

## Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Bardwell School

This document is based on:

- [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#) and
- [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](#)

### Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed at least **annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures** by Alison Cox, The Gallery Trust Designated Safeguarding Manager. At every review, it will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Updated	1st September 2025
Date ratified	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
Chair of Trustees	Chris Scrivener
Chair of LAB	Matthew Willis
Designated Manager for Gallery Trust	Alison Cox

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## PART 1 Child Protection and Safeguarding in Our School

### Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Jade Levine	<a href="mailto:j.levine@bardwellschool.co.uk">j.levine@bardwellschool.co.uk</a> Mobile: 07984 095374
Deputy DSL	Rebecca Patchett	<a href="mailto:r.patchett@bardwellschool.co.uk">r.patchett@bardwellschool.co.uk</a>
Deputy DSL	Annie Coleman	<a href="mailto:a.coleman@bardwellschool.co.uk">a.coleman@bardwellschool.co.uk</a>
Deputy DSL	Hayley Laughlin	<a href="mailto:h.laughlin@bardwellschool.co.uk">h.laughlin@bardwellschool.co.uk</a>
Designated person for Children We Care For	Annie Coleman	<a href="mailto:a.coleman@bardwellschool.co.uk">a.coleman@bardwellschool.co.uk</a>
Designated person for PREVENT	Jade Levine	<a href="mailto:j.levine@bardwellschool.co.uk">j.levine@bardwellschool.co.uk</a> Mobile: 07984 095374
Designated person for children with medical needs	Jo McGill	<a href="mailto:head@bardwellschool.co.uk">head@bardwellschool.co.uk</a>
Designated person for online safety	Jade Levine	<a href="mailto:j.levine@bardwellschool.co.uk">j.levine@bardwellschool.co.uk</a> Mobile: 07984 095374
Headteacher	Jo McGill	<a href="mailto:head@bardwellschool.co.uk">head@bardwellschool.co.uk</a>
Local Academy Board (LAB)	Matthew Willis	<a href="mailto:m.willis@thegallerytrust.co.uk">m.willis@thegallerytrust.co.uk</a>
Safeguarding Trustee	Helen Barter	<a href="mailto:h.barter@thegallerytrust.co.uk">h.barter@thegallerytrust.co.uk</a>
Chair of Trustees	Chris Scrivener	<a href="mailto:c.scrivener@thegallerytrust.co.uk">c.scrivener@thegallerytrust.co.uk</a>
Designated Safeguarding Manager for Gallery Trust	Alison Cox	<a href="mailto:a.cox@thegallerytrust.co.uk">a.cox@thegallerytrust.co.uk</a> Mobile: 07385 724198
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Education Safeguarding Advisory Team	Jo Lloyd	<a href="mailto:Lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk">Lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a> 01865 810603
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)		0345 050 7666
MASH Education Rep	Katrina Johnson	<a href="mailto:Katrina.Johnston@oxfordshire.gov.uk">Katrina.Johnston@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a> 0345 050 7666

Out of Hours emergency duty team		0800 833 408
Police		101 In emergencies 999

Bardwell School, part of The Gallery Trust, recognises its responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

## Introduction

1. This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989, and in line with the following:
  - [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)
  - [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 - GOV.UK](#)
  - [Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

At Bardwell School, The Gallery Trust Board of Trustees takes seriously its responsibility under Section 11 of the Children Act and duties under “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023” to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements exist within our setting to identify and support those children who are suffering harm or are likely to suffer harm.

We recognise that all our staff, Local Academy Board (LAB) members, trustees and volunteers have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the child’s welfare is our paramount concern.

Our school should provide a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child free from discrimination or bullying where children can learn and develop happily.

This policy applies to all staff, LAB members, trustees and volunteers working in our school and across The Gallery Trust.

## 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.

## Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#) and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 - GOV.UK, and the [Academy trust governance guide - Guidance - GOV.UK](#) . We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our three local safeguarding partners.(these are detailed later in this policy)

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our members, trustees 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 characteristics 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.
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.
- The Oxfordshire safeguarding Children Board's policies and procedures.

## Principles and Values

Children have a right to feel secure and cannot learn effectively unless they do so.

All children have a right to be protected from harm. All staff have a key role in prevention of harm and an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm, either in the school or in the community, taking into account *contextual safeguarding* (see Part 2) in accordance with the guidance.

We acknowledge that working in partnership with other agencies protects children and reduces risk and so we will engage in partnership working throughout the child protection process to safeguard children.

Whilst the school will work openly with parents as far as possible, it reserves the right to contact Children's Social Care or the police, without notifying parents if this is believed to be in the child's best interests.

We will always act in the best interests of the child and ensure that our decisions around safeguarding take a child-centred and coordinated approach.

## 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 the impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- 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 14 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 14 defines neglect in more detail.

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

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

**Staff** applies to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This also includes parent volunteers, LAB members and The Gallery Trust Trustees.

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role, for example adoptive parents, step-parents, foster carers, special guardians.

**Exploitation** refers to Child exploitation which is when someone uses a child for financial gain, sexual gratification, labour or personal advantage.

The 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.

The Safeguarding Partners will be a team of key professionals from three sectors:

- the local authority;
- the clinical commissioning group for any area that falls under the local authority; and
- the chief officer of police for any area that falls under the local authority.

The three safeguarding partners have made arrangements to work together as an Executive Group with overall accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in our area.

They work with relevant partners through the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP), under the leadership of an Independent Chair. The three safeguarding partners (Executive Group) have agreed on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents.

**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.

### Acronyms

DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
DDSL	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
OSCB	Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board
LCSS	Locality Community Support Service
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
LADO (DO)	Local Authority Designated Officer
DSM	Designated Safeguarding Manager
ST	Safeguarding Trustee
LAB	Local Academy Board
RIB	Rapid improvement Board

### Equality Statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face. We are all vigilant to the special needs (SEN), disabilities or health conditions that our children have, and recognise this may make them even more vulnerable to abuse.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing from education
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

## Roles and responsibilities

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

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

- [Behaviour and Relationships policy](#) which is based on the DfE [Behaviour in schools guidance](#)
- Pastoral support
- 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 female genital mutilation (FGM) and how to access support.

- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable.

### **All staff**

All staff will:

- Read and understand Part 1 and Annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and review this guidance at least annually.
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance.
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online).
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns.
- Receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is updated regularly.
- Receive training around online safety which includes
  - an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
  - how to respond to the inappropriate use of online technologies
- Receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates: for example,
  - via email
  - e-bulletins
  - staff meetings
  - regular training throughout the school year
  - morning briefings

as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

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 the DSL team, the behaviour policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- The early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.

- The process for making referrals to local authority children’s social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines).
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online.
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual, non-binary or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by other children.
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection.

### **If a child makes a disclosure to you**

Our staff have undergone training to support them if a child makes a disclosure, and will:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely.
- If you need to ask further questions remember you must not ask leading questions, but you can clarify and gather further details. Remember your training around this:
  - T.E.D and the “WH” questions:
    - Tell me
    - Explain to me
    - Describe to me
    - Where .....
    - Who .....
    - What .....
    - When
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset.

There is further guidance in this policy about how staff are supported to do this.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is Jade Levine, Pastoral and Safeguarding Manager. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

Contact details are: [j.levine@bardwellschool.co.uk](mailto:j.levine@bardwellschool.co.uk) / 07984 095374

When the DSL is absent, the deputies – Rebecca Patchett, Annie Coleman, Hayley Laughlin and Jo McGill – will act as cover.

If the DSL team is not available, Alison Cox, The Gallery Trust Designated Safeguarding Manager, will act as cover (for example, during out-of-hours/out-of-term activities).

Contact details: [a.cox@thegallerytrust.co.uk](mailto:a.cox@thegallerytrust.co.uk)

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

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (Oxfordshire MASH LADO, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour.
- Ensure the filtering and monitoring of online technology

DSLs in The Gallery Trust have clear roles and responsibilities around safeguarding, which is documented in the “Role of the DSL in a Gallery Trust school” guidance.

The DSL will also keep the headteacher informed of any issues. They will:

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

The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job description.

### **The Trustees and Local Academy Board members**

The Trustees and Local Academy Board members will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a Trustee to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full board of trustees. The Safeguarding Trustee for the Gallery Trust is Helen Barter. The trustees will make sure:
  - An appropriate senior member of staff from the school leadership team is appointed to the role of the designated safeguarding lead.
  - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support.
  - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.
  - That all staff undergo appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, relevant to their role that covers online safety, and their role and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
  - The leadership team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the IT filters and monitoring systems in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns.
  - The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 1 of this policy covers this procedure.
  - This policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised.
  - Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
    - Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed.
    - Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate.
    - Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

All Trustees and Local Academy Board/Rapid Improvement Board members will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety to ensure that they understand their management responsibilities, and the statutory duty that the school will work to.

### **The Headteacher**

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

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
  - Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction

- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent.
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and updating the content of the training regularly.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate see part 3 for more details and our allegations management policy.
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.
  
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable.
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person.

### **Local Authority Virtual School Head Teachers**

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

The role of the virtual school head was extended in March 2024 to promote the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care.

They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, SENCOs, social workers, mental health leads and others.

Our lead for Children We Care For (CWCF) is Annie Coleman.

### **Confidentiality**

Our staff are all aware of the importance of upholding confidentiality. However, all staff know that the safeguarding of our students will always be our priority, and this will be paramount over UK GDPR.

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

cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.
- If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
  - The DSL will still contact Oxfordshire MASH, and act upon the advice that they provide
  - The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children, but will always act in the best interest of the child
  - The DSL will consider that:
    - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
    - If it is believed that a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral will be made to the MASH
    - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains
- Regarding anonymity, all staff will:
  - Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.
  - Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved.
  - Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

## **7 Golden Rules for Information Sharing**

The government's information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. The OSCP also provides guidance and advice [Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing](#) .

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

## **Recognising abuse and taking action**

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

Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean “the DSL (or deputy DSL)”.

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

- Make a referral to the MASH and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.** If a member of the DSL team is not available our staff know they must make the referral.
- Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.
- Referrals can be made over the phone and then must be followed up by completing the online MASH referral form.

[Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\) | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

[Report child abuse to a local council - GOV.UK](#)

- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Alert your DSL immediately.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child’s own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it.
- Record on CPOMS. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to the MASH and/or the police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible after that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process

Bear in mind that some children may:

- Not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers.

None of this should stop you from having a ‘professional curiosity’ and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

### **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)**

- Gather as much detail as you can.
- Record on CPOMS.
- Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

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

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

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

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

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

**Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.**

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

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

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

**Any member of staff** who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out or discovers that a pupil **aged 18 or over** appears to have been a victim of FGM should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

There is a lead for FGM in the MASH that will support our school if these concerns come to light. A referral should be made in the first instance.

### **If you have concerns about extremism**

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

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from local authority children's social care. Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate by calling the MASH. Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and Local Academy Board members can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email [counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk). Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

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

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

### **If you have a mental health concern**

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

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

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

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

In Oxfordshire we have a Locality Community Support Service (LCSS) All schools have a link social worker from this team that can offer advice and guidance.

Please see the Department for Education guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) for more information.

### **Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor**

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher as soon as

possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of the Local Academy Board.

The headteacher/chair of Local Academy Board will then follow the procedures that are in part 3, Appendix 1: Allegations and low-level concerns Full guidance can be found in our allegations management procedure.

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 Designated Safeguarding Manager for the Trust, Alison Cox or local authority designated officer (LADO).

### **Allegations of abuse made against other pupils (child on child)**

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

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, in our school all our children are vulnerable due to their special needs, disabilities or health conditions. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously in our school.

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

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

See part 3 for more information about child-on-child abuse. Appendix 3: Child-on-child abuse

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

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

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

considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s).

- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate.

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

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images.
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys.
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent.
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems.
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously.
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners.
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed.
- Consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
  - How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.
  - That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”.

- That if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
  - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
  - A friend may make a report
  - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
  - A child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
- That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.
- That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.
- The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.
- That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns.
- That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side.

The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

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

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

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

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

### **Your responsibilities when responding to an incident**

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

You must **not**:

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

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

### **Initial review meeting**

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will consider a review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. They will also consider a discussion with the school link LCSS worker. This will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

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

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

- The incident involves an adult.
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs).
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage or are violent.

- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13.
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy. However, a no names consultation may also take place with the MASH for advice and guidance.

### **Further review by the DSL**

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

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

### **Informing parents/carers**

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

### **Referring to the police**

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialling 101 or 999 if the child is at immediate risk of harm.

### **Recording incidents**

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

### **Curriculum coverage**

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our Sex and Relationship Policy and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is.
- How it is most likely to be encountered.
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment.
- Issues of legality.
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation.
- Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:
  - Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
  - The receipt of such images

- Working with our local schools' police officer about all of the above

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also discussed with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

### **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:

- Ensure our children know that they can talk to staff to report abuse.
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils.
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

All staff have had training around listening to the pupils and what steps to take, in line with this policy, around taking action to act in the best interests of all our pupils.

All pupils will be reminded about the fact they can talk to any adult who they choose if they have concerns or information they need to share.

### **Strengths and Needs Assessment**

If a strengths and needs assessment is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in a strength and needs assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.

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

The DSL will work closely with our LCSS and liaise with the link social worker that is allocated to our school.

### **Referral**

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

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

The local MASH will make a decision about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded. Further details about referrals to the Oxfordshire MASH can be found on the OSCB website [Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\) | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

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

Details of the MASH are above in the contacts table on page 4, if you feel a child is at risk of significant harm call the MASH to share all the information that you have.

Further guidance for staff can be accessed through [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - GOV.UK](#)

### **Notifying parents or carers**

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the Oxfordshire MASH, our LCSS team or the child's own social worker if they have one, before doing so.

We will act on the guidance that we are given from colleagues in social care or the police.

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

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

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

## **PART 2 Contextual Safeguarding and other requirements**

### **Pupils with special educational needs, disabilities, or health issues**

We recognise that all our pupils have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions and can face additional safeguarding challenges. We know they are three times more likely to be abused than their peers without such additional needs. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

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

All our staff read the EHCPs (Education Health Care Plans) for the pupils that they work directly with to ensure they have a good understanding of the additional needs of the child. Our staff work hard to know our pupils, ensuring they are able to recognise and respond to any concerns or changes in behaviour that they identify.

Addition support can be accessed from specialist organisations such as:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service:
- [Find your local IAS service Oxfordshire](#)

### **Pupils with a social worker**

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

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

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

## **Children We Care For**

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

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant Virtual School Head Teachers
- We have appointed a designated teacher, Annie Coleman, Assistant Head, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.
- The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

### **As part of their role, the Designated Teacher will:**

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

## **Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies**

### **Complaints against staff**

It is important to recognise the difference between a complaint and an allegation. If an allegation is made this will be referred to the LADO in line with our allegations management policy (see more details in section 3)

### **Other complaints**

All complaints will be taken seriously and will be dealt with in line with our [Complaints Procedure](#).

Where the complaint relates to safeguarding or welfare in our Early Years Foundation Stage we will take account of requirements related to complaints set out in the safeguarding and welfare section of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (paragraph 3.75).

### **Confidential reporting (Whistleblowing)**

Our school has a separate Whistleblowing Policy. However, this summary outlines the process when there is a concern that safeguarding issues have not been reported or followed correctly.

This does not replace the Whistleblowing Policy and should be read in conjunction with the school policy.

Whistleblowing is a term that is used when staff want to report a concern within their organisation that involves their manager or a person senior to them, which may prevent them from following the normal reporting systems.

There are a limited number of areas that can be called whistleblowing, and the policy protects staff from being punished for raising concerns.

Within our school, the head teacher is the senior manager and responsible for all staff. If you are concerned that any member of staff within the school is not following safeguarding processes or behaving in a way that is placing children at risk, you should, in the first instance, make your headteacher aware.

If your concern is about the headteacher, you should raise this with the Trust Designated Safeguarding Manager, Alison Cox.

If you would prefer to raise your concerns outside of the school then you are able to contact the NSPCC whistleblowing line on 0800 028 0285 or email <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/> or make contact with Oxfordshire County Council.

If you believe that a member of the school staff is harming a child and that this has been reported to the headteacher and no or insufficient action has been taken, or the member of staff you have concerns about is the headteacher, then you are able to contact the LADO team on 01865 810603 or email [lado.safeguarding@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:lado.safeguarding@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Where appropriate Whistleblowing will be responded to in line with paragraph 3.76 of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## **Record-keeping**

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

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL. Records will be completed on the same day of the concern or incident.

Our staff will undergo training on recording information.

Records will include:

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

Concerns and referrals will be kept on our electronic safeguarding system, CPOMS.

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

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained until the child is 24, unless there are reasonable grounds to justify retaining them for a longer period of time after they have left school, for example on an ongoing enquiry, part of an allegation in relation to a staff member. The DSL or Head Teacher can seek support from The Trust Designated Safeguarding Manager in relation to these decisions.

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

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

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

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

## **Training**

### **All staff**

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

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning.
- Be in line with advice from the OSCB.
- Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
  - Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment.
  - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required but at least annually (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

All staff will receive annual training focusing on the relevant updates in Keeping Children Safe In Education

### **The DSL and Deputy DSL(s)**

The DSL and Deputy DSL(s) will undertake level 3 child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.

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

They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

### **The Members and Trustees**

All members and trustees receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge.
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.
- Trustees will ensure that an appropriate 'case manager' is appointed in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher,

### **Recruitment – interview panels**

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

See part 3 of this policy for more information about our safer recruitment procedures.

## Training table

Type of training	Staff/volunteers	Requirement to update
Generalist level safeguarding training	All	Every 3 years is the statutory requirement but there should be at least annual updates
DSL training	DSL and DDSL's	2 years through the OSCB
Lead Trainer training	DSL and any DDSL's who are going to lead the generalist training	No requirement
Safer recruitment training	Members of SLT, LAB's and Trustees All recruitment panels must have at least one member who is safer recruitment trained	Every 5 years
PREVENT training	All	We are recommending every 3 years

## Staff who have contact with pupils and families within the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

## Online safety and the use of mobile technology

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

To address this, our school aims to:

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

## The 4 key categories of risk

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

To meet our aims and address the risks above we will:

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
  - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
  - Keeping personal information private
  - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
  - How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim.
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, AI [Generative artificial intelligence \(AI\) in education - GOV.UK](#) and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training or guidance at least once each academic year.
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety.
- Have a clear procedure in place for students around the use of mobile phones in school.
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
  - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present.
  - Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and Local Academy Board members aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology.

- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones.
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community.

Further information can be found in Appendix 10: Online safety

For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policy, which you can find on our website.

### **Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Health and safety
- Attendance
- Online safety, including use of mobile phones
- Equality
- Relationships and sex education
- First aid should
- Supporting Pupils with medical conditions

### **Branch Out**

Branch-Out is a specialist provision in play and leisure activities for children and young people aged 5-19 with impairments.

*“We believe that every child and young person has the right to freely chosen play within a dedicated and fully inclusive environment”*

Branch-Out is commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council and provides after school sessions, and day sessions across the school holidays.

Branch Out follows the policies of the school, however the DSL team for Branch Out are:

<b>DSL</b>	Carly Stephens
<b>DDSL</b>	Freya O’Donghue
<b>DDSL</b>	Megan Robins-Bourton

## **Part 3 - Appendices**

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

### **Appendix 1: Allegations and low-level concerns**

#### **Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harms threshold**

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

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

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

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer team for advice and guidance (LADO).

<https://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/local-authority-designated-officer-lado>

We will deal with any allegation of abuse as quickly as possible, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation. However, if there is involvement from the police or children's social care this may affect timescales.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or an appropriate "case manager" will be identified where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The Designated Safeguarding manager for the trust will have oversight of the case and a case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

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

#### **Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved**

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

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the Trust HR manager, the Designated Safeguarding Manager, and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

### **Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations**

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

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.

See our school allegations management policy for full details.

### **Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns)**

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

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

## **Definition of low-level concerns**

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

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils

## **Sharing low-level concerns**

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.
- 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.

See our school allegations management and low level concerns policy for full details.

## **Appendix 2: Child Exploitation**

### **Tackling Child exploitation:**

Tackling Child Exploitation – is the non-statutory guidance for local areas, developed by the Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme, funded by the Department for Education and supported by the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Justice

### **Child Criminal exploitation (CCE)**

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

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

If a member of staff suspects CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

## **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

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

- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant

If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: [Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners - GOV.UK](#)

## **County lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children

can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network

### Appendix 3: Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse is when children abuse other children. This type of abuse can take place inside and outside of school. It can also take place both face-to-face and online and can occur simultaneously between the 2.

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are no reports, that doesn't mean that this kind of abuse isn't happening.

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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual

behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma, and will offer them appropriate support and work with other agencies to share any concerns.

See our [Child on Child policy](#) for full details.

#### **Appendix 4: Domestic abuse**

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescence to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others – for example, the impact of all forms of domestic abuse on children.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Older children may also experience and/or be the perpetrators of domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. This can include sexual harassment.

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

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the designated safeguarding lead) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is the procedure where police forces are part of Operation Encompass

The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

## Appendix 5: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

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

Part 1 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

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

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

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider).
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin.
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out.
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.
- A girl:
  - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
  - Having limited level of integration within UK society
  - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
  - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period

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

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

## **Appendix 6: Forced marriage**

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 1 or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the '1 chance' rule, i.e., we may only have 1 chance to speak to the potential victim and only 1 chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place.
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer.
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or [fm@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fm@fco.gov.uk)
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate.

From February 2023 there has been a change in the law which states that it is a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced carriage law this applies to non-binding, unofficial marriages as well as legal marriages.

## **Appendix 7: Homelessness**

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

The DSL team will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns 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 children's social care.

## **Appendix 8: So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)**

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

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

## **Appendix 9: Missing children/children who have unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education**

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will:

All our staff are aware that children being absent from school, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. All our staff are aware of our school's absence procedures and children absent from education procedures.

Further information and support includes:

- Guidance on school attendance [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK](#) including information on how schools should work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.
- Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools **must** provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: [Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities September 2016](#) .
- further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in: [Full-time enrolment of 14 to 16-year-olds in further education and sixth-form colleges: 2023 to 2024 academic year - GOV.UK](#)
- general information and advice for schools and colleges can be found in the Government's [Missing Children and Adults - A cross government strategy](#)

Unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education

**Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions**, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

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

- Are at risk of harm or neglect

- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from abuse, neglect or exploitation, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

See our Attendance Policy for full information.

## Appendix 10: Online safety

See KCSIE page 35 and [Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

As a Gallery Trust school we have a specific online policy.

KCSIE states that *“It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. An effective whole school and college approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.*

*The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:*

- **content:** *being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism. misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.*
- **contact:** *being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: 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:** *online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and nonconsensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and*
- **commerce:** *risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group [APWG](#)*

We all know the impact on a young person if they access inappropriate content online, and we are aware of the importance of ensuring that filters are in place to safeguard our students, and that this is monitored regularly.

Our DSL works with Andrew Shanahan, IT Technician, to ensure that we have appropriate level of security protection procedures and filtering mechanisms in place to prevent access to safeguard our systems, staff and learners. We have clear policies and procedures on the use of [mobile and smart technology](#) reflects that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via their own personal devices and their networks (for example 3G, 4G and 5G) This access means some students, whilst at school have the opportunity to potentially sexually harass, bully and control others via their mobile phone or other smart technology. They may also share indecent images, consensually and non-consensually, and view and share inappropriate and harmful content. In our school our policy around the use of personal devices is that staff are not permitted to make or receive personal calls / texts, send or receive emails, or

access the internet and social media during work time where students are present, unless in exceptional circumstances where this has been approved by the Head Teacher.

In addition to the information above we work in line with the DfE guidance [Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

To meet the standards that are set out in the above guidance we ensure that:

- We identify and assign roles and responsibilities within our staff teams to manage filtering and monitoring of systems. It is important that the right people are working together and using their professional expertise to make informed decisions.
- Our DSL understands their responsibility to have the ownership and management around the monitoring and filtering of online technologies
- The DSL will have this responsibility reflected in their job descriptions moving forward.
- We have a nominated member of our LAB that will have discussions around the filtering and monitoring of online systems and will receive reassurances that these are in place.
- We have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet our safeguarding needs including reviewing filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- The effectiveness of our procedures are reviewed periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. Guidance on e-security is available from the [NEN](#) . In addition, we consider meeting the [Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Cyber security standards for schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK](#) . Broader guidance on cyber security including considerations for governors and trustees can be found at [Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)
- harmful and inappropriate content is blocked without unreasonably impacting on teaching and learning.

See our Trust [Filtering and monitoring Guidance](#) for further details

## Appendix 11: Preventing radicalisation

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

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Terrorism is an action that:

- Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
- Causes serious damage to property; or
- Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system

The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

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

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use

- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should always take action if they are worried.

## **Appendix 12: Safer Recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures**

### **Recruitment and selection process**

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Please refer to this guidance and our School's and Trust recruitment policy.

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 (1 will always have been safer recruitment trained) 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
- If there is anything that could affect their suitability to work with children (including information online)
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

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

### **Seeking references and checking employment history**

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

When seeking references 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.

## Appendix 13: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.

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

If a victim reports an incident, it is essential that staff make sure they are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse or neglect. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

When supporting victims, staff will:

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

Some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows that girls, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.
- Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising the behaviour
- If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as

appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

### **Serious violence**

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

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation (see above))

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

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

## Appendix 14: The Role of the Appropriate Adult

### The Appropriate Adult

How the Police conduct themselves when a person is detained and / or questioned is covered by the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Code C. In paragraph 1.7 the PACE guidance advises that “The role of the appropriate adult is to safeguard the rights, entitlements and welfare of juveniles and vulnerable persons”. Our role as an appropriate adult (“AA”) is to observe that the police are acting properly and fairly in relation to a vulnerable detained person's rights and entitlements, as well as helping the detained person understand their rights.

Equally important is that if the AA considers that the rights of the detained person are not being respected, or the police are not acting properly in their dealings with a detained person, the AA must act to protect the child and raise their concerns by speaking to an officer of the “rank of inspector or above”. This therefore means that if the AA is not happy about something there is clear recourse to a senior officer who can then review and determine what steps should be taken. The active nature of the AA role is reinforced in Home Office Guidance for Appropriate Adults, which states that the AA is not just an observer. It is crucial that we ensure that the appropriate staff member is identified to be the AA, it needs to be someone that has the confidence to be able to escalate concerns in this way. The Headteacher should always ensure the right staff member is identified to be the AA, advice can be taken from the Trust DSM.

Safeguarding is therefore inherent within the AA role – this could be as basic as an AA reviewing the custody record of the young person that has been detained to check that they have been given regular opportunities to access food and drinks, and to have appropriate breaks. It is expected that the AA will support the young person to understand what is being said to them, allowing them to participate fully in the process. This is especially crucial for the children in our schools. The staff member must know the child well and have a clear understanding of their additional needs and their EHCP.

For anyone requiring an AA, this can be a crucial part of the role with many people – Children and young people can default to giving a “yes” or “no” answer, this could be for various reasons:

- They may look for what they see is the quickest and easiest route out of the predicament they find themselves in.
- They may give the answer they think the adult wants to hear
- They may not understand what is being asked of them.

The role of AA is therefore a vital and powerful role for children and vulnerable people when detained by the police.

See our full guidance [Safeguarding and the role of the appropriate adult](#)

## Appendix 15: Types of Abuse

### Abuse, neglect and exploitation

All staff are made aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that our staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

All our staff are aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) will consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they must always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

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

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

Emotional abuse may involve:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Appendix 16: Use of alternative provision**

There may be occasions where our school places a student with an alternative provision provider, we recognise we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that student and ensure that we are satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

If we place one of our pupils in an alternative provision, we recognise the importance of ensuring that governing bodies and proprietors of these settings are aware of the complex needs of our student and the additional risk of harm that our student may be vulnerable to.

The department has issued two pieces of statutory guidance to which commissioners of Alternative Provision should have regard:

- Alternative provision - GOV.UK and
- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK

## **Appendix 17: Use of school or college premises for non-school activities**

If our school premises/premises is hired or rented out to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) we ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

We will work to the guidance [Keeping children safe during community activities, after-school clubs and tuition: non-statutory guidance for providers running out-of-school settings - GOV.UK](#) Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings details the safeguarding arrangements that we will expect these providers to have in place.

This includes ensuring the external organisation understands that if any allegations are made against any of their staff or volunteers, they must inform us so we can be assured that the correct procedures have been followed in line with our allegations management policy, KCSIE 2023 and our local OSCB and OCC procedures.

## **Appendix 18: Visitors to school**

### **Checking the identity and suitability of visitors**

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign in and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will have to wear/have photo ID that confirms their identity and the organisation they work for.

The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out.

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.