obtained and the date on which each check was completed or the certificate obtained. The school will ensure that the SCR is accurate and up to date and will have regard to the example single central record provided in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Copies of checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we 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). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We 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
- We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity

Regulated activity in relation to children includes certain activities carried out frequently or intensively, including teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children.

From 1 September 2026, teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children may constitute regulated activity where the frequency requirements are met, regardless of whether the individual carrying out the activity is supervised.

Regulated activity also includes certain work carried out regularly in specified establishments, including schools, where the work provides an opportunity for contact with children, as well as relevant intimate or personal care and certain overnight activities.

The school will determine whether a role constitutes regulated activity in accordance with the current statutory definition and will ensure that the appropriate level of DBS and children's barred list check is undertaken.

Existing staff

In certain circumstances we 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

We will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where the legal referral criteria are met. This includes where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct in relation to a child or vulnerable adult; or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence; or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual, meaning that 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, whether paid or unpaid, or would have been removed had they not left.

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform on any individual who will be working at the school or providing education on the school's behalf, including through online delivery.

In respect of agency and third-party staff, the school's single central record (SCR) will record whether written confirmation has been received that the relevant checks have been carried out and the appropriate certificates obtained, the date on which this confirmation was received and whether details of any enhanced DBS certificate have been provided.

We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

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

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

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

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

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

Volunteers

The school will undertake appropriate safeguarding checks on all volunteers and will determine the level of checks required by considering the nature of the role and whether the volunteer will be engaging in regulated activity with children.

From 1 September 2026, the supervision exemption from regulated activity no longer applies. A volunteer who teaches, trains, instructs, cares for or supervises children frequently, or who meets the relevant period condition, may therefore be engaging in regulated activity even where they are supervised by a member of staff.

The period condition is met where the activity takes place on more than 3 days in any 30-day period or overnight between 2am and 6am.

The school will obtain an enhanced DBS check, including children's barred list information, for volunteers who are engaging in regulated activity with children.

For volunteers who are not engaging in regulated activity, the school will undertake a risk assessment and use its professional judgement when deciding whether an enhanced DBS check should be obtained. The risk assessment will consider:

- The nature of the work with children
- What the school knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers
- Whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability

- Whether the role is eligible for a DBS check and, if so, the appropriate level of check

Details of the risk assessment will be recorded.

Occasional volunteers, such as parents or carers helping at an occasional school event or on a school day trip, will not normally be engaging in regulated activity solely by undertaking that activity. The school will determine what checks are appropriate according to the nature and frequency of the role.

All volunteers who help on an overnight school trip will be engaging in regulated activity and will require an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.

The school will ensure that no person who is barred from working with children is permitted to engage in regulated activity.

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.

All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

Staff working in alternative provision settings

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

Pupils staying with host families

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

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, trainee 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 we’re in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO).

We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

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

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

If we receive an allegation of an incident happening while an individual or organisation was using the school premises to run activities for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures and inform our LADO.

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

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

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/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 immediate suspension is considered necessary, the case manager will record the rationale and justification for the decision, including which alternatives to suspension were considered and why they were rejected.

If in doubt, the case manager will seek advice from the school's personnel adviser and the local authority designated officer (LADO), as well as the police and local authority 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, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL 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. Union advice should be sought as well as signposting to the Employee Assistance programme which offers free counselling sessions for support.
- 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

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

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the 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, trainee teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency or training provider, we 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.
- Where appropriate, the governing board will discuss with the agency or training provider whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual or redeploy them to another part of the school while the investigation is carried out.
- We will involve the agency or training provider fully. The school will usually take the lead in collecting the necessary information because the agency or training provider may not have direct access to children, staff or all of the relevant information required by the LADO.
- We will address issues such as information sharing to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency or training provider are taken into account. This may form part of an allegations management meeting or liaison directly with the agency or training provider.
- Supply teachers and trainee teachers will be advised to contact their trade union representative, where they have one, or another appropriate person for support.

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, take account of the agency's own policies and procedures and the duties placed on agencies to make referrals to the DBS where appropriate. We will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to relevant meetings and keep the agency updated as appropriate.

Where concerns or allegations relate to a trainee teacher placed within the school, the same expectations will apply. The school will work closely with the relevant teacher training provider, which will be expected to follow the same procedures as those set out for supply agencies.

Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible, while ensuring that the process is thorough and fair.

The case manager will monitor the progress of each case and will work with the local authority designated officer (LADO) and any other agencies involved to avoid unnecessary delay.

Where an investigation is required, the case manager and LADO will agree how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. The school will seek to progress all actions promptly and will keep relevant parties appropriately informed throughout the process.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority designated officer (LADO) 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 local authority children's social care.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

Where an allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not resigned or otherwise ceased to provide their services, the school will consider its duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

This duty applies to paid staff and volunteers who are engaged in regulated activity. A referral will be made as soon as possible where the relevant referral criteria are met.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will also consider whether a referral should be made to the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided at 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 their return.

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 allegations

Where 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 may be in need of help, or that the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to local authority children's social care may be appropriate.

Where an allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made the allegation.

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

Where the allegation concerns a teacher, the school will have regard to the statutory reporting restrictions that may apply. Where appropriate, parents, carers and others will be reminded that information must not be published that could lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation while those restrictions remain in force.

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

- Who needs to know about the allegation and exactly what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip
- What, if any, information can reasonably be given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

References

When providing employer references, we 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 we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

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

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

Non-recent allegations

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

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

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

Section 2: concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section is based on 'Section 2: Concerns or allegations 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 adults working in or on behalf of the school, including supply teachers, trainee 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
- A safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- A disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' does not mean that a concern is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if it is no more than a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – 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 harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the local authority designated officer (LADO)

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 contrary to school policy
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating children

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour, or behaviour that may appear inappropriate but might not be in the particular circumstances, through to behaviour that is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Sharing low-level concerns

We 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 as per section 7.7 of this policy
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

Responding to low-level concerns

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

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

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's code of conduct. The headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

Copmanthorpe Primary School's Low Level Concern's Policy

Record keeping

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

The name of the individual sharing the concern will also be recorded. Where the individual wishes to remain anonymous, this will be respected as far as reasonably possible.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour can be identified
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school

Where a pattern of behaviour is identified, the school will decide on an appropriate course of action. This may include action under the school's disciplinary procedures or, where the pattern of behaviour moves from a low-level concern to meeting the harm threshold, referral to the LADO.

Consideration will also be given to whether there are any wider cultural issues within the school that may have enabled the behaviour to occur and whether policies should be revised or additional training provided to minimise the risk of similar behaviour occurring again.

Where a low-level concern relates to supply staff or a contractor, we will notify the individual's employer so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. This is specifically required by the current guidance.

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.

Annex A of KCSIE 2026 contains further information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues, including child abduction and community safety incidents, child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation, county lines, children and the court system, children missing from education, children with family members in prison, cybercrime, domestic abuse, homelessness, modern slavery, preventing radicalisation, serious violence and so-called 'honour-based' abuse.

Assessing adult-involved nude and semi-nude sharing incidents

All adult-involved incidents involving the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes are child sexual abuse offences and must be referred immediately to the police and/or local authority children's social care, as appropriate.

Adult-involved incidents may initially present as child-on-child sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, so it may not always be immediately clear whether an adult is involved.

There are two common types of adult-involved incidents:

- Sexually motivated incidents
- Financially motivated incidents

Sexually motivated incidents

In this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nudes and semi-nudes directly from a child or young person using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present as themselves or use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender may groom the child or young person on social media, in chatrooms or on gaming platforms, and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made.

To encourage the child or young person to create and share nudes or semi-nudes, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material, including AI-generated or digitally manipulated material.

Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, the offender may blackmail them into sending further images by threatening to release the images online or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but which appears to belong to another child or young person
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images
- Moved from a public platform to a private or E2EE platform
- Coerced or pressured into sexual activity, including creating nudes and semi-nudes
- Offered something of value, such as money or gaming credits
- Threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing an image, or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person in an attempt to extort 'real' images

Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated sexual extortion, often referred to as 'sextortion', is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender or offenders threaten to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else that benefits the offender.

Financially motivated sexual extortion may be carried out by offenders working within organised crime groups, including groups operating overseas, and is typically motivated by financial gain. Adults may also be targeted by these groups.

Offenders may use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or may hack another young person's account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- Groom or coerce the child or young person into sending nudes or semi-nudes and then financially blackmail them
- Use images stolen from the child or young person, including images obtained through hacking their account
- Use digitally manipulated or AI-generated images of the child or young person

The offender may demand payment or seek access to the victim's bank account or financial details, including for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but which appears to belong to another child or young person, including through a hacked account
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing an image first
- Moved from a public platform to a private or E2EE platform
- Pressured into taking or sharing nudes or semi-nudes
- Told that they have been hacked and that the offender has access to their images, personal information or contacts
- Blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image, or after the offender shares hacked, digitally manipulated or AI-generated images of the child or young person

Children who are absent from education

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, particularly county lines.

We recognise that our response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education is an important part of safeguarding. Our response will support the identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation and, in the case of absent pupils, help prevent the risk of them becoming children missing education in the future.

There are many circumstances in which a child may be absent or become missing from education. Some children may be particularly at risk, including those who:

- Are at risk of harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families
- Come from 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 newly arrived migrant families

We will follow our procedures for attendance, unauthorised absence and children missing education, particularly where absence is repeated or prolonged.

We will make appropriate enquiries to establish the whereabouts and safety of a child and will work with parents, carers, the local authority and other relevant agencies as appropriate.

We will comply with our statutory duties relating to the admission register and will notify the local authority where required, including where a child leaves the school without a new school being identified.

Staff will be alert to safeguarding concerns that may be associated with absence from education, including exploitation, travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a member of staff has concerns about a child's welfare, they will follow the procedures set out in Section 7 of this policy and report the concern to the DSL. Where a child is suffering or is likely to suffer harm, a referral will be made immediately to local authority children's social care and, where appropriate, the police.

KCSIE also identifies **unexplained and/or persistent absence from education** as a general safeguarding indicator.

Child criminal exploitation

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

CCE may be perpetrated by adults or children, as individuals or groups. It may be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and can range from opportunistic exploitation to complex organised abuse.

Children can be exploited even where the activity appears consensual. Exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can also take place online.

CCE can include children being coerced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, pickpocketing, committing violence or threatening other children. County lines is a form of child criminal exploitation.

Different forms of exploitation often overlap. Children who appear to be involved in exploiting other children may themselves be victims of exploitation and this will be considered when responding to concerns.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- Associating with children involved in exploitation
- Experiencing changes in their emotional wellbeing
- Misusing alcohol or drugs
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly returning home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

If a member of staff suspects that a child may be experiencing CCE, they will report this to the DSL. The DSL will follow local safeguarding procedures, including making referrals to local authority children's social care and the police where appropriate.

Where there are indicators that a child may be a victim of modern slavery or trafficking, the school will also consider the relevant child protection and National Referral Mechanism procedures.

That final sentence is worth adding because KCSIE 2026 explicitly links exploitation and modern slavery and identifies the **National Referral Mechanism** as the framework for identifying and supporting victims.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse in which an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity.

It may involve an exchange for something the child needs or wants, such as money, gifts or affection, and/or be for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, involve violence or threats of violence.

CSE may be perpetrated by adults or children, as individuals or groups. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and can range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

A child can be sexually exploited even where the activity appears to be consensual. Children who are being sexually exploited may not recognise that they are being abused and may trust the person exploiting them or believe that they are in a loving or consensual relationship.

CSE can involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative sexual activity, as well as non-contact sexual activity. It can also take place online, including through persuading or coercing children to make or share nudes or semi-nudes, engage in sexual conversations or participate in sexual activity online.

Different forms of exploitation can overlap and a child may experience both criminal and sexual exploitation.

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

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections
- Displaying sexual behaviours beyond what would be expected for their age or stage of development
- Becoming pregnant

If a member of staff suspects that a child may be experiencing CSE, they will report this to the DSL. The DSL will follow local safeguarding procedures, including making a referral to local authority children's social care and the police where appropriate.

Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is abuse of one child by another child or group of children. It can take place inside or outside of school, face-to-face or online and may occur simultaneously in different environments.

All staff will recognise that children are capable of abusing other children and that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the child or children displaying harmful or abusive behaviour.

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. It will never be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. We recognise that even where there are no reported incidents, abuse may still be taking place and may simply not have been reported.

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

- Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying

- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children, sometimes referred to as teenage relationship abuse
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm
- Physical assault, serious physical harm or threats of harm involving a weapon
- Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment, which may include misogyny or misandry
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually or engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including images generated or manipulated using AI
- Upskirting, which is a criminal offence and 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 humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals

Child-on-child abuse can also take place online. This may include abusive, harassing or misogynistic messages, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments or messages, sharing unwanted explicit content, coercion or threats and pressuring or coercing another child into making or sharing images or carrying out sexual acts online.

All incidents involving the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, whether consensual or non-consensual, will receive a safeguarding response. The response will be proportionate and will take account of the age, development and circumstances of the children involved, as well as any elements of coercion, exploitation or vulnerability.

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 Section 7 of this policy. In particular, Sections 7.8 and 7.9 set out the school's approach to responding to child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence.

When considering harmful sexual behaviour, we will take account of the ages and developmental stages of the children involved, any imbalance of power and the nature and context of the behaviour.

We recognise that harmful sexual behaviour exists on a continuum from inappropriate or problematic behaviour through to abusive or violent behaviour. Early intervention is important in preventing escalation. Children who display harmful sexual behaviour may themselves have experienced abuse or trauma and will be offered appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child-to-parent or caregiver abuse. It can include physical, emotional and economic abuse, as well as coercive and controlling behaviour.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse in their own right where they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious and long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and may affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside the home.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. Where there are concerns about the safety or welfare of any child under 18, safeguarding procedures will be followed and appropriate support will be offered to both victims and children displaying abusive behaviour.

Operation Encompass is an information-sharing scheme between the police and education settings and operates across police forces in England and Wales. Where the school receives an Operation Encompass notification, the DSL, who is likely to be the school's Key Adult, will ensure the information is handled confidentially and securely and that appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support is provided to the child.

Homelessness

Being homeless or at risk of becoming homeless can present a significant risk to a child's welfare.

The DSL and deputies will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so that concerns can be raised and progressed at the earliest opportunity, where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures.

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

Under the temporary accommodation notification duty, local housing authorities in England are required to notify education settings when a child is placed in temporary accommodation, where the relevant consent has been given.

Where the school receives such a notification, the DSL will consider what safeguarding, pastoral and educational support may be required. The notification does not replace the school's existing safeguarding duties or the need to make a referral to local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Honour or faith-based abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

Honour or faith-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including female genital mutilation (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. We recognise the importance of considering these dynamics and additional risk factors when deciding what safeguarding action to take.

All forms of HBA are abuse, regardless of the motivation, and will be handled and escalated as such. 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 that a child may be at risk of, or may have experienced, HBA, they will report this to the DSL or a deputy. The DSL will activate local safeguarding procedures as appropriate, including liaison with the police and local authority children's social care.

FGM

Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

The DSL will ensure that staff have access to appropriate training to enable them to recognise children who may be affected by, or at risk of, FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed where FGM is suspected or where a teacher discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

Where a teacher discovers, either through disclosure by the child or visual evidence, that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18, the teacher has a statutory duty to report this personally to the police. Unless there is a good reason not to, the teacher should also discuss the matter with the DSL or a deputy and local authority children's social care should be involved as appropriate.

The mandatory personal reporting duty does not apply where there is only a concern that a girl may be at risk of FGM. In these cases, staff must follow the school's normal safeguarding procedures and report the concern to the DSL.

Indicators that FGM may already have occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother or family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family or pupil already being known to children's social care in relation to other safeguarding concerns
- A girl:
    - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or appearing uncomfortable
    - Finding it difficult to sit still for long periods where this was not previously a problem
    - Spending longer than usual 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 or psychological needs, such as withdrawal, low mood or a significant change in behaviour
    - Being reluctant to undergo medical examinations
    - Asking for help without being explicit about the problem
    - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

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

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM
- 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, including health, education or social care, or already being known to children's social care in relation to other safeguarding concerns
- A girl:
    - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
    - Having limited integration within UK society
    - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a 'special procedure' or attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'
    - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where FGM is prevalent, or parents or 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, while taking account of the context of the discussion
    - Being unexpectedly absent from school
    - Having sections missing from her 'red book' or child health record and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations or anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not exhaustive. Where staff have any concerns that a child may be at risk of FGM, or may have undergone FGM, they must act immediately and follow the safeguarding procedures set out in this policy.

Forced marriage

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

A lack of full and free consent may also arise where a person is unable to consent, for example because of a learning disability.

It is also a criminal offence to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday, even where violence, threats or coercion are not involved. This applies to non-binding or unofficial marriages as well as legally recognised marriages.

Staff will receive appropriate safeguarding training so that they are alert to the signs and risks associated with forced marriage. We recognise the importance of the 'one chance' rule: there may only be one opportunity to speak to a child at risk and one opportunity to provide effective safeguarding support.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil may be at risk of forced marriage, they will report the concern immediately to the DSL or a deputy. Where it is safe and appropriate to do so, the child will be given an opportunity to speak about their concerns in a secure and private place.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil in a secure and private place, where appropriate
- Follow local safeguarding procedures and make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police where appropriate
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit where required
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding, pastoral and emotional support is put in place for the pupil

The Forced Marriage Unit can provide advice and information on **020 7008 0151** or **fmu@fcdo.gov.uk**

Preventing radicalisation

- Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Protecting children from this risk forms part of the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Radicalisation** refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.
- **Extremism** is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to:
- Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others
- Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights
- Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve either of the above
- **Terrorism** is an action that:
- Endangers or causes serious violence to a person or people
- Causes serious damage to property
- Seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system

- The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public and be for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.
- Under the Prevent duty, the school must have due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. We recognise the Prevent duty as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities.
- The DSL and deputies will be familiar with the Prevent duty guidance and local procedures for making a Prevent referral. They will undertake appropriate Prevent awareness training and ensure that staff receive training appropriate to their role.
- The school will assess the risk of children becoming involved with or supporting terrorism, taking account of the potential risks within the local area and working with safeguarding partners and the police as appropriate.
- We will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements are in place and will support pupils to develop the knowledge and skills they need to stay safe online.
- There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation. Staff will be alert to changes in behaviour or circumstances which may indicate that a child is in need of help or protection and will use their professional judgement when identifying and responding to concerns.
- Potential indicators may include:
- Becoming increasingly intolerant of or hostile towards people who are different from them
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories or feelings of persecution
- Significant changes in friendship groups, behaviour or appearance
- Rejecting activities or relationships they previously enjoyed
- Increasing isolation from family or friends
- Using language or expressing views that appear scripted or drawn from extremist material
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss or challenge their views
- Increased anger, hostility or secretiveness
- Expressing support for extremist ideologies, groups or terrorist violence
- Accessing or sharing extremist material online
- Possessing extremist material
- Being in contact with extremist individuals or groups, including recruiters
- These indicators should not be considered in isolation and do not necessarily mean that a child is being radicalised.
- If staff have concerns that a child may be susceptible to radicalisation, they will follow the procedures set out in Section 7.5 of this policy and report their concerns to the DSL or a deputy without delay.
- The DSL will consider the concern and determine the appropriate safeguarding response. This may include making a Prevent referral. Prevent referrals are initially assessed by the police and may subsequently be considered by a multi-agency Channel panel.
- **Channel** is a voluntary and confidential programme that provides support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Where a child is receiving support through Channel, the school will work with relevant agencies and share information appropriately. Any new information that becomes relevant while a Prevent referral is being assessed will be shared with the police.
- Staff should **always act on concerns about radicalisation and terrorism**.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children of any age and sex. It can involve a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can take place both online and face-to-face.

Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence exist on a continuum and may overlap or escalate.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence. Such behaviour is never acceptable and will not be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’, ‘just having a laugh’, ‘part of growing up’ or ‘boys being boys’.

We recognise that even where there are no reports, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment or sexual violence may still be occurring and may simply not have been reported.

Children who experience sexual violence or sexual harassment are likely to find the experience stressful and distressing. This may adversely affect their educational attainment and may be exacerbated where the alleged perpetrator attends the same school.

Any child making a report will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe. They will never be made to feel that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse or be made to feel blamed or ashamed.

Staff will:

- Challenge inappropriate and sexualised behaviour
- Make clear that sexual harassment and sexual violence are never acceptable
- Challenge potentially criminal physical behaviours, such as grabbing bottoms, breasts or genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras or lifting up skirts
- Recognise the potential for inappropriate behaviour, including misogyny, to escalate into more serious harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment or sexual violence
- Remain alert to patterns of behaviour and wider cultural or environmental issues within the school
- Ensure that children affected by sexual violence or sexual harassment receive appropriate safeguarding and pastoral support

Staff should be aware that girls are more likely to experience sexual harassment and sexual violence and boys are more likely to perpetrate it. Children with disabilities are also at increased risk of abuse.

If staff have any concerns about harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment or sexual violence, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in Section 7 of this policy. Sections 7.8 and 7.9 provide further detail about the school’s response.

Following a report of sexual violence, the DSL or a deputy will carry out an immediate risk and needs assessment. For sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The assessment will consider the safety and support needs of the victim, any potential other victims, the alleged perpetrator, the wider school community and any action required to prevent further harm.

Serious violence

Serious violence is a safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and may also be associated with criminal exploitation.

Staff will report any concern about a child carrying or using a weapon, or expressing an intention to do so, immediately to the DSL or a deputy.

The DSL will assess the risk to the individual child and to others, taking account of any wider safeguarding information or concerns. Depending on the level of risk, appropriate action may include putting in place a safety and support plan and taking steps to de-escalate peer conflict.

Indicators that a child may be at risk of, or involved in, serious violence can include:

- Increased absence from school
- A change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- A significant decline in educational performance
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing

- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions, which may indicate association with criminal networks or gangs or possible criminal exploitation

Factors which may increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- Being male
- Having been suspended, spent time in alternative provision or permanently excluded from school
- Having experienced child maltreatment
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery
- Having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence
- Having previously been a victim of violence or previously perpetrated violence

We recognise that children involved in serious violence may themselves be victims and will consider their safeguarding and support needs as well as any risk they may pose to others.

Staff will also be alert to times and places where children may be at greater risk of serious violence, including immediately before or after school and while travelling to and from school. The school will work with pupils, staff and relevant local partners to understand where and when children may feel unsafe and to take proportionate action to reduce risk.

Early support will be considered for children identified as being at risk of serious violence. This may include access to trusted adults, support with social and emotional skills, mentoring, therapeutic support and appropriate work with external agencies.

If a member of staff has a concern that a pupil may be involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this immediately to the DSL or a deputy, who will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and make referrals to other agencies where appropriate.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and follow the school's procedures for accessing the premises.

If a visitor is unknown to the school, we will check their identity, credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them access to the school. Visitors should be prepared to provide appropriate identification.

All visitors will sign in using the school's electronic visitor management system on the iPad and will wear the appropriate visitor lanyard while on the premises.

The level of checking and supervision required will depend on the purpose of the visit and the nature of any contact the visitor will have with children.

For visitors attending in a professional capacity, such as educational psychologists, social workers or other education-related professionals, we will:

- Check their identity
- Be satisfied that they have undergone the appropriate DBS check for the activity they will undertake, either through prior confirmation from their employer or other appropriate assurance
- Not ask to see the individual's DBS certificate where appropriate assurance has been provided

Where a professional visitor will have no contact with children, a DBS check is unlikely to be required.

We will not request DBS or barred list checks, or ask to see existing DBS certificates, for visitors such as children's relatives or people attending events such as sports days. The headteacher or other appropriate

senior member of staff will use professional judgement to determine whether such visitors need to be escorted or supervised.

For external organisations, speakers or performers, we will consider their suitability before the visit. This may include consideration of the educational value and age appropriateness of the activity, the nature of the contact with children and whether any safeguarding checks are required.

We will not invite any speaker or organisation known to promote extremist or terrorist views and will take appropriate steps to ensure that individuals or organisations using school premises do not seek to radicalise pupils or promote views that conflict with the school's safeguarding responsibilities.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the school day or agreed session, we will make reasonable attempts to contact their parents, carers and other authorised emergency contacts.

The child will remain appropriately supervised while these enquiries are made.

If we are unable to arrange for the child to be collected, or there are concerns about the child's welfare, we will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and seek advice or make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police as appropriate.

Missing pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that any child who goes missing from school is located and returned to effective supervision as quickly as possible.

If a child is found to be missing, staff will immediately notify a senior member of staff and an appropriate search of the school premises and surrounding area will be undertaken.

Parents or carers will be contacted as soon as appropriate. Where the child cannot be located promptly, or there is reason to believe that they may be at risk of harm, the police will be contacted without delay.

Any safeguarding concerns arising from the incident will be reported to the DSL and dealt with in accordance with this policy. The circumstances of the incident will be reviewed to identify whether any additional safeguarding action is required.