Healthy **E**mpowered **A**mbitious **R**espectful **T**ogether

Our values are at the HEART of our school

Safeguarding Policy

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Contents:

Policy statement and principles……4

Child protection statement ……5

Definitions and Terminology ……..5

Safeguarding legislation and guidance……6

Categories of Abuse:

- Abuse ……7
- Physical Abuse ……7
- Emotional Abuse ……7
- Sexual Abuse ……..7
- Neglect ……7
- Other Safeguarding Issues …….. 7
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CSE) ……8
- Child on Child Abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment ……..9
- Serious Violence ……10
- Female Genital Mutilation ……10
- Mental Health ……10
- Domestic Abuse ……11
- Operation Encompass……11
- Children who are absent from education ……..11
- Preventing Radicalisation ……12
- Private Fostering …….. 12

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead ……..13
- The Deputy Designated Persons ……14
- The Governing Body ……14
- The Head Teacher ……15
- The Virtual School Head Teacher…….. 15

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct ……15

Abuse of position of trust …… 16

Children who may be particularly vulnerable …… 16

Children Missing from Education (CME) …… 17

- Operation Endeavour …….. 17

Helping children to keep themselves safe …… 17

Support for those involved in a child protection issue …….. 17

Complaints procedure …….. 18

Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague …….. 18

Safeguarding concerns or allegations against staff, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors ……. 18

Staff training …… 19

Safer recruitment …… 20

- Regulated activity …….. 20
- Volunteers …….. 20
- Contractors …… 21
- Site security …… 21

Extended school and off-site arrangements …… 21

Photography and images …….. 21

Online Safety …… 21

Staff/pupil relationships ……22

Child protection procedures

- Recognising abuse ……22
- Impact of abuse …….. 23
- Taking action ……23
- If you are concerned about a child's welfare …….. 23
- If a pupil discloses to you ……..23
- Notifying parents ……..24
- Referral to children's social services ……24
- Confidentiality and information sharing ……24
- The child's wishes …….. 25
- Reporting directly to child protection agencies …….. 25
- Low-level concerns ……25

Work Experience ……..26

Children staying with host families ……26

Appendices

APPENDIX A: Definitions of Abuse and other harmful behaviour …… 29

APPENDIX B: LA and GSCP contacts ……40

APPENDIX C: School Paperwork for recording and reporting concerns …… 42

APPENDIX D: Flowchart for raising safeguarding concerns about a child …….. 43

APPENDIX E: Standards for effective child protection practice in schools …….. 45

APPENDIX F: Frequently asked questions …… 46

APPENDIX G: Online Safety…….. 47

APPENDIX H: Dealing with allegations against people who work with children ……50

APPENDIX I: School child protection files – a guide to good practice …….. 51

APPENDIX J: Template Report for Child Protection Conference …….. 52

Policy statement and principles

Washingwell Primary School fully recognises its responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

We facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. All systems, processes, support and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

It is the responsibility of *every* member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor to our school to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, at all times, work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all of the pupils at this school. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned. Where there is a safeguarding concern, we ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

Washingwell Primary School understands information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes and that we have a clear power to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

This policy is one of a series in the school's safeguarding portfolio which includes for example:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Restrictive Intervention Policy
- Behaviour and Exclusions Policy
- Personal Care Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- SEND Policy
- Children Missing in Education Procedures
- Recruitment and selection (this document will reference your single central record which is statutory*)
- Allegations Against Staff in School Policy and procedures
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Statement
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions guidance
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures *
- Social Media Guidance
- Sex and Relationships Policy*
- Grievance Policy and Procedures

**These policies are statutory*

Ofsted inspectors will consider how well leaders and managers have created a culture of vigilance where children's and learners' welfare are promoted and where timely and appropriate safeguarding action is taken for children or learners who need extra help or who may be suffering or likely to suffer harm. Inspectors will evaluate how well statutory and other responsibilities are met and how well staff exercise

their professional judgement in keeping children and learners safe. This policy contributes to the setting's commitment to all local and national requirements.

This policy is reviewed annually (unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review) and is available on the school website and is stored electronically on Sharepoint – Policies & Procedures. There is a hard copy in the school staffroom and is available to all visitors on request.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- safer children make more successful learners
- that we recognise the need to assess the risk and issues in the wider community when considering the wellbeing and safety of our pupils

This policy applies to all staff, children, parents, Governors, Trustees, volunteers and visitors.

Child protection statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information.

At Washingwell Primary School pupils are taught how to identify risks and stay safe, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities and the school is fully committed to this as part of the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff volunteers, visitors and governors and are consistent with those of the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP).

Policy principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- the school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the wellbeing of its pupils
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support
- Reflects the reflects the whole school/college approach to child-on-child abuse

Policy aims

- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to safeguarding and child protection to pupils, parents and other partners
- To contribute to the school's safeguarding portfolio
- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice

Definitions and Terminology

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.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

Safeguarding legislation and guidance

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This includes the duty that all staff understand that they have a responsibility for "providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge" whether that is within or outside the home, including online (See section on Contextual Safeguarding, page 41 of this policy).

- The **Teacher Standards 2021** state that teachers, including head teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

- The statutory guidance, **Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2026,** covers the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services (including schools and colleges) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also provides the framework for safeguarding partners to monitor the effectiveness of local services, including safeguarding arrangements in schools.

- The statutory guidance, **Keeping Children Safe in Education** is issued under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and colleges must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Unless otherwise stated, 'school' in this guidance means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent, including academies and free schools, alternative provision academies and pupil referral units.

- All staff must including those who do not work directly with children, must read Part One of **Keeping Children Safe in Education** in full and have all been issued with a copy. A record to confirm this is held on Sharepoint - Management. Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's summary of the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

- Section 3 of **the EYFS statutory framework** should expressly be read alongside KCSIE where children aged 0 to 5 attend school-based nurseries or reception classes.

- **What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015 - Advice for practitioners** is non statutory advice which helps practitioners (everyone who works with children) to identify abuse and neglect and take appropriate action. A copy is available in the staffroom.

Due to their day-to-day contact with pupils, school staff are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult in school

when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that all school staff are alert to the signs of abuse and understand the procedures for reporting their concerns. The school will always act on identified concerns.

We recognise that there is an increased emphasis on students at risk of suspension nationally. Within our Behaviour Policy in school, we are committed to considering any suspension through a safeguarding lens.

At Washingwell Primary School we recognise 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.

Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges because:

- there may be assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
- difficulties may arise in overcoming communication barriers.

At Washingwell Primary School we identify pupils who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe by following our school policies and procedures.

Categories of Abuse (see Appendix A for details including 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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

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.

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 verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling or name calling as well as 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 from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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.

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 penetration with an object) 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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males.

Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education

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, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Other Safeguarding Issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that often overlap can put children at risk of harm (including but limited to those listed below).

The following behaviours and indicators can be signs that children are at risk:

- drug taking and/or alcohol abuse
- unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
- serious violence, criminal exploitation (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes through photographs, videos, livestreams, digitally altered images, deepfakes and wholly AI-generated images.

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

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. This can be committed by an individual or an organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. As with CCE, victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a significant concern, as professionals continue to encounter cases where children are manipulated, groomed, and exploited without fully understanding the abuse they are experiencing.

This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. 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. This may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK. In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children who are criminally exploited should have their vulnerabilities recognised by adults and professionals (particularly older children) and should be treated as victims. It is not possible for a child to consent to be exploited, abused or trafficked, and they may not recognise that it is happening to them. It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Staff should be aware of the Tackling Child Exploitation Support Programme new multi-agency practice principles: https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/



Child on Child Abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment and violence
All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying); physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon, sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse; consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi nudes; 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; sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and further guidance can be found in the '*UKCCIS Guidance: Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (2017)'*

As part of this, schools should try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day such as immediately after school. All staff should be aware that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and alleged perpetrator.

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Examples of which are listed below.

- Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys"

This can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny, an unsafe environment for children and worst-case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

As well as knowing how to respond to concerns, all staff should know that child-on-child abuse is preventable. As well as knowing how to recognise behaviours and indicators of risk early, staff should know that timely, evidence-based support can be key to preventing children from going on to commit abuse or violence.

Serious Violence

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation. Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). The designated safeguarding lead should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

Schools play a key role in protecting children from violence, safeguarding victims, as well as those who may be at risk of, or are involved in committing violence (who may also be victims themselves). Staff should be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence. These risks are higher for children with disrupted education (e.g. suspensions, permanent exclusions, time in alternative provision) or a history of offending. Schools should also try to be alert to when children might be at highest risk around the school day (for example, immediately after school). Further information on indicators, risk factors, and protective actions relating to serious violence is provided in the Annex.

Early, evidence-based support for those considered at risk, as well as at critical points when concerns emerge, is vital. This includes access to trusted adults, social and emotional skill support, and, where available, targeted interventions such as mentoring or therapeutic support (practical guidance on evidenced support is available from the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) (the "what works" centre for preventing violence).

Designated safeguarding leads can find further guidance on referrals and when to contact the police in Annex B of KCSIE (Manage Referrals).

Female Genital Mutilation

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific 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 page 173 of KCSIE for further information.

Mental Health

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which education staff are well placed to recognise. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

If staff feel that a child is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it is not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is an information-sharing scheme between the police and relevant education settings operating in all police forces across England and Wales. In November 2025, a new statutory duty was placed on the police to notify a child's education setting, and where relevant, local authorities, if they have reasonable grounds to believe a child may be a victim of domestic abuse. This includes all children connected to a household where they have attended a domestic abuse incident; children who are physically present at the incident, children not physically present during the incident, and situations where a child might reside in another household temporarily or permanently. Operation Encompass report over 2,000 notifications are made to settings every day. Educational settings are often the only consistent support available to some children, especially for those who live in isolated or rural communities. The aim of the duty is to support education settings to provide timely, informed support to children affected by domestic abuse, to ensure the school has up to date information about the child's circumstances and enable immediate support to be put in place according to the child's needs. This places no new responsibilities on education settings. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures or referrals and applies solely to domestic abuse incidents. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare. Forces and educational settings should have an open communication process to determine where a safeguarding referral should be made in accordance with local thresholds. If an officer makes a referral alongside issuing an Operation Encompass notification, they should tell the child's education setting. The duty applies to all children in education from reception (typically aged 4/5) up to the age of 17, and who are enrolled in registered primary and secondary schools, including independent schools, private schools, alternative provision settings (e.g., Pupil Referral Units), as well as further education colleges or 16 to 19 academies in England or Wales. Police forces must notify the local authority if the child is electively home educated or missing from education. Forces may also make notifications to other settings,

for example early years settings or further education provision for young people with SEND, although these are not covered under the duty

Children who are absent from education

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

It is important our response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

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

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
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:
    i. leave school to be home educated
    ii. move away from the school's location
    iii. remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
    iv. are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
    v. are permanently excluded

We will 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.

Preventing Radicalisation

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter- Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard19 to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism". The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in education settings should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 141-210, which are specifically concerned with education (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of three general themes: leadership and partnership, capabilities and reducing permissive environments. The school or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are first assessed by police and may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. Whilst the referral is being assessed, should any further or new information come to light, this should also be passed to police. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse, incidents that may indicate concerns about

serious violence or harmful behaviours and/or details of those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

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 stepparents; 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.

Professionals who are aware that a child is residing in a Private Fostering arrangement have a safeguarding duty to refer the child to Children's Services to ensure that assessment work is progressed.

For further information, see: PRIVATE FOSTERING (gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk)

Roles and responsibilities

Key personnel

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for child protection is:

Alison Hall

email: alisonhall@washingwell.org.uk

tel: 0191 4884400

The deputy designated person(s) are: Vicky Tough; Leanne Erskine: Jade Mustard

email: vickytough@washingwell.org.uk

email: leanneerskine@washingwell.org.uk

email: jademustard@washingwell.org.uk

tel: 0191 4884400

The nominated child protection governor is: Stuart Walker

email: stuartwalker@washingwell.org.uk

tel: 0191 4884400

The Head Teacher is: Alison Hall

email: alisonhall@washingwell.org.uk

tel: 0191 4884400

The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place)

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, receiving annual updates and face to face training every two years
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- encourages a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- has a working knowledge of multi-agency training courses
- makes staff aware of multi-agency training courses and the latest policies and procedures on safeguarding
- has an understanding of locally agreed processes for providing family help and intervention
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- notifies children's social care if a child with a child protection plan has unexplained absence
- ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is sent securely to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained. The pupil's social worker should also be informed of the change in school
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership
- ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated annually, working with governors and trustees
- liaises with the nominated governor and headteacher (where the role is not carried out by the headteacher) as appropriate
- ensures a record of staff attendance at child protection and safeguarding training is maintained
- ensures staff are kept up to date with key priorities within the LA (local authorities), including learning from safeguarding practice reviews
- makes the child protection & safeguarding policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means
- ensures parents are aware of the school's role in safeguarding and that referrals about suspected abuse and neglect may be made
- has the lead role for Operation Encompass in the school and ensures the school meets all requirements set out in the LA procedures
- 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.**

The deputy designated persons:
Are appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

If the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) (or deputy) are not available, staff should contact a member of the leadership team to seek advice. Advice can also be sought from colleagues in the Integrated Referral Team (IRT), on 0191 433 2653

The Governing Body:
The governing body/proprietors will ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training will equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in the school/college are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training will be regularly updated

The governing body/proprietors ensure that the school:

- has safeguarding policy, which is reviewed annually, is available publicly via the school website and has been written in line with local and national guidance
- appoints a DSL for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training
- ensures that the DSL role is explicit in the role holder's job description
- has a child protection policy and procedures
- has a staff code of conduct, which is reviewed annually and made available publicly on the school's website or by other means
- has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the head teacher and allegations against other children
- follows safer recruitment procedures that include statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children and disqualification by association regulations
- is compliant with online safety legislation by regularly reviewing the effectiveness of school filters and monitoring systems.
- develops a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the head teacher, receive information about the school's safeguarding arrangements, staff behaviour policy or code of conduct and the role of the DSL on induction, and appropriate child protection training, which is updated at least annually and will receive regular updates. The DSL receives face to face refresher training at two-yearly intervals as a minimum and accesses an annual update in line with the Local Safeguarding Board requirements. Training should cover online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
- ensures that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers are provided with the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy
- ensures that the school contributes to family help arrangements and inter agency working and plans
- provides a coordinated offer of family help when additional needs of children are identified
- considers how pupils may be taught about safeguarding, including online as part of a broad and balanced curriculum
- upholds the obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Including, not unlawfully discriminating against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics)
- has appropriate arrangements in place to keep children safe when organisations or individuals rent or hire school facilities/premises. Safeguarding requirements will be included in any hire or lease agreement as a condition of use of the premises.

The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the head teacher.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the school's safeguarding, recruitment and managing allegations procedures take into account the procedures and practice of the local authority and Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership and national guidance.

A safeguarding audit will be submitted, as required, to the local authority, including an action plan. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.

The Head Teacher:

- ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- allocates sufficient time, training, support and resources, including cover arrangements when necessary, to enable the DSL and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistle blowing procedures
- ensures that pupils are provided with opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about safeguarding, including keeping themselves safe online

- school leaders and governors ensure that the child's wishes are taken into account when determining action to be taken or services to be provided
- contacts the LADO immediately an allegation is made against a member of staff, seeking advice and then works with the LADO to follow the advice received
- ensures that anyone who has harmed or may pose a risk to a child is referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service and, if a member of teaching staff, to the Teaching Regulation Agency.

The Virtual School Head Teacher:

- the role of the virtual school head includes a non-statutory responsibility for oversight of the attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker
- virtual school heads should identify and engage with key professionals to help them understand the role they have in improving outcomes for children.

Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards pupils we need to agree standards of good practice which form a code of conduct for all staff.

Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- being an active listener
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact, sexual exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing
- asking the pupil's permission before initiating physical contact, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during PE or administering first aid
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between pupils and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with school policy and procedures
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police or children's social care, which will be recorded in on CPOMS
- following the school's rules with regard to relationships with pupils and communication with pupils, including on social media.

Abuse of position of trust

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.
In addition, staff should understand that, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.

The school's Staff Code of Conduct sets out our expectations of staff and is signed by to all staff members.

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions or child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and a reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- displaying early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- looked after or returned home after a period of care
- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs or misusing substances themselves
- asylum seekers
- living away from home or in temporary accommodation
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexuality and gender identity / curiosity
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage
- at risk of being drawn into extremism or being radicalised
- showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- privately fostered
- the fact that a child or a young person may be LGBTQ+ or gender curious is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBTQ+ or gender curious can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBTQ+ or gender curious (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBTQ+. Our school engenders a culture where children can speak out or share their concerns with staff across a range of topics.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive.

Children Missing from Education

Children missing from education (CME) are children of compulsory school age (5-16 years old) who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children Missing from Education (CME) relates to: -

- children of compulsory school age who are thought to have left Gateshead, but their destination is either unknown and/or unconfirmed
- children of compulsory school age who have arrived in Gateshead but whose parents have not sought a school place

Gateshead's Children Missing from Education Policy provides further detail on this. See also:

- DfE's guidance on Children Missing Education
- Regional multi-agency guidance

Operation Endeavour

Our school is fully engaged in Operation Endeavour, which aims to support children and young people who go missing from home. Children who go missing from home are at risk of significant harm and they may be vulnerable to sexual exploitation, violent crime, gang exploitation, or to drug and alcohol misuse. Our school recognises the importance of all staff having an understanding of the risks the impact this can have on children. The school notifies all parents that we are partners with the LA and police in relation to Operation Endeavour and new staff receive a briefing as part of their induction.

Helping children to keep themselves safe

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps prevention. We will therefore raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills to keep them safe, this will include activities to improve their resilience

The school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment and positive ethos where children feel secure, supported and are encouraged to talk, are listened to, can learn, develop and feel valued;
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse, develop resilience and that they know to whom to turn for help.

Support for those involved in a child protection issue

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support pupils, their families, and staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, ensure that lines of communication are maintained
- following the procedures laid down in our child protection, whistleblowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies
- providing access to supervision for those staff dealing with child protection issues.

Complaints procedure

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a pupil or parent raises a concern about poor practice towards a pupil that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Complaints are managed by senior staff, the headteacher and governors. An explanation of the complaints procedure is on our school website.

Complaints from staff are dealt with under the school's complaints and disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Complaints which escalate into a child protection concern will automatically be managed under the school's child protection procedures.

Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague, including supply staff, towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's Whistleblowing Policy is available on our school website in the School Office section under Documents and Policies. This enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the head teacher. Complaints about the Head Teacher should be reported to the chair of governors.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure immediate actions.

For further information and support you can also contact the NSPCC whistle-blowing helpline, their phone number is 0800 028 0285 or view Ofsted's processes and procedures for dealing with whistleblowing referrals here.

Safeguarding concerns or allegations against staff, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, including supply staff, governors, volunteers and agency staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some professionals do pose a serious risk to pupils, and we must act on every allegation.

Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not the default option and alternatives to suspension will always be considered. In some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected. In the event of suspension, the school will provide support and a named contact for the member of staff.

The school allegation procedure will be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including supply teachers and volunteers) in a school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may harm a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- 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 behave in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and in the school's Managing Allegations policy and procedures. The GSCP also has a procedure for managing allegations against staff and volunteers with referral form.

Staff, parents and governors are reminded that publication of material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation is prohibited by law. Publication includes verbal conversations or writing, including content placed on social media sites.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

If staff have an allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers or contractors) that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the school's low-level concerns policy.

Where allegations are concluded to be either, unfounded, false, malicious or unsubstantiated the case manager (and if they have been involved the LADO) may consider the facts and determine whether any lessons can be learned and if improvements can be made.

Staff training

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation. We realise that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. All staff are made aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. We acknowledge that children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. We are therefore committed to regular, robust training that equips staff and governors to identify abuse, to know what to do if they have a concern and to act swiftly.

New staff and governors will receive a mandatory briefing during their induction, which includes the school's child protection policy, behaviour policy, staff behaviour policy, reporting and recording arrangements, safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods, and details for the DSL. We also ensure kinship care is covered in staff training, including for the designated teacher and DSL.

All staff, including the head teacher (unless the head teacher is the DSL) and governors will receive training that is regularly updated. Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership recommends staff receive annual updates and a detailed programme (either online or face to face) at least every three years.

The DSL (and deputies) will receive annual safeguarding training, with subjects to reflect local and national priorities and including a refresher session on their roles and responsibilities every two years.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy and staff code of conduct and have read Keeping Children Safe in education (Part 1)

Supply staff and other visiting staff will be given the school's **summary of the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy,**

Safer recruitment

Our school endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ safe staff by following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education and the school's Staff Recruitment procedures (available on Sharepoint – Management).

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

The school obtains written confirmation from supply agencies or third-party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked. The school advises all agencies of their procedures for dealing with allegations, ensuring agencies are fully aware of the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education in relation to the school having a lead role in the management of any allegations, working with the LADO.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

Regulated Activity
Schools are 'specified places' which means that the majority of staff and volunteers will be engaged in regulated activity. A fuller explanation of regulated activity can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (part three). Statutory guidance on the supervision of activity with children, which is regulated activity when unsupervised, is also included as Regulated activity: removal of the supervision exemption (comes into force 1 September 2026) - GOV.UK

Volunteers
Volunteers may not previously have been in regulated activity if they were supervised by a member of staff. From 1 September 2026, volunteers engaging in regulated activity will need to have an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.
It is an offence for:
- a barred person to engage in regulated activity
- someone to permit a barred person to engage in regulated activity

Schools and colleges need to ensure that any volunteer who is now in regulated activity is not barred from working with children.

Occasional volunteers
Parents or carers who help out occasionally will not need to get an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.
The change only applies to those who work or volunteer in a supervised role with children frequently or:
- on more than 3 days in a 30-day period
- overnight between 2am and 6am

Parents or carers who help out on a less frequent basis will not be affected, for example, parents helping out:
- at an occasional parent teacher association (PTA) event
- on a school day-trip (not overnight)

People who volunteer in multiple settings
Where a person volunteers in multiple settings, each instance of teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising a child counts towards the 'on more than 3 days in a 30-day period' period condition.
If they volunteer for 4 days a month, even if each of the 4 days in that month is in a different school, then they are considered to be in regulated activity.
We encourage schools to work together to decide who should apply for the DBS check. The volunteer can provide details of the check to each school.
At the point of applying for an enhanced DBS check with barred list information, the volunteer should also consider joining the DBS Update Service.
This is free for volunteers and means that:
- applicants can keep their check updated
- employers can check their certificate without applying for a new check

Contractors
The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

Site security
Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations to ensure children in school are kept safe. The head teacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

Extended school and off-site arrangements

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site, we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place (inspecting these as needed), including safer recruitment procedures, and ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school or college on these matters where appropriate.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent and legitimate reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or distributing images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place.

To protect pupils, we will:

- seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
- use only the pupil's first name with an image
- ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
- encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

Online Safety

Our pupils increasingly use electronic equipment on a daily basis to access the internet and share content and images via social networking sites including Facebook, Twitter, MSN, Tumblr, Snapchat and Instagram.

Unfortunately, some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to grooming and enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.

Pupils may also be distressed or harmed by accessing inappropriate websites that promote unhealthy lifestyles, extremist behaviour and criminal activity.

The school's Online Safety Policy, available on our school website in the School Office Section, under Documents and Policies. This explains further our approach to keeping our pupils safe in school when using technology, including appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks and also our expectation around the 4Cs (Content; Contact; Conduct and Commerce). Cyberbullying and sexting by pupils will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures. Serious incidents may be managed in line with our child protection procedures.

- Responsible ICT use by all staff and pupils; encouraged by education and made explicit through published policies.
- Sound implementation of Online Safety policy in both administration and curriculum, including secure school network design and use.
- Safe and secure broadband including the effective management of content filtering
-

The purpose of Internet use in school is to raise educational standards, to promote pupil achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management information and administration systems.

Internet use is part of the statutory curriculum and a necessary tool for learning. It is an essential element in

21st century life for education, business and social interaction. Access to the Internet is therefore an entitlement for pupils who show a responsible and mature approach to its use. Our school has a duty to provide pupils with quality internet access.

Pupils will use the internet outside school and will need to learn how to evaluate internet information and to take care of their own safety and security.

The school Internet access will be designed expressly for pupil use and includes filtering appropriate to the age of pupils.

Pupils will be taught what Internet use is acceptable and what is not, and they are given clear objectives for Internet use.

Internet access will be planned to enrich and extend learning activities.

Staff guide pupils in online activities that will support learning outcomes planned for the pupils' age and maturity.

Pupils will be educated in the effective use of the Internet in research including the skills of knowledge location, retrieval and evaluation.

Pupils will regularly learn about online safety across the Computing and PSHE curriculum.

All staff receive e-safety training and the school's e-safety coordinator is Miss Lauryn Tweedy.

The use of personal electronic devices and mobile phones is not permitted within school. Children in year 5 and 6 who walk home from school independently, may bring a mobile phone into school for safety purposes, but the phone must be switched off and handed into the class teacher at the start of day and collected at the end of day. These are stored securely in locked drawer.

See Appendix G for further details

Staff/pupil relationships

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation

See Handling Allegations of Abuse made Against Employees Policy and Procedures, available on SharePoint – Policies & Guidance

Child protection procedures

Recognising abuse
To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.
The four types of abuse are physical, sexual, emotional and neglect

All school staff need to understand the need to be particularly vigilant, taking advice from the DSL if they believe they identify a child who may need extra support or referred to an external agency. Staff must also ensure they are extra vigilant whilst working in the period post lockdown.

Impact of abuse
The impact of child abuse, neglect and exploitation should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside the school or college. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) will consider the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. Children's social care assessments will consider such factors, so it is important that schools and colleges provide 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.

Taking action
Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary, call 999
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, definitely by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a written record/account via CPOMs, under the category of Child Protection
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare
There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk but have no 'real' evidence. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, or their patterns of attendance may have altered. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk. The signs they have noticed may be due to a variety of factors, for example, a parent has moved out, a pet has died, a grandparent is very ill, or an accident has occurred. It is fine for staff to ask the pupil if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the **CPOMs** under the category of Cause for Concern, to record these early concerns. If the pupil does begin to reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff remains concerned, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

Concerns which do not meet the threshold for child protection will be managed through the Family Help process

If a pupil discloses to you
It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will need to let the pupil know that they must pass the information on** – staff are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. If they jump in immediately the pupil may think that they do not want to listen, if left until the very end of the conversation, the pupil may feel that they have been misled into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During their conversations with the pupil staff will:
- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact – the pupil may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting their listener
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – 'I'm so sorry this has happened', 'I want to help', 'This isn't your fault', 'You are doing the right thing in talking to me'
- not be afraid of silences – staff must remember how hard this must be for the pupil
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the pupil's mother think about all this

- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as 'I do wish you had told me about this when it started' or 'I can't believe what I'm hearing' may be the staff member's way of being supportive but may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next. The pupil may agree to go to see the designated senior person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- write up their conversation as soon as possible on CPOMs – but no later than by the end of the school day.
- seek support if they feel distressed.

Notifying parents
The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.
However, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care.

Referral to children's social care

- **The DSL will make a referral to children's social care** if it is believed that a pupil **is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm.**
- The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.
- Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.
- The DSL should keep relevant staff informed about actions taken, they do not need to share all information, but staff must be confident their concerns have been actioned

If staff have a safeguarding concern that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be shared in accordance with the school's Low-Level Concerns Policy.

Confidentiality and sharing information
All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated senior person, head teacher or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, *Keeping Children Safe in Education* emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.
Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate

- timely
- secure

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Record of concern forms and other written information, not stored on CPOMs, will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort will be made to prevent unauthorised access, and sensitive information should not routinely be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. Child protection information, including Operation Encompass (domestic abuse) or Operation Endeavour (missing) notifications will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the head teacher or DSL

The Data Protection Act and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping a child safe.

The school's confidentiality and information-sharing policy is available to parents and pupils on request, and is available on the school website in School Office under Documents and Policies.

Resources on when and how to share information

The child's wishes.
Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all systems and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Reporting directly to child protection agencies
Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated senior person, their deputy, the head teacher and the chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

Low-level concerns
All concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) will be dealt with promptly and appropriately.

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the criteria indicated in the allegations section above.

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a nagging doubt.

An adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that does not meet the expectation in the staff code of conduct, including conduct outside of school and does not meet the allegations criteria or is not considered serious enough to refer to the LADO.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum; examples could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Using inappropriate language

Low-level concerns about a member of staff should be reported immediately to the DSL/headteacher. If the concern is reported to the DSL, the headteacher should ultimately be informed and make any final decisions on how to respond. Where the concern is about the DSL it should be reported to the headteacher and where it is about the headteacher it should be reported to the chair of the governing board.

Low-level concerns about a supply teacher or contractor should be reported as above.
The DSL/headteacher will notify the employer so that any patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

All low-level concerns will be recorded by the DSL/headteacher using the cause for concern form and stored securely and confidentially.

These records will be reviewed so that any patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified and dealt with.

Work Experience

The school has detailed procedures to safeguard pupils undertaking work experience, including arrangements for checking people who provide placements and supervise pupils on work experience which are in accordance with the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
Students completing work experience that are over 16 must have DBS clearance as it will be classed as regulated activity. Regulated activity with children in England and Wales - GOV.UK Regulated activity: removal of the supervision exemption (comes into force 1 September 2026) - GOV.UK

Children staying with host families

The school may make arrangements for pupils to stay with a host family during a foreign exchange trip or sports tour. In such circumstances the school follows the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, to ensure that hosting arrangements are as safe as possible.

Some overseas pupils may reside with host families during school terms, and we will work with the local authority to check that such arrangements are safe and suitable

Our designated safeguarding lead who has responsibility for Child Protection issues is:
Mrs Alison Hall, Head Teacher
Last trained: September 2025

Deputising arrangements

Mrs Vicky Tough; Mrs Leanne Erskine: Mrs Jade Mustard
Last trained: September 2025; May 2025; November 2025

Lead governor for Safeguarding

Mr Stuart Walker

Last trained: October 2025

Our E-Safety Coordinator is: Miss Lauryn Tweedy

Safer Recruitment and Selection online training

One member of the selection panel for staff appointments must have completed either the on-line or face-to-face safer recruitment training

Currently the following people are trained:

Name & role designation	**Contact details**
Mrs Alison Hall (Head Teacher)	admin@washingwell .org.uk
Mrs Leanne Erskine (Deputy Head Teacher)	admin@washingwell .org.uk

Policy review date:	Date ratified by governors	Date shared with staff
September 2026	November 2026	2 September 2026

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	**Definitions of Abuse and other harmful behaviour**
APPENDIX B	**LA and GSCP contacts**
APPENDIX C	**School Paperwork for recording and reporting concerns**
APPENDIX D	**Suggested LSCB flowchart for raising safeguarding concerns about a child**
APPENDIX E	**Standards for effective child protection practice in schools**
APPENDIX F	**Frequently asked questions**
APPENDIX G	**Online Safety & dealing with indecent or potentially illegal images of children**
APPENDIX H	**Dealing with allegations against people who work with children**
APPENDIX I	**School child protection files – a guide to good practice**
APPENDIX J	**Template Report for Child Protection Conference**

APPENDIX A: Definitions of Abuse and other harmful behaviour

Four categories of abuse

Physical abuse
Physical abuse is 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. (This used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse
Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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 cyber 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.

Sexual abuse
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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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

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

Indicators of abuse

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated senior person.

It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their schoolwork
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL to decide how to proceed.

Additional examples of abuse are outline below, with details provided in Appendix
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, 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.

It is very important that staff report their concerns – they do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological;
- physical;
- sexual;
- financial; and
- emotional.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life.

Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects
- Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
- Safelives: young people and domestic abuse.

Abduction

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

Child sexual exploitation

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, 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. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex;
- can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and noncontact sexual activity;
- can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g., through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

- **GSCP procedure: Children missing from home or care**
- **GSCP Exploitation Framework**: **Exploitation Framework including Screening Tool and risk assessment Tool**

Child criminal exploitation: county lines

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been

trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation:

- can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and
- is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

- **GSCP Procedure:** **Gang Activity, Youth Violence and Criminal Exploitation Affecting Children**
- **GSCP Exploitation Framework**: **MSET Exploitation Framework including Screening Tool and risk assessment Tool**

Cyber-crime

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 skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

Consideration can be made to 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.

Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Honour based violence
So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses 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. All forms of so-called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBV, or already having suffered HBV.

Indicators
There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBV. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found

on pages 38-41 of the Multi agency statutory guidance on FGM (pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools and colleges) Handling case of forced marriage.

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 mandatory reporting duty for teachers
Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information.

Teachers **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e., where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures.

Forced marriage
Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into 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.

School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fco.gov.uk and more information can be accessed at Government guidance on forced marriage

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

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.

Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance.

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive appropriate care. A trafficking case may involve a range of agencies such as the police, local authorities and charities and the NRM makes it easier for these agencies to work together.
If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999. If you receive information on a potential trafficker or you think a child is a victim of trafficking:

- Professionals: contact the Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC)
- General public: contact the NSPCC to discuss concerns with one of our counsellors, or you can contact your local police or children's services (0191 433 2653).

Preventing Extremism

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

A new definition of extremism was published on 14th March 2024:

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:
1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others;
or
2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights;
or
3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).
There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremism. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability.

However, it is possible to protect vulnerable people from extremism. As with other safeguarding risks, 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 and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a referral to Channel.

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of extremism may include:

- showing sympathy for extremist causes
- glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures
- making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school
- evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature
- advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist 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 may 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

The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a 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 should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

Additional support

Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support.

There is additional guidance: Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales that applies to colleges.

Gateshead Prevent Page:

Channel Duty Guidance: Protection vulnerable people from being draw into terrorism

Educate Against Hate

Serious Violence

Children can be at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. Indicators may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in 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 or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. Other risk factors which may increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, are 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.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

Context

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and LGBTQ+ children are at greater risk.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;

- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- 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.

What is Sexual violence and sexual harassment?

Sexual violence

It is important that school and college staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual violence offences under the Sexual Offences Act 200322 as described below:

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: s/he 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.

What is consent?

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g.to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

Children who have experienced sexual violence display a very wide range of responses to their experience, including in some cases clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses, or no overt signs at all. Schools should remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those sighs and show sensitivity to the needs of the child (e.g., about attendance in lessons) irrespective of how overt the child’s distress is.

Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. 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.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names; sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
- non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
- sexualised online bullying;
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats; and upskirting.

Upskirting

‘Upskirting’ 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. It is now a criminal offence.

The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the referral process. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).

There is support available for schools and colleges. Paragraph 43 and Annex A in the Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges advice provides information and links to resources.

Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding has been developed by Carlene Firmin at the University of Bedfordshire over the past six years to inform policy and practice approaches to safeguarding adolescents. Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people’s experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people’s experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

Therefore, children’s social care practitioners need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts

Contextual safeguarding | NSPCC Learning

Additional advice and support

Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures

Regional Procedures: multi-agency safeguarding procedures (pan-regional)

Local Resources and Protocols: https://gatesheadsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/resource-library/

Abuse or Safeguarding issue	Link to Guidance/Advice	Source
Attendance	Working together to improve school attendance	DfE advice
Abuse	What to do if you're worried a child is being abused	DfE advice
	Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance	Home Office
	Faith based abuse: National Action Plan	DfE advice
	Relationship abuse: disrespect nobody	Home Office website

Behaviour	Behaviour in schools	DfE advice
Bullying	Preventing bullying including cyberbullying	DfE advice
Children and the courts	Advice for 5-11-year olds witnesses in criminal courts	MoJ advice
	Advice for 12-17 year old witnesses in criminal courts	MoJ advice
	Children and young people involved with the court system	CAFCASS
Children missing from education, home or care	Children missing education	DfE statutory guidance
	Child missing from home or care	DfE statutory guidance
	Children and adults missing strategy	Home Office strategy
Children with family members in prison	National Information Centre on Children of Offenders	Barnardo's in partnership with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) advice
Child Exploitation	County Lines: criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults	Home Office guidance
	Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners	DfE
	Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked	DfE and HO guidance
	https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/	The Tackling Child Exploitation Support Programme new multi-agency practice principles
Cyber-crime	Cyber Choices	National Crime Agency
Data Protection	Data protection in schools	DfE Guidance
Drugs	Drugs: advice for schools	DfE and ACPO advice
	From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives	Government strategy
	Information and advice on drugs	Talk to Frank website
	ADEPIS platform sharing information and resources for schools: covering drug (& alcohol) prevention	Website developed by Mentor UK
"Honour Based Violence" (so called)	Female genital mutilation: information and resources	Home Office
	Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance	DfE, DH, and HO statutory guidance

	Forced marriage: statutory guidance and government advice	Foreign Commonwealth Office and Home Office
Health and Well-being	Fabricated or induced illness: safeguarding children	NHS
	Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience	Public Health England resources
	Medical-conditions: supporting pupils at school	DfE statutory guidance
	Mental health and behaviour	DfE advice
Homelessness	Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions	MHCLG
Online	Sexting: responding to incidents and safeguarding children	UK Council for Child Internet Safety
Online	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people	UK Council for Child Internet Safety
Private fostering	Private fostering: local authorities	DfE - statutory guidance
Radicalisation	Prevent duty guidance	Home Office guidance
	Prevent duty advice for schools	DfE advice
	Educate Against Hate Website	DfE and Home Office
Relationship Sex and Health	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health	DfE
	Self-help site for teenagers worried about sexual behaviour	The Lucy Faithful Foundation
SEND	Safeguarding Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people	NSPCC
Unaccompanied migrant children	Care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery	DfE advice
Violence	Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges	Home Office advice
	Ending violence against women and girls	Home Office strategy
	Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims	Home Office guidance
	Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges	DfE advice

	Serious violence strategy	Home Office Strategy

APPENDIX B: Local Authority and other contacts

Advice Area	Contact
Discussion about a CP (Child Protection) or child welfare referral and advice on the operation of CP/Safeguarding Procedures, how to refer and where	**If this is a new contact, then please ring: -** **Integrated Referral Team (IRT): 0191 433 2635 or use the online form**
Children's social care	Phone Gateshead Council's Children's Services (in confidence) on: **0191 433 2653** (office hours: Monday - Friday, 8.30am to 5pm) **0191 477 0844** (out of hours, at night, at weekends and bank holidays) The Emergency Duty Team will help with personal or family problems that reach a crisis at these times. All calls go through to the Gateshead Care Call Service where a telephone operator takes all the calls. This service is the contact point for all council services out of hours. If the phone isn't answered straightaway, please be patient as they will be dealing with another call. **In an emergency always call 999.**
Multi-agency safeguarding partnership	**https://gatesheadsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/** **Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership** SafeguardingBoardsBusinessUnit@Gateshead.Gov.UK
Allegations against people working with children What is a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)? - Information Sheet and Flowchart	Michelle Farry (LADO) Tel: 0191 433 8031 Mobile: 07597 527210 Email: LADO@gateshead.gov.uk
Head of Virtual School (Looked After Children)	Adele Brown AdeleBrown@Gateshead.Gov.UK 07732826181
Queries in relation to the model CP policy for schools or related guidance	Tracy Peel – Safeguarding Officer (Education, Schools and Inclusion) Tel: 0191 433 8575 Email: tracypeel@gateshead.gov.uk

MAPPA – Risk Management re individuals who may pose a risk to children	https://mappa.justice.gov.uk/connect.ti/MAPPA/groupHome
Monitoring/Quality Assurance re operation of schools safeguarding arrangements	Anna Harrison (Business Manager – Safeguarding Children Partnership) Tel: 07395 361 053 Email: SafeguardingBoardsBusinessUnit@Gateshead.Gov.UK
Safeguarding Adults	Contact Adult Social Care Direct on 0191 433 7033 or use the **online form**
Police / law and order	Emergency: 999 Non-emergency: 101 Prevent team Tel: 101 Email: specialbranch@northumbria.pnn.police.uk Anti-terrorist hotline 0800 789 321
NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (Mon-Fri 8am-8pm)	Address: Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH Helpline: 0800 028 0285
Disclosure and barring service (DBS)	Address: PO Box 3961, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 4HF customerservices@dbs.gov Tel: 03000 200190
Teacher regulation agency (TRA)	Address: Cheylesmore House, 5 Quinton Rd, Coventry CV1 2WT misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk Tel. Teacher misconduct: 0207 593 5393
OFSTED	whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk Whistleblowing hotline: 0300 1233 155 (8am -6pm Mon-Fri)
Independent Schools Inspectorate	concerns@isi.net Tel: 0207 6000 100
Prevent Referral	Gateshead online page Prevent violent extremism - Gateshead Council Children 0191 433 2653 Adults 0191 433 7033 National Terrorism hotline 0800 789 321 and, in an emergency, always dial 999. For more advice call our Community Safety Team, 0191 433 2701 or email prevent@gateshead.gov.uk

Appendix C: School Paperwork for recording concerns

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. 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.

If staff are in doubt about recording requirements, they should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Appendix D: Flow chart for raising safeguarding concerns about a child *

Designated Safeguarding Lead(s):

Link Governor:

Concern put in writing on CPOMS

Form submitted automatically to correct staff member via CPOMS.

Designated Safeguarding Lead reviews concern form and makes a decision about next steps

The local authority Designated Officer for concerns about adults is:

Michelle Farry (LADO)
0191 433 8031 / 07597527210

Lado@Gateshead.gov.uk

Decision made to monitor the concern.

Decision made to discuss the concern informally with the parents/carers

Decision made to refer the concern to social care

Monitor

Refer

Class teacher asked to monitor child and feedback to the Designated Safeguarding Lead within an agreed timescale

Monitor

Once discussed with parents Designated Safeguarding Lead decides to discuss with parents, monitor or refer to social care

Refer

Designated Safeguarding Lead discusses decision with a senior teacher or the head and agree to refer to social care

Record

Designated Safeguarding Lead keeps concern form in secure, confidential safeguarding file.

Designated Safeguarding Lead keeps concern form in secure, confidential safeguarding file.

If this is a new contact then please ring **IRT 0191 2653** or send a written referral using the **online form**

This section should be included when the school deals with young people who have reached their 18th birthday

*The procedures noted in the chart above are those to be implemented when dealing with a child. If the student is over 18, and is not a danger to themselves, permission must be obtained from the student to share the information they have disclosed with outside agencies.'

We recognise that some procedures are different for those young people and adults over the age of 18 years. Once the student has reached the age of 18, he/she may be classed as a **vulnerable adult.** The definition of this is in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

- A person who has reached the age of 18 and
- is in residential accommodation or sheltered housing
- receives domiciliary care or any form of health care
- is detained in lawful custody
- is by virtue of an order of the court under supervision by a person exercising functions for the purposes of part one of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
- receives the welfare service of an agency outside the College
- receives any service or participates in any activity provided specifically for persons who fall within subsection 9 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2009
- payments are made to him/her (or to another on his/her behalf) in pursuance of arrangements under section 57 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001
- requires assistance in the conduct of his/her own affairs' child (i.e., a pupil at school who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

In general, adult safeguarding procedures should be implemented for 18-year-olds and in these situations Children's Safeguarding should remain equal partners throughout the process so any issues that impact on the service can be addressed. These situations may be complicated by the different procedures' timescales and processes. The shortest timescales should be met

The following pages on the safeguarding website will provide you with more information in relation to safeguarding advice.

https://www.gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk/

https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/1819/Adult-social-care

APPENDIX E: Standards for effective child protection practice in schools

A school should measure its standards with regard to safeguarding against the expectations of the Ofsted Framework (Refer to Education Inspection Framework and Inspecting the curriculum) and the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

In best practice, schools:

1. operate safe recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to DfE guidance on safer recruitment, including the maintenance of a single central register of all staff (including volunteers) with DBS numbers and training record;
2. have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
3. provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties;
4. work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure;
5. are vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and indicators, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals;
6. monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping*, in a secure place*, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences;
7. provide and support child protection updates regularly to school staff and in particular to designated teachers every two years to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date;
8. contribute to an inter-agency approach to child protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies;
9. use the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, taking into account sex and relationships guidance.
10. provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and children and young people on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the school's approach to bullying;
11. have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying - physical, verbal and indirect, and act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that pupils are aware of the school's position on this issue and who they can contact for support;
12. take particular care that pupils with additional needs in mainstream and special schools, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively with particular attention paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are supported to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communicative skills;
13. have a clear policy about the handling of allegations of abuse by members of staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance
14. have a written whole school policy, produced, owned and regularly reviewed by school staff and which clearly outlines the school's position and positive action in respect of the aforementioned standards.

Appendix F: Frequently Asked Questions

What do I do if I hear or see something that worries me?

- *Tell the designated member of staff or head teacher.*
- *If that is not possible, telephone Children's Services (IRT 0191 4332653) as quickly as possible. (In an emergency call 999 for the police)*

What are my responsibilities for child protection?

- ***To know the name of your designated safeguarding lead** and who to contact if they are not available*
- ***To respond** appropriately to a child*
- ***To report** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or directly to Social Care if that is not possible*
- ***To record** your concerns, using your school's agreed paperwork*
- ***Do not do nothing***

Can I go to find someone else to listen?

- *No! You should never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.*

Can I promise to keep a secret?

- *No! The information becomes your responsibility to share in order to protect. As an adult, you have a duty of care towards a child or young person*

Can I ask the child questions?

- *No! Nor can you make judgements or say anything about the alleged abuser; it may be construed as contriving responses.*
- *You **can** ask a child to repeat a statement.*

Do I need to write down what was said?

- ***Yes,** as soon as possible, exactly what was said. Use your school's agreed paperwork and make sure you date and sign the record*

Appendix G: Online Safety Guidance

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- **Content**: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- **Contact**: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- **Conduct**: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

Education

Opportunities to teach safeguarding, including online safety, are discussed in Keeping Children Safe in Education. Resources that could support schools and colleges include:

- **Teaching online safety in school** - DfE guidance outlining how schools can ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online as part of existing curriculum requirements;
- UKCIS has published its **Education for a connected world framework**. Online safety is a whole school and college issue. The framework aims to support the development of the curriculum and is of particular relevance to PSHE education and Computing. It is designed, however, to be usable across the curriculum and beyond and to be central to a whole school or college approach to safeguarding and online safety. It covers early years through to age 18;
- The PSHE Association provides guidance to schools on developing their PSHE curriculum – **www.pshe-association.org.uk**;
- Parent Zone and Google have developed **Be Internet Legends** a free internet safety curriculum with PSHE accredited lesson plans and teaching resources for Key Stage 2 pupils.

Filters and monitoring

Governing bodies and proprietors should be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's or college's IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their school or college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place.

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, governing bodies and proprietors should consider the age range of their pupils, the number of pupils, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks.

The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems are a matter for individual schools and colleges and will be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty. The UK Safer Internet

Centre has published guidance as to what “appropriate” filtering and monitoring might look like: **UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring**.

Guidance on e-security is available from the **National Education Network**. Support for schools is available via the: **schools' buying strategy** with specific advice on procurement here: **buying for schools**.

Whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of the online safety picture for schools and colleges to consider, it is only one part. Governors and proprietors should consider a whole school or college approach to online safety. This will include a clear policy on the use of mobile technology in the school or college. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G, 4G and 5G in particular and the school and college should carefully consider how this is managed on their premises.

Whilst it is essential that governing bodies and proprietors ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they should be careful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding.

Reviewing online safety

Technology in this area evolves and changes rapidly. A free online safety self-review tool for schools can be found via the **360 safe website**. UKCIS has published **Online safety in schools and colleges: Questions for the governing board**

Staff training

Governors and proprietors should ensure that, as part of the requirement for staff to undergo regularly updated safeguarding training and the requirement to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, including an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, that online safety training for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the overarching safeguarding approach.

Information and support

There is a wealth of information available to support schools, colleges and parents to keep children safe online. The following list is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point:

Organisation/Resource	What it does/provides
thinkuknow	NCA CEOPs advice on online safety
Safe sex / healthy-relationships	NSPCC advice on healthy relationships
UK safer internet centre	Contains a specialist helpline for UK schools and colleges
swgfl	Includes a template for setting out online safety policies
internet matters	Help for parents on how to keep their children safe online
parentzone	Help for parents on how to keep their children safe online
childnet cyberbullying	Guidance for schools on cyberbullying
pshe association	Guidance and useful teaching resources covering online safety issues including pornography and the sharing of sexual images

educateagainsthate	Practical advice for parents, teachers and governors on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation.
The use of social media for online radicalisation	A briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq
UKCCIS	The UK Council for Child Internet Safety's website provides: • Sexting advice; • Online safety: Questions for Governing Bodies; • Education for a connected world framework.
NSPCC	NSPCC advice for schools and colleges
commonsensemedia	Independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents
Searching screening and confiscation	Guidance to schools on searching children in schools and confiscating items such as mobile phones

Appendix H: Dealing with allegations against people who work with children

What is a Local Authority Designated Officer or LADO?

The role of the LADO was initially set out in the HM Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 and continues in Working Together 2026.

The LADO works within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

This role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers and all adults outside the school workforce. They capture concerns, allegations or offences; this can include concerns about their own personal life, e.g., incidents of domestic violence or child protection concerns relating to their own family.
If there is an allegation against the Headteacher then concerns should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors and LADO.

The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. They will provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures. **Schools should seek advice from the LADO as soon as an allegation is made and no later than 24 hours.**

The LADO coordinates information-sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible – The LADO for Gateshead is **Michelle Farry.**

LADO@gateshead.gov.uk

Tel: 07597527210 or 0191 4338031

For further information:

- **Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers who Work with Children**
- **What is a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)? - Information Sheet and Flowchart**

Appendix I: School Child Protection Files – a guide to good practice

Child protection file should include:

- Copy of referral form
- Minutes of strategy meetings
- Any written submission to a child protection conference / child protection plan review
- Minutes of child protection conference / child protection plan reviews
- Log of phone calls / contact with parent/carer and professionals

All safeguarding concerns raised with the DSL (whether or not they require referral to Children's Social Care) should be recorded. This should include any action taken by the member of staff raising the concern and also any action taken by the designated person (e.g., talking to child individually, contacting parents, taking advice from other professionals etc). These records should be kept, as with a child protection file, securely, separate to the child's main school file.

At the point of transfer to another school, child protection records should be transferred, securely and directly from DSL to DSL, separate to the child's main school file. School should ensure a record of posting is maintained and that the receiving school records receipt of documents

The main school file should have a 'flag' which shows that additional information is held by the DP.

Appendix J: Template Report for Child Protection Conference

Gateshead Council

Name of child/young person:
DOB:

Report for: Initial child protection conference/Review child protection conference **(delete as appropriate)**

Please note if this is a report for a review child protection conference then it **must** build on the initial child protection conference report.

The report **must** be written in jargon free language and **must** not use acronyms.

It **must** be written in a way that is accessible to all.

You **must** consider the content of this report in terms of risk and confidentiality. Please contact the chair of the conference if in doubt.

Tell us about the child/young person's general presentation in school

Current attendance % and what is the impact on the child	
Number of lates	

Does the child have a ECHP or SEND plan?
Is the child a Young Carer? What is the impact on the child?

Tell us about the child/young person's engagement in learning relationships with staff/relationships with other children/young people
Strengths
Vulnerabilities
Are there any barriers? Please include information about any special educational needs.

Have there been any suspensions please detail below (date/sessions and reason)
What support has been given to the child/young person, so they are better able to manage in school

What are your concerns about this child?
What are you worried may happen to the child/young person if these concerns are not addressed?
What factors may make it more difficult to address any concerns?
Summary and analysis of risk and harm to the child as it relates to the threshold of risk of significant harm:

Parent/carer engagement with school:

(Child/young person's name) views:

Following only needed for review child protection conference reports:

Update on relevant school and parent actions within the Child Protection Plan
Summary and analysis of risk and harm to the child as it relates to the threshold of risk of significant harm:

Name of person completing the report:	
Position	
Date	

This report **must** be shared with parents/carers prior to the initial child protection conference or review child protection conference.

Date report shared with parents/carers:	