

SOLIHULL

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Owner: Pastoral Support Manager & DSL
Reviewer: Head of the Senior School & Head of the Preparatory School
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Version 6

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Policy Statement

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: Protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Our Policy and our commitment at Solihull School is that everyone in the school takes reasonable measures to safeguard and promote the welfare of each pupil in our care (including children in the EYFS), to create a culture of safety, equality and protection, and

- To ensure that we practise safe recruitment by checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and young people.
- To ensure that staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, that safeguarding and child protection concerns 'could happen here' and staff are child centred and always act in the best interest of the child.
- To safeguard children who have suffered or who are **at risk** of suffering serious harm.
- To recognise that there is a difference between safeguarding children who have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm and those who are **in need** of support from the school or from other agencies.
- To record the relevant information in the school's safeguarding repository: The Watch List, Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS) and in confidential pupil files.
- To protect each pupil from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another pupil.
- To create an environment where children's concerns are taken seriously and to encourage children to talk to us about anything that worries them.
- To be alert to signs of abuse both in school and from outside.
- To understand that bullying may be a child protection matter.
- To deal appropriately with every suspicion or complaint of abuse.
- To design and operate procedures which promote this policy and which, so far as possible, minimise the impact upon the innocent of unfounded allegations.
- To support children who have been abused, in accordance with their agreed Child Protection Plan.
- To be alert to the safeguarding needs of children identified as being more vulnerable, including those with SEND and with medical conditions.
- To understand that children who go missing from education are an 'at risk' group.
- To operate robust and sensible health and safety procedures.
- To take all practicable steps to ensure that school premises are as secure as circumstances reasonably permit.
- To operate clear and supportive policies on drugs, alcohol, nicotine and substance misuse.
- To consider and develop procedures to deal with any other safety and welfare issues which may be specific to individual children in our school or in our local area.
- To have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in accordance with section 157 of the Education Act 2002 and associated regulations.
- To consider the school's specific context when safeguarding children including, but not limited to, proximity to town and city centres, local parks and national and international transport hubs.
- To have regard to DfE and Charity Commission guidance:
 - *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2023)* which incorporates the additional statutory guidance, *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006*

(September 2018) and the non-statutory advice for practitioners: *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused* (March 2015).

- Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees (October 2019)
- *Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales* (July 2015, updated 2021) (Prevent), supplemented by non-statutory advice and a briefing note:
 - [The Prevent duty an introduction for those with safeguarding responsibilities \(October, 2022\)](#)
 - *The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders* (July 2015).
 - *The use of social media for on-line radicalisation* (July 2015)
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (2019, updated 2021)
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (July 2018, updated 2022).
- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (September 2022).

1. Aims of this Policy

- To raise awareness of child protection.
- To set clear expectations of how we expect all staff, supply staff, agency staff, Governors and volunteers to respond in the event of a concern about a child or young person, including their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse, in order to safeguard children and young people.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured, confidential, internal procedure to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To promote understanding and sensitivity towards child protection.
- To support the child's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence.

2. Principles

All staff and Governors are in a unique position to identify abuse in children and to provide information for the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) of the school.

All staff and Governors have the responsibility for the moral, social, cultural, and spiritual welfare of the children in our care.

Pupils' concerns, wishes and feelings should always be taken seriously, and systems of Pastoral Care are in place for children to confidently report abuse.

This school recognises its responsibility to communicate with the 'Education and Children's Services' Referral Team (0121 788 4333) whenever an allegation or disclosure of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect, has been made, within 24 hrs of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse, in accordance with the Solihull Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (within Solihull, the partners are: Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Birmingham & Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group and West Midlands Police). If at any time there is a risk of immediate, serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care immediately. If a criminal offence may have been committed, the police will be contacted immediately.

This school recognises its duty to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and in responding appropriately to abuse.

The protection of the child is the over-riding aim of any intervention. Children should be seen as individuals and their rights, needs and welfare must remain paramount. In any conflict of interest this principle must be upheld.

3. Management of Safeguarding

Governors

Whilst all members of the Governing Body have collective responsibility for all the matters referred to them, the Board has considered it appropriate to nominate two individual governors specifically to liaise with the DSL and the deputies to oversee matters concerning safeguarding & child protection. The Governing Body ensures that an appropriate senior member of staff from the School Leadership Team is appointed to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The School Leadership Team and Governing Body read KCSIE on an annual basis and sign off for the record doing so. All members of the Governing Body receive reports, presentations and appropriate training in order to understand and fulfil their obligations in this area, ensuring that the school has a safeguarding and child protection policy that is reviewed at least annually, and that safeguarding and child protection matters are on the agenda of every full meeting of the Governing Body.

The Designated Governor and/or the Deputy Designated Governor meet more regularly with the DSL and deputies and other senior leaders of the school, receiving more advanced training and reporting back on safeguarding and child protection matters to the Governing Body as a whole.

The Governor review relates to both policy and procedures (effectiveness and implementation) and to the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. After any Governor review, any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding and child protection arrangements are to be remedied without delay and reported to the Governing Body.

The Chairman of Governors (or in his absence, a delegate thereof) has the Governing Body's authority to liaise directly with the LADO and Children's Services should it be so required.

- Chairman of Governors: Mr D.J. Kelly (clerk@solsch.org.uk)
- Designated Governor for Safeguarding: Mrs. G.E. Tillman
- Deputy Designated Governor for Safeguarding: Dr. A.Burtenshaw.

Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) are trained to the same level regarding the managing of referrals and raising awareness of safeguarding amongst the staff and parents. They have a responsibility for dealing with safeguarding issues, providing advice and support to staff, liaising with the local authority and working with a wide range of other external agencies. The DSL need not be a teacher but must have the status and authority within the management structure to carry out the duties of the post.

The DSL and Deputies will co-ordinate action on child abuse within the school, ensuring that all staff (including supply staff, agency staff and volunteers) are aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection.

- They will liaise with all appropriate authorities (including the Police, in cases of serious harm) and be aware of the requirement for children (investigated by police) to have an [Appropriate Adult](#) alongside them.
- They will be the first point of contact for parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, external agencies, and any other matters of child protection.
- They will advise and act upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse reported to him/her.
- They will keep the Executive Headmaster informed of all actions unless the Executive Headmaster is the subject of a complaint.

More details on the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be found in KCSIE (2023) Annex C and Appendix 2.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Ms Sarah Hardy (*Pastoral Support Manager and DSL Mental Health Lead & Designated Member of staff for Looked After Children and the Prevent Duty*)
hardys@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – Ext 459 or 0121 703 2922)

The **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads** are:

Senior and Prep School

Mrs Helen King (Lead Nurse)
kingh@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – Ext 222 or 0121 703 2901)

Mrs Claire Evans (School Nurse)
Evansc@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – Ext 222 or 0121 703 2901)

Mrs Liz Munro (School Nurse)
Munrol@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – Ext 311 or 0121 705 0165)

Prep School

Mr Michael Jones (Senior Deputy Head)
jonesm@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – Ext 302 or 0121 705 1265)

Mrs Julie Litwinko (Head of EYFS) is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in the early years setting
Litwinkoj@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – 0121 705 1265)

Mrs Suzannah Farnan (Assistant Head Juniors)
farnans@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – Ext 300 or 0121 705 1265)

Mrs Amanda O'Leary (Wrap Around Care Manager)
Olearya@solch.org.uk (Telephone 0121 705 1265)

Senior School

Ms Rachael Speirs (Deputy Head, Pastoral)
speirsr@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – Ext 239 or 0121 703 2901)

Mr James Brown (Deputy Head of Section, Lower School)
brownj2@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – 0121 705 0958)
 Miss Claire Bednall (Deputy Head of Section, Middle School)

bednallc@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – 0121 705 0958)

Mrs Claire Black (Deputy Head of the Sixth Form)

blackc@solsch.org.uk (Telephone – Ext 471 or 0121 703 2964)

Whilst the DDSLs are attached to differing sections of the school, if, in the event that one is unavailable, any one of the others should then become the point of contact. If none of the appointed persons are available, the Executive Headmaster would become the person to contact. If the Executive Headmaster is also unavailable, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (e.g. Head of Senior School or Head of Prep School) should be contacted – the important issue is that there is always a person with relevant training and status on site and that a concern should be raised without delay.

In the event of a school closure, local or national lockdown (e.g. as a result of COVID-19), specific contact details and arrangements for the Designated Safeguarding Leads will be communicated to all staff the same working day.

Solihull Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Referrals

The Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership's thresholds are adhered to and acted upon:

- Universal
- Universal Plus
- Early Help
- Statutory Services

Solihull threshold guidance can be found by following this [link](#).

Guidance on other regional West Midlands (e.g. Birmingham and Warwickshire) child protection referrals and procedures can be found by accessing [West Midlands Procedures](#). Whilst the DSL (or Deputy) would usually make the referral by following guidance set out by the relevant local authorities, it is important to note that ANY member of staff can refer their concerns to children's social care directly if desired or if the child's situation does not appear to be improving and/or the staff member is not satisfied with the DSL's (or Deputy's) handling of the matter.

Even so, normally after such a referral, the DSL (or Deputy) would be informed unless they are the subject of the concern in which case the Executive Headmaster must be informed.

To report an emergency always call 999

Designated Safeguarding Lead Training

When new to the role the DSL and all deputies will undertake child protection training and training in inter-agency working including:

- Solihull SSCP Module 1 (Early Help)
- Solihull SSCP Module 2 (Introduction to Multi-Agency Working)

A DSL/DDSL will also complete at least 3-6 hours of SSCP training annually (one SSCP module), attend refresher training at two-yearly intervals (e.g. SSCP DSL Conference) and complete training as determined by national, local authority and/or school priorities as appropriate.

A DSL/DDSL reads KCSIE updates on an annual basis and signs off to confirm doing so.

In addition to this formal training, the DSL and deputies will also update their skills and knowledge continually, and at least annually, through studying appropriate guidance from ISI, the local authority, the DfE and others with an interest in maintaining the highest possible standards of safeguarding, and through meeting with other DSLs and members of the local safeguarding community.

The DSLs' training will enable them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Job Description of a DSL/DDSL (including roles and responsibilities related to Attendance, Children Missing from Education and Elective Home Education) can be found in Appendix 2 of this policy and should be read by all staff as part of this policy.

Any member of staff or volunteer who has concerns about poor or unsafe practice either in general or in any specific case should follow the guidance given in the school's Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy.

4. Duty of Employees

Every employee of the school, including the Executive Headmaster, supply staff, agency staff and volunteers at the school has a general moral and professional duty to:

- Recognise that any child may benefit from **early help assessments**, but all school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:
 - is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
 - has a mental health need
 - has involvement or association with organised crime groups or county lines
 - has been subject to sexual or criminal exploitation
 - has special educational needs (i.e. they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
 - is a young carer
 - is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
 - has a family member in prison
 - is at risk of 'honour' based abuse such as FGM or Forced Marriage
 - is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
 - is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
 - is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
 - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
 - has returned home to their family from care
 - is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect
 - is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
 - is a privately fostered child
 - is persistently absent from school, including persistent absence for part of the school day
- Ensure that children receive the right help, at the right time to address risk and prevent issues escalating.
- Ensure that staff should not assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.
- Listen to the views of the child, reassessing concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information quickly and challenging inaction.
- Be aware of the school's child protection procedures and follow them.

- Know how to access and implement the procedures, independently, if necessary.
- Keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event which should be dealt with as set out below (in Record Keeping).
- Report any matters of concern to a DSL. Undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, which is regularly updated, no less infrequently than every three years. In addition, all staff members should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, staff meetings and briefings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. The specific training will include online safety including the dangers of grooming, cyber-bullying and social media, child-on-child abuse and dealing with harmful behaviours such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, and youth-produced sexual imagery/sexting (advice about sexting can be found in *Advice About Sexting in Schools and Colleges* - UK Council for Child Internet Safety, August 2016).
- Be fully aware of the detail in this policy and will also have read (at least) Part 1, Part 5 and Annex B of: *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)*.
- Adhere to the Disqualification under Childcare Act 2006 (March 2015) and Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, which concerns how people can be disqualified and explains the effect of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009. In our environment, this includes staff involved before/after school wraparound childcare for those children under the age of 8. The relevant staff are required to complete a self-certification form.
- Be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- Adhere to the contents of the Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy. Members of staff should raise all/any concerns in line with the Policy. The promotion of the importance of raising concerns is everyone's responsibility.
- Understand that Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors and contexts outside the school (e.g. local parks, international transport links and a multi-cultural city) and/or can occur between children. All staff, but especially the DSL (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harm takes 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, and serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety/welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors, so it is important that the school provides as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.
- Read and sign-off (on an annual basis):
 - Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy;
 - KCSIE (2023) Part one, five and Annex B;
 - ICT Acceptable Use Policy;
 - Online-safety & Curriculum Policy;
 - Social Networking Policy;
 - Staff Mobile Telephone and Photography Protocols
 - Public Interest Disclosure Policy (Whistleblowing);
 - Pupil Behaviour and Discipline Policy;
 - Anti-Bullying Policy;

- Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy;
- Use of Reasonable Force Policy.
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy

Members of non-teaching staff should also report any matters of concern to the DSL (or Deputy), undersigned Line Manager or member of the School Leadership Team who would then escort the relevant employee to a DSL or Deputy:

- Ground Staff, Maintenance Team, Marshal Team, Admin/Bursarial Staff, HR, IT, Development & Alumni Relations, Careers, Marketing, Library staff and External Contractors e.g. Catering or Cleaning Team - The Bursar or Assistant Bursars.
- Visiting Music Teachers – Director of Music.
- Visiting Sports Coaches – Acting Director of Sport, Health and Fitness/ Head of Sport at Prep school..
- Technicians – relevant Academic Head of Department.
- Lunchtime Supervisors – Deputy Head of the Prep School.
- Teaching Assistants – relevant Class Teacher.
- School Counsellors - Lead Counsellor.

Members of school staff (including supply teachers, agency staff, external contractors, and volunteers) should always ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil. For example, particular care should be taken with regard to one-to-one tuition, sports coaching, performing arts, conveying a pupil in a car, or engaging in inappropriate electronic communication.

5. Signs of Abuse

Whilst no list can be comprehensive and vigilance is always required, the following may be signs of abuse (refer also to KCSIE 2023):

- The pupil says they have been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference.
- There is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a pupil's injury (e.g. unexplained bruising); the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries.
- The pupil's behaviour stands out from the group as being either extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the pupil's behaviour (e.g., Youth-produced sexual imagery/sexting).
- The pupil asks to drop subjects with a particular teacher and seems reluctant to discuss the reasons.
- The pupil's development is unexpectedly delayed.
- The pupil inexplicably loses or gains weight.
- The pupil appears neglected, e.g., dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed.
- The pupil is reluctant to go home or has been openly rejected by his/her parents or carers.
- 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.

N.B. The above concerns could also be relevant when there are concerns about children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Advice can also be sought from the Channel Programme or Children's Social Care.

Further guidance and advice can be [find in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners' helpful.](#)

6. Children in Need

The school is committed to providing additional support to those children who need it. The possible needs are many and various and include cases in which there is for example: children with social workers; a child with mental health concerns; a child missing in education; a child who is self-harming; a child who has an eating disorder. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are particularly vulnerable (and can be more prone to peer group isolation and bullying than other children) and additional pastoral support is available and provided.

There are many other possible situations and professional guidance is always sought in such cases. The school aims to address, alleviate and resolve such matters alongside appropriate external agencies.

The school demonstrates this through the strong pastoral support available, engaging external professionals and agencies as required and maintaining a log of ongoing concerns. Where it is recognised that a child needs specialist support, the school will work with agencies such as Children's Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) and relevant medical professionals as appropriate and use inter-agency assessments such as the Common Assessment Framework. *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018), Section 21, should be consulted when assessment is required.

All staff should be aware of the early help process to support children in need and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

Referrals are normally managed by the DSL (or Deputy) who will contact the relevant local agencies when a child is identified as being in need of additional support. However, anyone may make a referral, informing the DSL (or Deputy) as soon as possible. Wherever possible, and dependent upon the guidance received from local children's services, the parents, carers or guardians of the child concerned will be involved in the referral and the resolution of any concerns.

The school recognises that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child is more at risk than most pupils. This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health. We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker for example, a named DSL (or Deputy) will normally oversee a pupil's progress (attainment, attendance, academic effort) and be a named contact within school (through the Watch List).

7. Procedures for dealing with Disclosures or Concerns:

If a child makes an allegation or discloses information which raises concern about actual or potential significant harm, the initial response should be limited to listening carefully to what the child says so as to:

- clarify the concerns;
- confirm who the child has already told, if anyone;
- make a full written record of what is being said by the child in their words.

If a child is freely recalling events, the response should be to listen, rather than stop the child; questioning of the information being given must be limited to confirming factual accuracy required to provide a quality referral, e.g. who are the people involved, what has actually happened and when and where did any incident occur.

If the child has an injury but no explanation is volunteered, it is acceptable to enquire how the injury was sustained.

However, the child must not be pressed for information, led or cross-examined or given false assurances of absolute confidentiality. Such well-intentioned actions could prejudice Police investigations.

It is important that the child should not be asked to repeat the information to a colleague or write the information down. Making an accurate and verbatim record of what the child has said (disclosure), (or evidence that has led to the concerns) recording the child's own words, is the responsibility of the person to whom the child has disclosed. This is recorded through CPOMS (see Appendix 3 for guidance).

The DSL (or Deputy) should be informed of the concerns immediately and given the completed concerns form as soon as possible afterwards.

A record of all conversations (including the timings, the setting, those present, as well as what was said by all parties) and actions must be kept. These should be recorded on the concerns form.

8. Record Keeping and Information Sharing

Any member of staff who has a concern about the safeguarding or welfare of a child must share this information with the DSL

- The report is given immediately to the DSL, who will analyse risk and refer onwards as necessary and appropriate.
- Referrals where urgent action is required should never be delayed in order for a full record to be written.
- Written records should include:
 - A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
 - Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
 - A note of any action taken, decision reached and the outcomes.
- Verbal conversations should be promptly recorded in writing.

No enquiries or investigations may be initiated without the authority of Children's Social Work Services or the Police.

- Safeguarding and child protection information may be shared without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner. It would be legitimate to share information without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; and, if to gain consent would put the child at risk.
- Child Protection records will be stored securely and confidentially within CPOMS and and/or in pupils' individual files in the Head's Wing in accordance with the school's Privacy Notice

Where children leave the school, the DSL (or Deputy) should ensure that their child protection files are transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of the new term.

Note: Early Years registered providers (including school-run early years providers) must notify Solihull multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) of any serious accident, illness or injury to, or

death of, any child while in their care, and of the action taken. Notification must be made as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any event within 14 days of the incident occurring.

9. What staff should do in the event of a concern or disclosure: The 'Seven Rs'

'The Seven Rs' provides staff with clear guidance on how to act in the event of a concern or disclosure: Receive, Reassure, Respond, Report, Record, Remember, Review.

Receive

- A child might report abuse directly to a member of staff or peer in person or on-line (e.g. email or Microsoft Teams), a member of staff might overhear a conversation or there might be an observed change in behaviour;
- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief;
- Accept what is said and take it seriously;
- Make a note of what has been said or observed as soon as practicable.

Reassure

- Reassure the pupil, but only as far as is honest and reliable;
- Do not make promises you may not be able to keep, e.g.: "I'll stay with you", or "everything will be alright now" or "I'll keep this confidential";
- Do reassure, e.g., you could say "I believe you," "I am glad you came to me," "I am sorry this has happened," "We are going to do something together to get help."

Respond

- Respond to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details;
- Do not ask 'leading' questions, i.e.: "did he touch your private parts?" or "did she hurt you?". Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later court proceedings;
- Instead, make use of open-ended questions which offers the child the opportunity to provide more information about an event in a way that is not leading, suggestive or putting them under pressure. Open questions may use how? When? Who? Where?
- Questions beginning with the phrases "tell me", "describe" or "explain" are useful:
 - Tell me what happened, tell me who was there;
 - Explain what you mean when you say;
 - Describe the place to me;
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator; the pupil may care about him/her, and reconciliation may be possible.
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to. Reassure the pupil that it will be a senior member of staff.

Report (and Refer)

- Share concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible.
- **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process.**
- If you are unable to contact your designated safeguarding lead, deputy designated safeguarding lead, or most senior member of staff, and the child is at risk of immediate harm, contact:

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council / Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership:

Contact Solihull MASH ([link](#) to MASH referral form) on **0121 788 4300** (Monday to Thursday 8.45am - 5.20pm, Friday 8.45am - 4.30pm or 0121 605 6060 (out of hours)

And or, as required:

Birmingham City Council:

Contact Birmingham Children's Trust, Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) ([link to CASS referral form](#)) on 0121 303 1888 (Monday to Thursday: 8:45am to 5:15pm, Friday: 8:45am to 4:15pm) or 0121 675 4806 (out of hours)

To make referrals to other West Midlands local authority or view policies and procedures use [this link](#) and choose the corresponding area.

Police and Emergency Services:

In an emergency always call 999.

For further guidance on when to call the Police refer to the National Police Chief's Council guidance: [When to Call the Police Guidance for Schools and Colleges](#)

To report an incident or concern to the West Midland Police use [this link](#) or call 101
If information is gathered by staff that might be important and relevant for the police to analyse and build information, staff should also complete a [West Midlands Police Force Intelligence Bureau \(FIB\) form](#) and emailed to fib@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk.

- If you are dissatisfied with the response from a DSL or children's social work, you should ask for the decision to be reconsidered, giving your reasons for this.
- A formal referral or any urgent medical treatment **must not** be delayed by the unavailability of designated staff.
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. More information and guidance can be found within Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers (2018).

If the suspicions in any way involve another member of staff (including supply teachers, agency staff and volunteers), the matter needs to be brought to the attention of the Executive Headmaster who will act in accordance with Managing Allegation procedures (see Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy and Section 11 of this policy).

If the suspicions in any way involve the Executive Headmaster, The Chair of Governors is to be informed immediately and advice needs to be sought from the Solihull Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as per procedures (see Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy and Section 11 of this policy).

The Solihull Local Authority Designated Officer (who should be contacted using the details below when there has been an allegation against a member of staff in relation to a child) role is currently undertaken by Sarah Harris (LADO).

The Solihull LADO service is based at:

Child Protection and Review Unit
Bluebell Centre
Chelmsley Wood
B37 5TN
B37 5EX (Sat Nav)
LADO referrals: should be made via

Telephone: 07795128638

Email: lado@solihull.gov.uk (please put 'LADO referral' in subject line)

Whilst the LADO will oversee the process, the day to day work will be undertaken by the Independent Review Officers (IROs) within the Child Protection and Review Unit. The IROs have a duty system which should ensure that any enquiries will still be answered speedily.

N.B. (1) The above processes are also relevant when there are concerns about children who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Advice can also be sought from the Channel Programme (a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism) or Children's Social Care.

N.B. (2) Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL or Deputy with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers (Serious Crime Act 2015). If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must personally report this to the police (see KCSIE, 2023, Annex B for further details).

Record

(See Appendix [3](#) – for guidance.)

- If possible make some very brief notes at the time and write them up as soon as possible. Keep your original notes on file.
- Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse in a child or young person, will make a written record within the hour recording the disclosure using the child's own words, what was said or seen and the location both of the abuse and the disclosure.
- Record the date, time, place, persons present and noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the words used by the child. If the child uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into proper words.
- A record of a concern, suspicion or allegation should be made at the time of, or as soon as possible after the event. Dates and times of events should be recorded as accurately as possible, together with a note of when the record was made.
- Record facts and observable things, rather than your 'interpretations' or 'assumptions'.
- A record should be made of any visible marks, bruising or injuries to a child that give cause for concern. This may be completed on a body map. The child should not be examined intimately, or pictures taken of any injuries / marks.
- All records must be signed and dated clearly with the name of the signatory clearly printed.
- Children **MUST NOT** be asked to make a written statement themselves or to sign any records.
- All records of a child protection nature (handwritten or typed) should be marked as confidential and passed to the DSL and Deputy through CPOMS and/or forms available in Reception (Appendix 3)

Remember

- Support the child: listen, reassure, and be available.
- Complete confidentiality is essential. Share your knowledge only with appropriate professional colleagues.
- Try to get some support for yourself if you need it.

Review

- Has the action taken provided good outcomes for the child?
- Did the procedure work?
- Were any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in the procedure? Have these been remedied?
- Is further training required?

10. Safe Recruitment Procedures

The school operates safe recruitment procedures including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and compliance with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations), the details of which are contained in the Recruitment & Selection Policy in the Vacancies section on the website, which also houses the Recruitment of ex-offenders policy. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be done as part of pre-recruitment checks.

At least one person on every recruitment panel will have received Safer Recruitment Training.

The school is fully aware of the requirement to report to the DBS (PO Box 181, Darlington DL1 9FA, Tel. No. 01325 953795), as soon as is reasonably possible of leaving the school, any person (whether employed, contracted a volunteer or student) who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- The harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual;
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is a reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and
- The individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left.

A referral will be considered to the Teaching Regulations Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate.

The reasons for such a referral would be: 'unacceptable professional conduct'/'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute' or 'a conviction at any time for a relevant offence'.

Confirmation is obtained that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils on either the school site or another site.

11. Allegations Against Staff

The school has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (including Governors, supply staff, agency staff and volunteers who work with children) that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. KCSIE 2023 sets out definitions for: substantiated, malicious, false, unsubstantiated and unfounded.

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

These procedures should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including supply teachers or volunteers has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she **may** pose a risk of harm to children, or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (e.g. domestic abuse of a partner)

The last bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school, which might make that individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk. When making an assessment of transferable risk the school should consider consulting the LADO.

Allegations against staff, supply staff, contractors, volunteers or the DSLs should be reported to the Executive Headmaster without discussing or otherwise notifying the matter with any other person including the person against whom the allegation is made. The matter must then be reported to the LADO by the Executive Headmaster. If the Executive Headmaster is absent, the allegation should be passed to the Chairman of Governors (or designate thereof).

If an allegation concerns the Executive Headmaster, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Chairman of Governors (or designate thereof), who has the responsibility to liaise with the LADO, without discussing with or otherwise notifying the matter to any other person including the Executive Headmaster.

In cases of serious harm and/or a crime being committed, the Police should be informed from the outset.

All allegations should be referred to the LADO for advice before any investigation takes place (and within 1 working day). In borderline cases, these discussions can be held informally and without naming the school or individual.

Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation. Full consideration will be given to all options, subject to the need to ensure:

- The safety and welfare of the pupil or pupils concerned.
- The need for a full and fair investigation.
- Support is provided for the individual accused as appropriate.

All cases of suspected abuse should be referred to the local authority children's social care and:

- The local authority designated officer (LADO) for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a member of staff);
- Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child); and/or
- Police (cases where a crime may have been committed).

Details of allegations following an investigation that are found to be malicious or false should be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, the following information is kept on file: a clear and comprehensive *summary* of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken, and decision reached, a copy provided to the person concerned (where agreed by the Police and children's social care) and a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

Cases in which an allegation was found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated, or malicious should not be included in any reference. Substantiated allegations are included in references as factual statements.

If a report/allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child or person making the allegation is in need of further help or may have been abused by someone else.

If it is determined that the allegation has been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate.

Allegations that do not meet the harm threshold

The school has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (including Governors, supply staff, agency staff and volunteers who work with children) that do not meet the harm threshold set out above.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if it is no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that any adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy, 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 LADO.

Example of low-level concerns could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- **taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy***
- engaging with a child on a **one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door**
- humiliating pupils.

(*) Staff should refer to the Taking, Storing, & Using Images of Children Policy, Mobile Devices and Photography Protocols that include EYFS specific guidance that does not allow the use of all electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities in the EYFS setting and outlines the school’s photo and filming exclusion zones.

All staff are encouraged to self-refer, where, for example they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Low level concerns about staff (inc. supply staff, agency staff and contractors) should be reported to the Executive Headmaster, Head of Senior School or Head of Prep School who will determine whether the harm threshold has been met. *If a concern has been raised with a member of staff other than the Executive Headmaster (i.e. to EYFS, the Head of Senior School or Head of Prep School), the concerns should be notified to the Executive Headmaster the same day.* The Executive Headmaster may share the concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or appropriate member of staff. Reports about agency staff or contractors will be passed onto their employers. Where the concern is raised about the Executive Headmaster, the concern should be shared with the Chairman of the Governors.

Procedures of managing low level concerns about staff behaviour are set out in Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy.

All low-level concerns are recorded in writing and stored securely with details of who raised the concern, details of the concern, context and actions taken. Records are reviewed regularly so that patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified, with consideration to the culture within the school. If a pattern of low-level concerns reaches the harm threshold, the school will follow procedures associated with allegations that meet the harm threshold. The Executive Headmaster stores these records securely and confidentially.

Low level concerns will only be reported in references when they are linked to issues that would normally be recorded in a reference (e.g. misconduct or poor performance). However, low level concerns (or a pattern of concerns) that meet the harm threshold, referred to the LADO and subsequently substantiated should be referred to in a reference.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised, or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again. Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

12. Abuse of Trust

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 established a criminal offence of the abuse of trust affecting teachers and others who are in a relationship of trust with 16-18 year olds. A relationship of trust is one where a teacher, member of education staff, sports coach, faith leader or volunteer is in a position of power or influence over a pupil or student by virtue of the work or nature of the activity being undertaken.

The legislation is intended to protect young people in education who are over the age of consent but less than 18 years of age.

The principle of equality embedded in the legislation applies irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust. Any concern raised by a parent, child or young person will be listened to and taken seriously in accordance with the school's procedures for those working with children and Allegations Against Staff (Section 10) and the Staff Behaviour and Conduct Policy

'Grooming' a child or person under 18 with a view to a future sexual relationship is an offence.

13. Child-on-Child Abuse

Children can abuse other children, inside and outside of school and online. ALL child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and all staff should recognise the signs and indicators of abuse. Victims will be taken seriously, kept safe and never made to feel like they are creating a problem for reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment.

It is recognised that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place but isn't being reported. Pupils can report incidents of child-on-child abuse to their circles of support, including, but not limited to the Pastoral Team, School Nurses, confidential counselling (e.g. Listening Service, CHAT) and Pastoral Support Manager.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (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
- the use of technology (e.g. mobile devices) to sexually harass another child
- 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, and
- 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)

Children with SEND and LGBT+ pupils might be at greater risk of child-on-child abuse (including bullying).

It should not be assumed that indicators of abuse (including bullying) relate to a child’s with SEND diagnosis or that a lack of signs or symptoms of abuse means that a child with SEND isn’t affected by incidents of abuse. Children with SEND might find it more difficult to communicate or disclose abuse and therefore, it is important that they have a trusted adult in the school that they can talk to (e.g. A Form Tutor and/or Learning Support Teacher).

In circumstances where there is an allegation of abuse including bullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment, physical abuse, sexting, youth-produced sexual imagery, banter (abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated as ‘banter’ or ‘having a laugh’), gender based violence/issues and upskirting by one or more pupils against another pupil - all children involved, whether alleged perpetrator or victim, will be treated as being ‘at risk’ and the protocols set down in this policy will be followed. This would also include initiation/hazing and any related rituals. Abuse can be confined to the online world and/or used to promote offline abuse.

A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be excluded from the school during any investigation and the school’s policy on behaviour, discipline and sanctions will apply.

The school does not tolerate bullying of any kind, recognising for example, the emotionally abusive impact of cyber-bullying.

The threshold for dealing with an issue of pupil behaviour or bullying under this policy, is subject to local specifics as in any other case: when there is ‘reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Hence, we regard bullying as well as other forms of child-on-child abuse as potential child protection matters. If a child is suffering or is at risk of significant harm, we shall refer the matter to the LSCP and/or the police.

14. Child-on-Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, including Prep and Senior aged children. It can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally).

All staff should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' with regard to child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment and have a 'zero tolerance' approach.

Sexual Violence

It is important that staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact that children can, and sometimes do, abuse other children in this way and it can happen inside and outside of school.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 refers to sexual violence as:

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

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

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

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

Consent: Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent can be withdrawn at anytime during sexual activity and each time activity occurs.

- A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- The age of consent is 16
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

More information about consent can be found by following this link: [Rape Crisis England & Wales Sexual consent.](#)

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school/college. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments,
- sexual 'jokes' or taunting,
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately bruising against someone, interfering with someone's clothes. Schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence and it is important to talk and consider the experience of the victim.
- Displaying pictures, photos or drawing of a sexual nature
- Upskirting (this is a criminal offence), and

Online sexual harassment, which may include:

- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- Sharing of unwanted explicit content
- Sexualised online bullying
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, and
- Coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

The school considers sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviour and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abuse and violent. Problematic, abuse and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. Harmful sexual behaviour has been widely adopted in child protection and is used by the school.

Harmful sexual behaviour can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. Harmful sexual behaviour should be considered in a children protection context.

When considering harmful sexual behaviour, both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature.

Harmful sexual behaviour, in some cases, progress on a continuum. The school needs to address inappropriate behaviour as a way of helping to prevent problematic, abuse and/or violence behaviour in the future. Children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experience their own abuse and trauma and it is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Report of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made. In recognition of this, the DfE Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges has been incorporated into KCSIE (2023). KCSIE 2023 (part 5) and this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy should be read by all staff as it contains further detailed advice on how to support victims and perpetrators of sexual violence and sexual Harassment between children.

All staff are to be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT+ children are at greater risk. Staff should also be aware of the importance of the following:

- Risks of harm may be compounded where LGBT+ children and children with SEND lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. All staff should endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by these children and provide a safe space for children to speak out or share their concerns.
- Sexual violence and harassment can happen inside or outside of school and online.
- Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim might not make a direct report (e.g. a friend might overhear a conversation).
- The importance of taking reports seriously and not be made to feel that they are causing a problem.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and are not an inevitable part of growing up.
- Sexual violence and harassment should not be tolerated or dismissed as 'banter,' 'part of growing up', 'just having a laugh' or 'boys being boys'.
- Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

N.B. Upskirting , which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm, is a criminal offence.

Immediate response to a report

Where possible, two members of staff will be present when managing a report. Ultimately, any decisions are for the school to make on a case-by-case basis with the DSL (or a Deputy) taking a lead role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police if required.

The member of staff should not promise confidentiality, but should only share on a need-to-know basis (e.g. with a DSL and/or children's social service). They should follow guidance (Appendix 2) on how to respond, record and report a child protection and safeguarding concern. **A written record must be made.**

Managing the report

Considering confidentiality and sharing information

Staff taking a report should never promise confidentiality as it is very likely that it will be in the best interest of the victim to seek advice and guidance from others in order to provide support and engage appropriate agencies.

The school should only engage staff and agencies who are required to support the children involved and/or be involved in any investigation.

If the victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment and/or doesn't give consent to share information, if there is a legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies, the DSL (or Deputy) should consider the following:

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

The DSL (or Deputy) will balance the victim's wishes against the duty to protect the victim and other children. If the DSL (or Deputy) decides to go ahead and made a referral to local authority children's social care and/or report to the police against the victims wishes, this should be handed extremely carefully, the reasons should be explained to the victim and appropriate professional support should be offered.

Additional information on confidentiality and information sharing is available here: [Safeguarding Practitioners Information Sharing Advice](#).

Risk Assessments

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL (or Deputy) should make an immediate risk and assessment of needs. Where there had been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case by case basis.

The risk assessment for a report of sexual violence will be recorded electronically, kept under review and consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support
- Whether there may be other victims
- The alleged perpetrator(s)
- All other children and staff at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harm, and
- The time and location of the incident, and any action required to make the location safer

The school will liaise and engage with the relevant local authorities and external agencies to inform the risk assessment as required.

School Actions, External Referrals and Reporting

Every report will be considered on a case by case basis. When to inform the alleged perpetrator(s) will be a decision that will be carefully considered and supervision from the Local Authority and/or the Police will be taken where required. The school will not wait for a response from the Local Authority and/or the Police before taking immediate action to safeguard the children.

There are 4 likely outcomes and referrals for the school to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence/harassment and all are underpinned by a zero tolerance approach.

1. Managing internally

The school may take the view that the children are not in need of early help or that referrals to statutory services are not required (e.g. for one off incidents). The school might take the view that the incident can be managed internally in line with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy and pupils supported through the school's circles of support.

2. Early help

Alongside the school managing the incident internally, the school might feel that the children and/or family might benefit from early help.

3. Referral to Local Authority Children's Care

Where a school has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, the school will make a referral into the Local Authority Children's Services. Parents will be informed of the referrals, unless there is a compelling reason not to (e.g. it will put the child at more risk).

After the referral, the school will work in partnership with the Local Authority to support the children.

If a referral isn't required and/or the Local Authority decide that statutory intervention is not required, the school will re-refer again if the local thresholds have been subsequently met.

4. Reporting to the Police

Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to the local authority.

Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is that this should be passed to the Police. If the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the Police is the same.

The school will follow guidance set out in [When to call the police.](#)

The school will work closely with the Police to determine what can be disclosed to staff and the alleged perpetrators and parents. The school will ask the Police if they have any questions about the investigation.

If the Police don't take any further action, the school will continue to engage with specialist support for the victim and alleged perpetrator as required.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for [Internet Safety \(UKCIS\): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes \(December 2020\)](#)

Actions following the report

The DSL (or Deputy) should engage with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that a professional risk assessment by social workers and/or sexual violence specialists will be required. Any report of sexual violence/harassment should be carefully considered. The DSL (or Deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the school's initial response. Important considerations will include:

- immediate consideration of how to protect the victim, alleged perpetrators and any other children involved/impacted
- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be

given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered.

- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour.
- the ages of the children involved.
- the developmental stages of the children involved.
- any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, or school or staff?
- the importance of understanding intra-familial harm and any necessary support for siblings following incidents and
- other related issues and wider context

Safeguarding and supporting the victim and witnesses

The following principles should be considered:

- The needs and wishes of the victim. The victim should never feel like they are a problem for making a report.
- Wherever possible, the victim, if they wish, should be able to continue their normal routine. The goal is to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible and not to isolate them, so that the school is a safe space, and they have support.
- Age, development, nature of allegations (including power imbalance), potential further risk and needs/wishes of the victim
- Support should be tailored on a case-by-case basis and could include liaising with Children and Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs) (signposted by police/social care agencies).
- Abuse and sexual assault can result in several health needs (inc. physical, mental, and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy) and specialist NHS support might be required from a Sexual Assault Referral Centre).
- Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, the school should be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general so it can offer support and act appropriately. Relevant information can be found in: [CPS: Safeguarding Children as Victims and Witnesses](#).

Safeguarding and supporting the alleged perpetrator

The school need to balance the need to safeguard the victim and wider community and provide the alleged perpetrator with an education safeguarding support and implement any disciplinary sanctions. Support will be considered on a case by case basis.

The following principles should be considered:

- Age, development, nature of allegations (including power imbalance), potential further risk and needs/wishes of the victim.
- Balance (safeguarding victim/others against providing the alleged perpetrator with an education).
- Proportionality of the response (advice to be taken from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police).
- The importance of liaising with another educational establishment where appropriate.
- Following external guidance and advice.

Discipline and the alleged perpetrator

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations by the Police and/or Local Authority children's services are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating or had investigate an incident does not in itself prevent the school from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities, about what happened, and imposing a sanction in line with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

The school will liaise with the Police and/or Local Authority Children's Services if by taking any action it would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution.

Anonymity

As a matter of effective safeguarding practice, the school should do all it reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. This will mean considering carefully which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for all children involved.

The school should consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating and spreading rumours and exposing victims' identities. Further guidance is available in KCSIE 2023 (paragraph 469) and in Childnet's cyberbullying guidance.

Criminal Process

The school will not wait for the outcome (or start) of a police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), and other children in the school.

The school will liaise carefully with police investigators to ensure a balanced approach and consider the impact of the use of bail with conditions, bail without conditions and people released under investigation on children in school. In particular, the school will give regard to the additional stress and trauma caused to a victim within school; the potential for the suspected person to intimidate the victim or a witness; the need to ensure that measures strike a balance between the management of risk and the rights of an unconvicted person (e.g., rights to privacy, family life).

At the end of the criminal process, if a child is convicted or received a caution for a sexual offence, the school will update the risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place, consider any action in line with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy and further support for the victim, alleged perpetrator, and other children.

Unsubstantiated, Unfounded, False or Malicious Reports

If a report/allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious, the DSL (or Deputy) will consider whether the child or person making the allegation is in need of further help or may have been abused by someone else.

If it is determined that the allegation has been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate in line with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

Working with parents

The school or college will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of sexual violence and sexual harassment. The exception to this rule is a DSL (or Deputy) or member of the School Leadership Team believe there if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk.

The following should be considered:

- Parents role in discussing what support is required and how to progress the report
- Meeting and speaking to the victims and/or alleged perpetrators parents
- Discuss the arrangements put in place for the alleged perpetrator, including the possible impact
- Sharing and discussing plans to safeguard the victim and alleged perpetrator
- Support for the parents

Safeguarding other children

Consideration will be given to supporting children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape and assault by penetration.

Other children might take 'sides' and the school will make reasonable steps to ensure that the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), and any witnesses, are not being bullied or harassed. Consideration will be given to how social media might be used to bully or harasses these children.

The school will consider any potential need to keep children safe on school transport, as this is a possible vulnerable space for children.

15.Suspected Harm from Outside School

A member of staff who suspects that a pupil has been suffering harm from outside the school should seek information from the child with tact and sympathy using 'open' and not leading questioning. A sufficient record should be made of the conversation (as previously outlined) and he or she should refer the matter immediately to the DSL (or deputy).

16. Use of Reasonable Force and Physical Intervention

Teachers and other staff in schools have the right to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances: Section 550A of the Education Act 1996. Members of staff should refer to the Use of Reasonable Force Policy.

Additional guidance on the use of restrictive physical interventions with children who display extreme behaviour is contained in the linked website: [Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

It is important to allow children to do what they can for themselves, but depending on age and circumstances (i.e., a child who is hurt, a child who needs instruction in the use of a particular instrument/piece of equipment, safety issues such as the need to prevent a child hurting themselves, running in to the road) it may be necessary for some physical contact to take place.

Further information can be found in the Use of Reasonable Form Policy.

If a pupil requires intimate care, a member of staff should follow the Intimate Care Policy.

17. Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Using searching, screening and confiscation powers appropriately is an important way to ensure pupil and staff welfare is protected and helps schools establish an environment where everyone is safe.

Headteachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited items or any other item that the school rules identify as an item which may be searched for.

The list of prohibited items is:

- knives and weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:
 - to commit an offence, or
 - to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the pupil).
- an article specified in regulations:
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks; and
- pornographic images.

Only the Head of the Senior School or Head of the Prep School, or a member of staff authorised by them, can carry out a search. The member of staff should follow guidance set out in [Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools \(DfE, July 2022\)](#) and the Pupil Behaviour and Discipline Policy. Accurate records are kept, including consent, rationale of the search and details of what was found, on the pupil's file.

The DSL (or deputy) should be informed of any searching incidents where the member of staff had reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of a prohibited item as listed above. The staff member should also involve the DSL (or deputy) without delay if they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding concern. If the DSL (or deputy) finds evidence that any child is at risk of harm, they should make a referral to children's social care services as set out in this policy. The DSL (or deputy) should then consider the circumstances of the pupil who has been searched to assess the incident against potential wider safeguarding concerns.

18. The Teaching of Safeguarding

Through effective age-appropriate curriculum, its delivery, and a child centric ethos, we are continually preparing pupils to take care of themselves and develop the necessary skills that will eventually enable them to grow into responsible members of the community and aware of safeguarding issues. Children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Particular attention should be paid to school practices to help children to adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks, build resilience and cover issues related to:

- 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
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable

- The concepts of, and laws related to sexual consent, exploitation, abuse, grooming coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called honour-based violence (inc. forced marriage and FGM) and how to access support

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

Particular attention is paid to online safety regarding the risks posed by adults or young people who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The principles embedded in this policy link into other policies and curricula including, but not limited to: Assemblies, Wellbeing & Personal Development (inc. Relationships and Sex Education), Health & Safety, Anti-Bullying, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy and Equal Opportunities.

Through the delivery of the above material pupils are encouraged to access support through their circles of support in the school including, but not limited to, their Form Tutor, Head of Year, School Nurse, Pastoral Support Manager, Learning Support Teachers and School Counsellors.

Further details can be found with the Wellbeing and Personal Development Policy (RSE), Online Safety and Curriculum Policy and associated schemes of works (e.g. Computer Science).

19. Assistance for Pupils

Pupils in the school are regularly made aware of their Circles of Support and those members of staff who may be of particular help to them: Form Tutors, Heads of Year, Heads and Deputy Heads of Section, Assistant Head-Pastoral, Deputy Heads of the Preparatory School, School Nurses, School Counsellor, Chaplain, Deputy Head - Pastoral, DSL, Deputy DSLs, Head of the Preparatory School and Senior School and Executive Headmaster. Of course, a pupil may choose to contact any member of staff about an issue pertaining to themselves, or another pupil. Further support can be offered including a school counsellor and/or helplines (Childline and Samaritans), which are advertised around the school and on the Pupil Portal.

20. Online Safety

The school recognises that it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material and issues associated with the four areas of online risk: **content, contact, conduct and commerce**.

The school is committed to promoting online safety through the curriculum (inc. Computer Science, Wellbeing and Personal Development / Relationships and Sex Education) and advice and guidance for parents, which is supported by staff CEOPS ambassadors.

Please refer to the Policies Folder in 'Staff Only' where the following policies are available:

- Online Safety Policy and Curriculum Document
- Social Networking Policy.
- Mobile Telephone and Photography Policy.
- Taking, Storage & Using Images Policy.

- ICT – Acceptable Use Policy.

Filtering and monitoring.

An IT filtering system (SMOOTHWALL) is in place to keep children safe when accessing the school's network and/or using a school device. The system also filters on search terms and also allows for terms to be added to block harmful and inappropriate content and for filtration purposes, e.g., the words/terms used in ISIL propaganda (which have been added) in line with the Prevent Duty requirements. Smoothwall is updated daily and the school logs incidents/concerns on CPOMS and maintains summative data to inform annual review. The DSL takes lead responsibility for filtering and monitoring and will work closely with the Head of ICT Services to ensure that standards set out within 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges' are carried out and staff are trained. See [Link to gov.uk guidance](#)

The school recognises that children might try and access the internet via their personal mobile network (inc. tethering) and this might bypass the IT filtering system. Therefore, pupils are not allowed to use their phone between 08:40 and 16:10 on site unless directed otherwise by a member of staff. The school recognises that the filtering system should block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.

For more information see the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Online Safety Policy and Curriculum Document and Mobile Telephone and Photography Protocols.

21. Mobile Phones, Devices and Cameras

Policies and protocols related to the use of mobile phones, devices and cameras in school can be found in [Taking, Storing, & Using Images of Children Policy](#), [ICT Acceptable Use Policy](#), Mobile Devices and Photography Protocols, the HR Handbook and Acceptable use of Mobile Phones for Pupils.

There is EYFS specific guidance that does not allow the use of personal mobile phones, devices or cameras in the EYFS setting and outlines the school's photo and filming exclusion zones (e.g. Alice House, changing rooms).

22. Training / Induction

The school is committed to supporting and training all staff in matters of child protection. The DSLs will liaise with the appropriate person in the Local Authority with respect to ensuring that all staff have access to appropriate training.

- The DSLs will attend training at least every two years in child protection and inter-agency work.
- All staff (including the Executive Headmaster, and volunteers in regulated activity) will receive training in safeguarding and child protection procedures at least every three years, in addition to annual safeguarding updates and awareness briefings.
- All Governors will complete safeguarding and child protection training (including the main points of online safety), Prevent training, the governance of safeguarding training, and managing allegations of abuse against staff training upon commencement of their role. Governors will also receive annual safeguarding and child protection updates, will be regularly updated of any changes to statutory and non-statutory safeguarding and child protection guidance, and will receive Child Protection Training at least every 3 years.

- All newly appointed members of staff and volunteers receive induction training in the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures. Training will take the form of a online courses/videos presentations, PowerPoint, instructions on Policy reading and implementation as well as wider safeguarding responsibilities and specific reference to the following:

- The Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Attendance and Children Missing in Education Policy
- The Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct Policy
- The Pupil Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Online Safety Policy, and Curriculum Document
- Mobile Telephone and Photography Protocols
- Use of Reasonable Force Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy (Whistleblowing)
- The identity and responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSLs
- The latest edition of KCSIE (Part 1, 5 & Annex B)

Training and induction cover the main points of:

- Prevent Duty (risk assessment and identifying pupils at risk)
- Online Safety
- Local safeguarding procedures as laid down by SSCP.

23. Visitors and Visiting Speakers

The school has a separate Visitor and Visiting Speaker Policy that outlines procedures that staff should follow when organising visitors and visiting speakers. The school undertakes risk assessments and research into the visiting speaker and their linked to external organisations. The school will not use a visiting speaker where any link is found to extremism, such as extremist groups and movements

24. Facilities Hire

When activities are directly supervised the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will apply, regardless of whether or not the children attending any of these services or activities are on the school roll.

If services or activities are provided by another body (e.g. sports organisations or community groups), they will be required to have their own child protection procedures in place and liaise with the school regarding safeguarding and child protection matters. If an outside body fails to comply, any agreement will be terminated. If an allegation or concern is reported directly to the school, school will follow its policy.

25. Supporting Documents

- Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures 2015
- Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (Arrangements for Safeguarding Children and Young People in Solihull (May 2019)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)
- What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused (March 2015)
- Managing Allegations against teachers and other staff (KCSIE 2023, Part 4)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)
- SEND Code 2015
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (November 2018)

- Counselling in Schools: a blueprint for the future (March 2015)
- UKCIS guidance: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education setting working with children and young people (2020)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (September 2021)
- Teaching Online Safety in School, D for E June 2019
- Elective Home Education (2019)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (2017)
- Children Missing Education (2016)
- Working together to improve school attendance (2022)
- Information sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers (2018).
- [Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners \(DfE 2017\)](#)
- [NPCC: When to Call the Police](#)
- [Searching Screening and Confiscation \(2022\)](#)

26. Purpose, Monitoring and Availability

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in a child centred school. The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all those working in school, their responsibilities, to ensure that they consider what is in the best interests of the child. It is in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and is made available to parents on the school website. Hard copies are also available on request. It is to be reviewed annually during term 1 of the academic year to ensure it complies with recent legislation and a report presented to the Governing Body.

27. Types of Abuse and Neglect and their Signs and Symptoms

Abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. They may be abused by an adult, adults, another child and/or children. They may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community session by those known to them or, more rarely, others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.

Children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and they might not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

The Department for Education Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023, Part 1) describes 4 categories of abuse:

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy 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); or

ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

N.B. A child going **missing from education** is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect (which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation) and can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. All staff to follow the appropriate procedures for dealing with unauthorised absence and children who go missing from education. See Section 28 and Attendance and Missing Pupil Policy for more information on Children Missing Education.

The school is aware of its obligation to inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

Physical Abuse:

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

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

FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8

So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed supposedly to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Where there are such concerns, staff must contact the DSL/DDSL as a matter of urgency.

Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM, or indeed any form of HBV. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM or of a forced marriage, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. It is mandatory for our school to report to the police cases where we suspect or discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Our school activates local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, include:

- A female child is born to a woman who has undergone FGM.
- A female child has an older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM.
- A female child's father comes from a community known to practise FGM.
- The family indicate that there are strong levels of influence held by elders and/or elders are involved in bringing up female children.
- A woman/family believes FGM is integral to cultural or religious identity.
- A girl/family has limited level of integration within UK community.
- Parents have limited access to information about FGM and do not know about the harmful effects of FGM or UK law.
- A girl confides to a professional that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'.
- A girl talks about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent.
- Parents state that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period.
- A parent or family member expresses concern that FGM may be carried out on the girl.
- A family is not engaging with professionals (health, education or other).
- A family is already known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.
- A girl requests help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM.
- A girl talks about FGM in conversation, for example, a girl may tell other children about it – it is important to take into account the context of the discussion.
- A girl from a practising community is withdrawn from Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHEE) education or its equivalent.
- A girl is unexpectedly absent from school.
- Sections are missing from a girl's Red book and/or a girl has attended a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations / anti-malarias.

Note: The concerns listed above are not exhaustive.

It is important that professionals look out for signs that FGM has already taken place so that:

- The girl affected can be supported to deal with the consequences of FGM.
- Enquiries can be made about other female family members who may need to be safeguarded from harm.
- Criminal investigations into the perpetrators, including those who carry out the procedure can be considered to prosecute those breaking the law and to protect others from harm.

There are a number of indications that a girl or woman has already been subjected to FGM:

- A girl may have difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- A girl may spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating. A girl may spend long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- A girl may have frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- There may be prolonged or repeated absences from school.
- A prolonged absence from school with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return could be an indication that a girl has recently undergone FGM.

- A girl may be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations.
- A girl may confide in a professional.
- A girl may ask for help but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- A girl may talk about pain or discomfort between her legs.

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. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (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.

It is often planned and systematic – people do not sexually abuse children by accident, though sexual abuse can be opportunistic; grooming the child – people who abuse children take care to choose a vulnerable child and often spend time making them dependent; grooming the child’s environment – abusers try to ensure that potential adult protectors (parents and other carers especially) are not suspicious of their motives.

Possible indicators:

Physical: damage to genitalia, anus or mouth; sexually transmitted diseases; unexpected pregnancy, especially in very young girls; soreness in genital area, anus or mouth and other medical problems such as chronic itching; unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections and discharges or abdominal pain.

Behavioural

- Sexual knowledge inappropriate for age; sexualised behaviour or affection inappropriate for age.
- Sexually provocative behaviour/promiscuity; hinting at sexual activity; inexplicable decline in school performance.
- Depression or other sudden apparent changes in personality as becoming insecure or clinging; lack of concentration, restlessness, aimlessness; socially isolated or withdrawn, overly-compliant behaviour; acting out, aggressive behaviour.
- Poor trust or fear concerning significant adults; regressive behaviour, onset of wetting, by day or night; nightmares.
- Onset of insecure, clinging behaviour; arriving early at school, leaving late, running away from home, suicide attempts, self-mutilation, self-disgust; suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures; eating disorders or sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating; regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys.
- Become worried about clothing being removed; trying to be ‘ultra-good’ or perfect; overreacting to criticism.
- Use of mobile phone and internet that causes concern.
- Involved with, or linked to, gang activity.

Note: The indicators listed above are not exhaustive and further information can be found in Annex B of KCSIE.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse, which can affect any child (inc. 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to having sex), who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. The statutory definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can

be found in the guidance document [Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners \(DfE 2017\)](#)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases, simply, affection), and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. These sexual activities may include assault by penetration, non-penetrative acts or non-contact sexual activities (e.g. involving children in the production of sexual images on the internet).

What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual Exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including online bullying and grooming. However, it is important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of abuse. However, others may exhibit one or more of the indicators set down below:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Potential vulnerabilities include:

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse;
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example);
- Recent bereavement or loss;
- Social isolation or social difficulties;
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality;
- Economic vulnerability;
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status;
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited;
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work;
- Having a physical or learning disability;
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- Sexual identity.

Note: The indicators listed above are not exhaustive and further information can be found in Annex B of KCSIE and further guidance can be found in [Child sexual exploitation \(2017\)](#)

Domestic Abuse, The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- a. physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
- (d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

People are 'personally connected' when they are or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person. They may also see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationships abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development and ability to learn.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Violence and Abuse, and which is in place in every police force in England and Wales.

Children were recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

Solihull is a part of Operation Encompass and the DSL has completed Operation Encompass Key Adult Training. The police will share information with our school about all police attended Domestic Abuse incidents which involve any of our children.

The Operation Encompass Key Adult is: Sarah Hardy (Pastoral Support Manager & DSL)

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is a form of abuse and can occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology

All children are at risk of CCE, but the experiences of girls being criminally exploited can be very different to boys and the indicators might not be the same. This can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. Indicators of child criminal exploitation include when a child:

- appears with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- associates with other young people involved in exploitation.
- suffers from changes in emotional well-being.

- misuses drugs and alcohol.
- goes missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- regularly misses school or education or do not take part in education.

Note: The indicators listed above are not exhaustive and further information can be found in Annex B of KCSIE.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

The indicators for CSE and CCE may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines, but there are some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap house or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity
- owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing

Serious violence: all staff should be aware of risk factors and indicators associated with children being at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime, which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence. Indicators include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a decline in academic performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks and may be a risk of CSE. Risk factors include, being male, having been frequently absent from school, having experience child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Note: further information can be found in Preventing Youth Violence and Involvement (2013) and Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines (2020) guidance.

Emotional Abuse:

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may

involve serious bullying (including online bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Other Possible Signs of Abuse:

Whilst far from being an exhaustive list, it is possible that the following 'could' signpost to possible abuse:

- Children who are Self-Harming.
- Children who are suffering from Eating Disorders.
- Children who are suffering from Anxiety.
- Children who are suffering from Mental Health issues.

Radicalisation & Extremism (Inc. Prevent Duty)

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. This known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

The School Leaders Team and DSL should understand the risk of radicalisation in the local area (e.g. Solihull, Birmingham and Warwickshire) and understand that the risk can change quickly because of individual, local, national and international socio-political factors.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

Resources to explain different types of extremism can be found below:

[Islamist extremism](#)

[Right wing extremism](#)

[Left-wing, anarchist and single-issue extremism](#)

Some children may appear engaged with, or have adopted, a mixed or unstable ideology that supports extreme violence. For example, An individual might show an interest in multiple extremist ideologies, target a 'perceived other' (e.g. Involuntary Celibates - who direct their anger mainly at women) but not one terrorist ideology, or are obsessed with massacre without targeting a group (e.g. school shootings).

The internet and social media can be used to target children and spread divisive and hateful narratives. Harmful online behaviour should be acted upon in the same way as offline activity.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people, damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat 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.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalised, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Prevent Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Prevent Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

The process of radicalisation is different for every individual. It can take place over a long period, or it can be very quick.

Children, young people and adult learners who are vulnerable to grooming for sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation or county lines, may also be vulnerable to radicalisation. Factors could include things like being a victim or witness of crime, abuse, or bullying, or having personal or emotional difficulties.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), combined with specific influences from family and peers or online connections, may make someone more vulnerable to radicalisation.

Extremist influences could include, but are not limited to:

- Family member having direct contact or involvement with extremist or terrorist groups
- Staff member of an education or community setting promoting an extremist ideology
- Peers promoting an extremist ideology or sharing extremist material
- Access or exposure to online extremist material via social media or the internet – for example, propaganda including picture, videos, blogs and fake news
- Access or exposure to extremist leaflets, magazine or stickering
- Exposure to extremist groups hosting marches, protest or stalls

However, this list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism. More counter-terrorism critical push and pull risk factors could include:

Push factors:

- Isolated
- They do not belong
- They have a purpose
- Low self-esteem
- Their aspirations are unmet
- Anger or frustration
- A sense of injustice
- Confused about life or the world
- Real or perceived personal grievances

Pull factors:

Pull factors could include an extremist or terrorist group, organisation or individual:

- Offering a sense of community and a support network
- Promising fulfilment or excitement
- Making the child feel special and part of a wider mission
- Offering a very narrow, manipulated version of an identity that often support stereotypical gender norms
- Encouraging conspiracy theories
- Promoting an 'us vs. them' mentality

- Blaming specific community for grievances
- Encouraging the use of hatred and violent actions to get justice
- Encouraging ideas of supremacy

Possible indicators of extremism and/ or radicalisation include:

- Showing sympathy for extremist causes
- Glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- Making remarks or comments about being at extremists' events or rallies outside of school
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisation or other extremists' groups
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups might not be apparent.)
- Secretive behaviour
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles
- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality
- Graffiti, artwork or writing that displays extremist themes
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others
- Verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views
- Advocating violence towards others
- Identity Crisis - the pupil is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
- Personal Crisis – the pupil may be experiencing family tensions; chaotic family background; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; bereavement; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; demonstrating controlling behaviour; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the pupil's country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- Unmet Aspirations – the pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life.
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration.
- Expressing hatred to others or a group.
- Lack of trust in authorities.
- Inappropriate online behaviour (inappropriate internet contact and content).
- Special Educational Need – pupils may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.
- Missing and/or absent from education (inc. attendance and punctuality)

Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in the family or outside, and display concerning behaviour. The Prevent duty does not require teachers or childcare providers to carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but they must take action when they observe behaviour of concern.

General safeguarding principles apply to keeping children safe from the risk of radicalisation as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children' and KCSIE (2023).

28. Mental Health

All staff are aware that 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. Signs of poor mental health, according to [NHS.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) are:

- Significant changes in behaviour
- Ongoing difficulty sleeping
- Withdrawing from social situations
- Not wanting to do things they usually like
- Self-harm or neglecting themselves

School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a DDSL.

29. Attendance and Children Missing Education

Attendance and knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding. Pupils missing or being absent from school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about others safeguarding issues, including criminal and sexual exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) the school has:

1. An Attendance and Children Missing Education policy, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education and during the school day (especially on repeat occasions).
2. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly.
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:
 - a. leave school to be home educated
 - b. move away from the school's location
 - c. remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
 - d. are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
 - e. are permanently excluded

We ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the school but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a pupil leaves the school, we will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date.

Start and End of School Arrangements

The school has procedures in place for pupils' arrival, departure and supervision as set out in the school's Supervision Policies ([Prep School](#) and [Senior School](#)) and [Wraparound Care Policy](#). This includes procedures that the school will follow if Prep school aged children (inc. EYFS) are not collected by 6 pm from Wraparound Care.

30. Further Safeguarding Issues

More information on further safeguarding issues can be found in KCSIE Annex B and issues are outlined below:

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

School staff should notify the DSL when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The DSL will speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the Local Authority. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibilities for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (e.g. neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of the school can raise concerns amongst children and parents.

In the event of such incidents the school will work closely with the Local Authority and Police in communicating safety information to parents and pupils.

Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes that they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides that the school can use to support children.

- [5-11 Year Olds](#)
- [12-17 Year Olds](#)

Children with family members in prison

These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, NICCO provides information designed to support school staff and other professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

See Section 27 and Keeping Children Safe in Education Annex B

County Lines

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the [Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals](#)

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.

Government guidance on identifying the signs and that someone is a victim of modern slavery, the support available to them and how to refer them can be found in the following link.

[Modern Slavery How to Identify and Support Victims](#)

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded
- 'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above. Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

Additional advice can be found at: [Cyber Choices](#), ['NPCC- When to call the Police'](#) and National Cyber Security Centre - [NCSC.GOV.UK](#).

Domestic Abuse (Inc. Operation Encompass)

See Section 27 and Keeping Children Safe in Education for more information

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. If a member of staff or a Designated Safeguarding Lead is concerned about homelessness they should contact the relevant Local Housing Authority and also the Local Authority Children's Services.

So called 'honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital mutilation and Forced Marriage)

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

- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific 15 legal duty on teachers.

If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

See Section 27 and Keeping Children Safe in Education

- Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered without the full and free consent of one 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. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines which focus on the role of schools.

[The right to choose government guidance on forced marriage.](#)

School staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk .

Preventing radicalisation

- The Prevent duty

The school is aware it its duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

[The Prevent duty: an introduction for those with safeguarding responsibilities](#)

Further advice for schools on the Prevent Duty can be found by following the link below:

[The Prevent Duty](#)

West Midlands’s Police CTU Prevent Hub: 0121 251 0241

West Midlands Prevent Referral Form can be found by following the link below:

[Solihull Prevent Referral Form](#)

- Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

[Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: Channel guidance.](#)

Information about Solihull Channel Panel can be found by following the link below:

[Solihull Channel Panel](#)

Solihull Channel Panel Chair: Anthony McGregor 07827 553036

Child on Child abuse

See section 13 and 14

- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

See section 13 and 14

[Further information can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education Section 5.](#)

Upskirting

Upskirting is a criminal offence, 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.

Bullying

Bullying can be a form of child-on-child abuse (including online/cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).

More information can be found the school's [Anti-Bullying Policy](#).

Drugs and Alcohol Misuse

Behaviours linked to drug taking and/or alcohol misuse are safeguarding issues.

More information can be found in the school's [Drugs, Alcohol, Nicotine and Substance Misuse Policy](#)

Health and Well-being

[Further Government guidance can be found on how to promote children mental health and wellbeing.](#)

Also see the [Wellbeing and Personal Development Policy](#), [Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy](#) and associated [Policies](#)

Serious Violence

Serious youth violence can be defined as 'any offence of most serious violence or weapon enabled crime, where the victim is aged 1-19'

Indicators that might indicate that a child is at risk of serious violent crime include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, as significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm, or a significant change in wellbeing, or sign of assault or unexplained injuries.

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the [Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy](#)

Toolkits

There is a toolkit available to support decision making in KCSIE Annex B on:

- Special education needs
- Online sexual behaviour
- Sexual harassment
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Contextual safeguarding

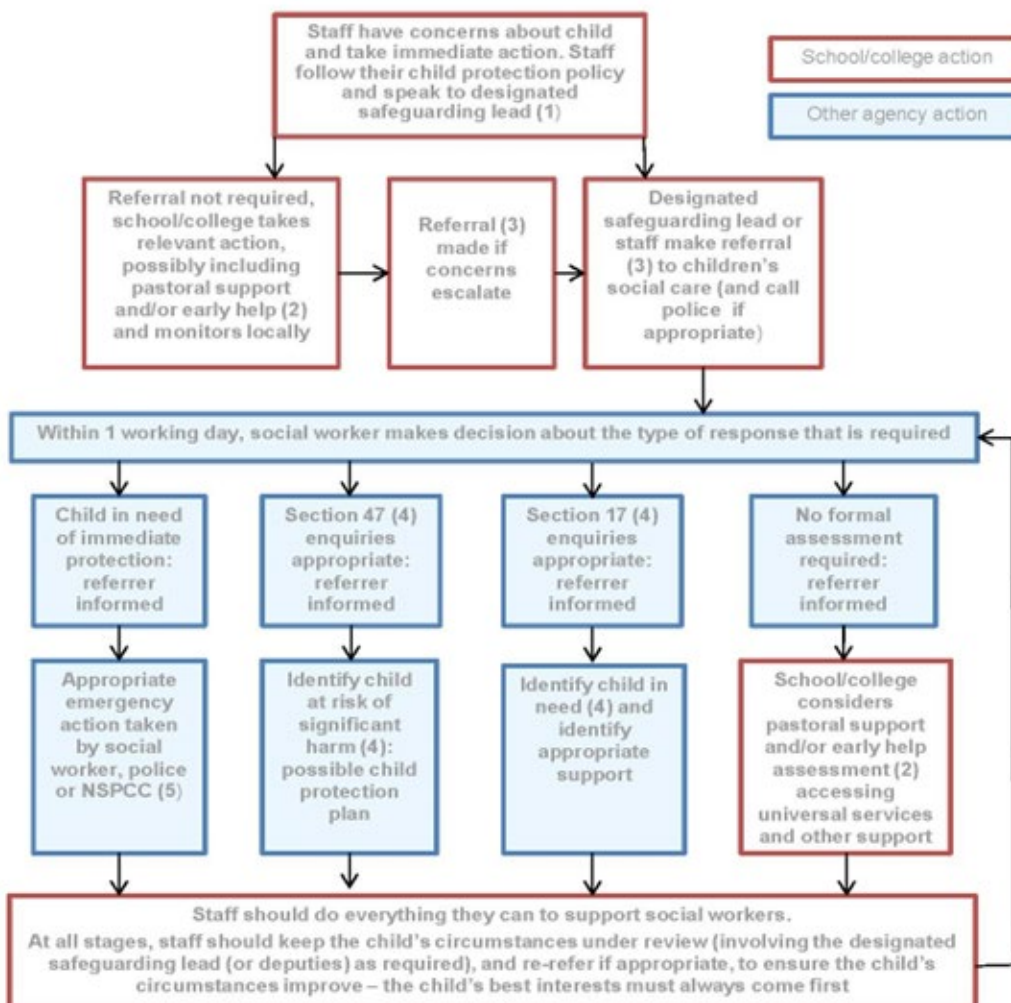
More advice and support can be found on safeguarding issues in KCSIE Annex B.

Policy approved by the Board of Governors –

Board Meeting – 11 October 2023

APPENDIX 1

Actions where there are concerns about a child



- (1) In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.
- (2) Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides detailed guidance on the early help process.
- (3) Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
- (4) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Chapter one of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).
- (5) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO).

APPENDIX 2

DSL Job Description

This Job Description for the DSL can be found in full in KCSIE Annex C: Role of the designated safeguarding lead. A specific job description for the school's DSL is agreed with the DSL upon appointment.

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

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

Deputy designated safeguarding leads

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

Availability

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

Manage referrals

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to refer cases:

- of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme

- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC - When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.

Working with others

The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.
- as required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCO’s), or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children’s needs are considered holistically
- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
- work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children’s attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes:
 - ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and
 - supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children’s educational outcomes.

Information sharing and managing the child protection file

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good

practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Records should include:

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

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice as set out in Part one and Part two of this guidance. Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO's) or the named person with oversight for SEND in colleges, are aware as required.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Raising awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff
- ensure the school's or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements, and
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

Training, knowledge and skills

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

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

Providing support to staff

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

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

Understanding the views of children

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

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

Holding and sharing information

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

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping

Attendance, Missing from Education and Elective Home Education

The DSL/DDSLs also have specific responsibilities related to Attendance, Children Missing from Education and Elective Home Education.

The DSL will ensure that the appropriate local agencies are notified if a child is missing from education, absent without explanation for a period of two days or more and when any child moves to a new school at any point during their time at the school.

The school will work closely with Local Authorities and other professionals in the event of a parent expressing their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating them at home.

APPENDIX 3

Stage 1 – Recording and Logging a Child Welfare, Wellbeing or Child Protection Concerns and / or Incident

a. Staff with access to CPOMS

When you become aware of any child welfare or child protection concern you should log a new incident on CPOMS against the pupil(s) you have concern for. Your concern should be recorded and logged **without delay** and follow the guidance below.

Concern Who, what, when where	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the nature of the incident, concern or disclosure?• Include any relevant background information• Reference any injuries and marks on the body and record on a body map (if applicable)• Record what the child has said in their own words. Use quotation marks to denote child's words.
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What actions have been taken?
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What was the immediate impact of your / the actions?
Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specify a review period• Is further action required?• Are there new or emerging concerns?

b. Staff with no access to CPOMS

If you do not have access to CPOMS you should contact the DSL or a DDSL directly via Reception / Administration without delay. You should follow up any call with a written account of your safeguarding or child protection concern and email it to dsl@solsch.org.uk You might be asked to complete a Logging a Concern Proforma, which are kept in Receptions in the

Head's Wing, Malvern Hall and Alice House. The form will then be logged on CPOMS by a DSL, DDSL or an appropriate Pastoral Lead or member of the School Leadership Team.

You can also and might be asked to complete a proforma form on the next page.

S Hardy (Pastoral Support Manager & Designated Safeguarding Lead) extn 459
hardys@solsch.org.uk



SOLIHULL

LOGGING A CONCERN
SOLIHULL SCHOOL

Only to be used to log a concern about a pupil, if you are unable to access CPOMS

Names of person causing concern:	Year and Form Group(s)	Time and date:
Form completed by:	Handed to:	For the attention of:
Why are you recording this issue/incident/concern?		
Please annotate the following (facts only): - Who? What? Where? When (re: incident)? Witnesses? <i>See body map on the reverse</i>		
Background information that you think may be relevant to how and why this incident/concern has arisen?		

What actions have you taken?	
Please identify anyone else informed as part of this concern?	

Please return this form to Warwick Road, Saint Martin's Reception or Health Centre before you leave the campus

Forms should be passed onto a Form Tutor, DDSL and or DSL in an envelope before the end of the same school day.

The concern should be logged on CPOMS as soon as possible after receipt.

If additional space needed please write on the reverse of this page, dating, timing and signing the additional information.

Stage 2 - Information reviewed by a DSL or DDSL and actions and rationale documented

The following actions should be considered and documented with rationale:

Discuss with child	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss with child• Ascertain child's wishes and feelings where appropriate
Check records	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check health, attendance, behaviour and SEND records for any relevant information
Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take supervision where appropriate (e.g. DSL, DDSL, MASH, SOLAR)
Contact parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact and discuss concerns with parents where appropriate
Refer to MASH Children's Social Care and or Solar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referral to MASH and or Solar
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any other appropriate action (e.g. Internal Monitoring, WatchList)

Stage 3 – Outcomes and reflection are documented

Final outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Document final outcomes, planned (and scheduled) reviews and further actions.• Identify success criteria if appropriate
Feedback to member of staff raising original concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give and record feedback to staff raising original concern (including rationale for information sharing)• Sign post member of staff to further support
Reflect and review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflect and review as part of internal supervision• Reflect and review as part of external supervision• Share best practice• Review policy and procedures

APPENDIX 4

Useful Contacts

- Children's Services 0121 788 4300
- Child Protection Unit 0121 788 4310
- LADO Referrals 0121 788 4310
- Police Family Protection Unit 0121 712 6143
- NSPCC Young Person's Centre 0121 770 3000
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- LA Prevent Lead 0121 704 8282
- NSPCC website: www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect.
- West Midland Anti-Terrorist Hotline 0800 789 321

- Senior Education Improvement Officer: Natasha Chamberlain
Senior Education Improvement Adviser
Early Years and Education Improvement Service
Learning and Skills
Council House, Manor Square
Solihull B91 3QB
Office: 0121 704 6620
- Local Police 101 (999 for emergencies)
- DfE helpline for staff and governors
(non emergency) 0207 3407264
- Counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk
- Childline:
www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111