



WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING INCORPORATING CHILD PROTECTION

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Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents and carers about this policy when their children join our school and through our school newsletter.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our Staff Code of Conduct. In addition, all members of staff are provided with Part One and Annex A of the statutory guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)', DfE (September 2023).

This policy will be reviewed in full by the DSL and shared with the Governing Body and all staff members on an annual basis.

CONTENTS

Section:

- 1. Purpose & Aims**
- 2. Our Ethos**
- 3. What is Abuse?**
- 4. Roles & Responsibilities**
- 5. Procedures for Managing Concerns**
- 6. Working with Parents & Carers**
- 7. Safer Recruitment**
- 8. Managing Allegations against Staff**
- 9. Other relevant policies**
- 10. Statutory Framework**

1. PURPOSE & AIMS

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure every child who is a registered pupil at our school is safe and protected from harm and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. This means we will always work to take all welfare concerns seriously and always act in the best interests of the child to:

- Protect children from maltreatment;
- prevent impairment of children's **mental and physical health** or development;
- ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

1.2 This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at our school.

1.3 Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children who are registered pupils at our school. This will include recognising when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it and identifying children who may benefit from early help. We also assess the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the wellbeing and safety of our pupils. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

1.4 This policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, governors, volunteers and visitors.

2. OUR ETHOS

2.1 The child's welfare is of paramount importance. Our school will establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children at our school will be able to talk freely to any member of staff if they are worried or concerned about something.

2.2 **'Everyone'** who comes into contact with children and their families has a responsibility in safeguarding children. It is important for children to receive the **'right help at the right time'** to address risks and prevent issues escalating. All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could be happening here'** where safeguarding is concerned.

2.3 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. We will not make promises to any child that we will keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose.

2.4 Throughout our curriculum we will provide activities and opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to identify risks and stay safe. This will also be extended to include material that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills. Our curriculum covers aspects of E Safety through both our Computing Curriculum and PSHE curriculum. We are fully implementing the RSE Curriculum and have consulted appropriately. The school is working in conjunction with the Diocese of Sheffield Academies Trust (DSAT) regarding all elements of safeguarding in school. We also work with RSCP (Rotherham Safeguarding Children Patnership)

2.5 At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018).

Link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729914/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children-2018.pdf

3. WHAT IS ABUSE?

Abuse may fall into a number of categories: - **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.**

Abuse and neglect are forms 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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical Abuse:

This 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.

Emotional Abuse:

This is 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 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:

This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child-on-child abuse) in education and all staff are aware of it and understand the school policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Neglect:

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

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

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

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

All staff are aware that child sexual and child criminal exploitation are forms of child abuse.

Specific safeguarding issues are:

3.1 Early Help and support for children in need:

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. We will work with local agencies in Rotherham to put processes in place for the effective assessment of the needs of individual children who may benefit from early help services. This may be a child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs/Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- Is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- Is frequently going missing from care or from home
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health, domestic abuse; being a young carer
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Has returned home to their family from care; is a privately fostered child
- Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect

Staff in school are aware of children who may benefit from family engagement with Early Help services. Where this is the case, staff will speak with parents and carers about a request for support. Staff in school are trained on how Early Help services can support families and how to make a request for support.

3.2 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old.

School is aware of the common risk factors for FGM which include:

- Low level of integration into UK society
- Mother or a sister who has undergone FGM
- Girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- Visiting female elder from the country of origin
- Being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin
- Talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, if there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM.

FGM is addressed as part of the procedures around ‘**Honour Based Abuse**’ which is defined as “crimes which have been committed to protect and defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including FGM, Forced Marriage and practices such as Breast Ironing”

The school has due regard to the **mandatory reporting duty**, which came into force in October 2015 (Serious Crime Act), of the FGM Act 2003, which places a **statutory duty** on teachers (along with social workers and healthcare professionals) to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 years.

Staff in this school will be vigilant and will report promptly any FGM or other Honour Based Abuse concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

More information on these issues is contained in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)

3.3 Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism (Prevent Duty)

The school has due regard to the **Prevent Duty** Guidance 2015, under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which aims to prevent children and young people from being ‘drawn into extremism and terrorism’.

In our school we use age-appropriate curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet. We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school’s core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

We will engage with parents and families as we are in a key position to spot signs of radicalisation and we will assist and advise those families who do raise concerns and point them in the direction of support mechanisms ie, the Local Authority, Police and/or the **Channel Programme**. We will provide a link, via our school website, to the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) website which provides information on radicalisation for children and young people, their parents/carers and professionals:

www.rscb.org.uk

As with other safeguarding risks, staff will be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff will use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the **Channel** programme.

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation. Referrals to the Channel Panel in Rotherham are via the LA Children’s Social Care Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01709 336080.

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

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or 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, art work 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

More information on Prevent and Channel is contained in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

3.4 Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. As a school we are aware that the predominant issues associated with online safety are:

- Content – exposure to illegal, harmful or inappropriate material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views
- Contact – harmful online interaction with others; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young people
- Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (*the production and sharing of sexual images of under 18s is illegal*), or online bullying

The school recognises that today's pupils are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. The school e-safety policy and day-to-day online e-safety procedures have due regard to the most recent DFE non-statutory guidance entitled 'Teaching online safety in school' (June 2019) this helps teach our pupils how to stay safe online, within both new and existing school subjects (including Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, Health Education, Citizenship and Computing). We teach pupils about the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them to navigate the online world safely and confidently regardless of the device, platform or app.

At our school, we understand the responsibility to educate our pupils about all online safety issues; teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies, in and beyond the context of the classroom. At our school, pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

Since the Covid 19 pandemic, children have been required to access more learning online. We have provided information for parents on keeping their children safe online and have worked with the children in school to ensure they understand this as a priority. Our school Computing curriculum is delivered through the Purple Mash resource in which Online Safety is delivered in the first term for all pupils in school.

We have a separate E-Safety Policy which can be found on the school website.

3.5 Children Missing in Education

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding issues. We monitor attendance very carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay. We will always follow up with parents/carers when children are not at school. This means we need to have a least TWO up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers. We strongly encourage parents/carers to update the school as soon as possible if the contact details change.

All staff in school understand the importance of regular attendance and our school has appropriate procedures to follow for unauthorised absence in place and for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. This helps identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and helps prevent the risks of their going missing in future. All staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage. More information on children missing education is contained in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) 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:
 - a. leave school to be home educated
 - b. move away from the school's location
 - c. remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
 - d. are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
 - e. are permanently excluded

Since the Covid pandemic, more children than usual have been absent from school. All though not classed as CME, staff in school will maintain regular contact with pupils they are not seeing on a daily basis to ensure that they are safe and well.

3.6 Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Children with SEND

Our school understands that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Where there are any concerns raised about the safety and welfare of a child with SEND in our school, we will ensure that these will be treated in the same way as with any other child, with careful consideration of any additional needs.

Mental Health

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. More information can be found in the [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) guidance.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. *At our school, this is done by logging the concerns on CPOMS which will then alert the DSL and SLT. Where staff have serious concerns, they should report them straight away to the DSL or SLT.*

More information on children with SEND and Mental Health is contained in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, and the NSPCC document '[We have the right to be safe – Protecting disabled children from abuse](#)'

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT)

The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT

Risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff

LGBT inclusion is part of the school's Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and PSHE curriculum and there is a range of support available to help schools counter homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and abuse.

3.7 Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents can occur outside of school and can be associated with outside factors. School staff, particularly the DSL and their deputy, will always consider the context of incidents – this is known as contextual safeguarding. Assessment of pupils' behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. The school will provide as much contextual information as possible when making referrals to MASH. School staff are aware of local issues which children in our school may be particularly vulnerable to.

3.8 Criminal exploitation of children and County Lines

The criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that typically crosses county boundaries. Key to identifying potential involvement are 'missing episodes', that is when a child may have been trafficked and/or groomed for the purpose of transporting drugs. Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, this can affect any child under the age of 18, appear consensual and could involve violence or threats of violence and enticement.

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

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

'County Lines' is:

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

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

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

See KCSIE (2022) page 13 and Annex B.

Serious violence

All staff, through training, will be made aware of the indicators which may signal that a pupil is at risk from, or is involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Increased absence from school
- A change in friendships
- New relationships with older individuals or groups
- A significant decline in academic performance
- Signs of self-harm
- A significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault
- Unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions

The most significant risk factors that could increase a pupil's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violent crime are; a history of committing offences, substance abuse, anti-social behaviour, truancy and peers involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour. If any staff member suspects that a child maybe vulnerable to, or involved in, serious violent crime will report it immediately to the DSL.

More information on the criminal exploitation of children and serious crime can be found in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)

3.9 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE 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. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can occur through the use of technology.

CSE can occur in all communities and amongst all social and ethnic groups and can affect girls and boys. Very young children can also be affected or targeted, particularly in relation to online concerns. CSE is a complex form of abuse and it can be difficult for those working with children to identify and assess however, all those working in our school are made aware of the potential indicators of grooming and exploitation and how to refer concerns on appropriately.

The statutory definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be found in the guidance document Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)

The definition, which can be found on KCSIE (2022) page 14, is:

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative 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. Some children may not realise they are being exploited for example they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

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

Potential vulnerabilities include:

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

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

More information on CSE is contained in Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022), [Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners](#) (DfE 2017).

3.10 Child on Child Abuse

Child on child abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in child on child abuse is under the age of 18. 'Child-on-child' abuse can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation), and crucially it does not capture the fact that the behaviour in question is harmful to the child perpetrator as well as the victim.

At our school, we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other children.

All staff in this school are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child on child abuse which is likely to include such things as:

- Bullying, including online/cyber bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- Child on Child Sexual violence and sexual harassment – Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) gives guidance to schools on how to manage reports of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Sexting (also known as 'youth produced sexual imagery')
- Initiation (sometimes referred to as 'hazing') type violence and rituals/gang activity

All staff in this school are clear about the action to take where concerns about child on child abuse arise and all staff will always reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. All staff will be aware that pupils of any age and sex are capable of abusing their peers and will never tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up". We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

A preventative approach

In order to prevent child on child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate pupils about abuse, its forms and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons.

The school will also ensure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE lessons, RSE and group sessions. Such content will be **age and stage of development specific**, and tackle issues such as the following:

- Healthy relationships
- Respectful behaviour
- Gender roles, stereotyping and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- Prejudiced behaviour
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong
- Addressing cultures of sexual harassment

Pupils will be allowed an open forum to talk about concerns and sexual behaviour. They are taught how to raise concerns and make a report, including concerns about their friends or peers, and how a report will be handled.

In cases of 'sexting' we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) published in 2017: 'Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people'.

In cases of 'Upskirting' we recognise that it is an offence under the Voyeurism Offences Act 2019 to operate equipment and to record an image beneath a person's clothing without consent and with the intention of observing, or enabling another person to observe, the victim's genitals or buttocks (whether exposed or covered with underwear), in circumstances where their genitals, buttocks or underwear would not otherwise be visible, for a specified purpose eg; obtaining sexual gratification or to humiliate, distress or alarm a victim. Upskirting will not be tolerated by the school and any incidents must be reported to the DSL who will then decide on an appropriate course of action.

KCSIE 2022 Part 5 and the separate guidance ['Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'](#) sets out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (previously known as 'sexting')

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

All concerns regarding child on child abuse are reported to the DSL immediately and are recorded on CPOMS. The DSL then makes the appropriate referrals and seeks advice. There is a recognition that even if there are no reported cases of child on child abuse such as bullying, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported.

More information on child on child abuse/sexual violence is contained in Part 5 and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)

3.11 Looked After Children (LAC)

A child who is looked after by a local authority (as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989) means a child who is subject to a care order (interim or full care order) or who is voluntarily accommodated by the local authority. Every school must have a named designated teacher for LAC who works closely with the Virtual School Team and the Local Authority. Details on the Designated Teacher for LAC and the policy can be found on the school website.

The most common reason for children becoming looked after⁴⁴ is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

3.12 Private Fostering

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

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

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

3.13 Domestic Abuse

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent and introduced a statutory definition for the first time.

Definition

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

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

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

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person.

(The definition can be found here: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted>)

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse.

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

There are different kinds of abuse that can happen in different contexts. The most prevalent type of domestic abuse occurs in relationships. But the definition of domestic abuse also covers abuse between

family members, such as adolescent to parent violence and abuse. The definition also considers coercive and controlling behaviour. Children and young people are very often the 'hidden' victims of domestic violence and abuse.

As a school we are supporting an initiative called 'Operation Encompass' a partnership between South Yorkshire Police and Education, supported by each Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

Operation Encompass has been designed to provide support for any child in school who may be affected by a domestic abuse incident where the police have attended.

A key safeguarding member of staff in school will be informed when a domestic abuse incident has been recorded within the previous 24 hours or over the weekend. This will enable school to monitor children possibly affected and, where required, support if necessary. This will remain confidential; no information about specific incidents is shared with school. The school will, however, be able to make provision for possible difficulties experienced by children who have been involved in, affected by, or witnessed a domestic abuse incident.

We are keen to offer the best support possible for our children and young people and we believe Operation Encompass will enhance the safeguarding within school. This will be extremely beneficial for all those involved.

Further information on Domestic Abuse and the impact on children are contained within Annex B of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022'.

3.14 Additional safeguarding issues

- Additional guidance on other safeguarding issues such as Substance Misuse, Modern Slavery and Trafficking, Mental Health and many more is contained in Annex B of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022' along with information about the indicators of abuse.

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3.15 Contextual Safeguarding in Rotherham

Understanding the context and circumstances of our children and families helps us to ensure we are able to safeguard our children to the best of our abilities. Within our catchment and local area, the following issues are of concern:

- Domestic abuse
- Poverty/unemployment/poor mental health
- Child sexual exploitation/Child Criminal Exploitation
- Drug and alcohol use
- Poor engagement with services

As a result, our approach is as follows:

Domestic Abuse – we are signed up to 'Operation Encompass'. Parents and carers know that school will be alerted where there has been a domestic incident in the family home. We are then able to offer support to children and families as appropriate. Where children disclose domestic abuse, we refer to MASH and take the advised action. All incidents – both reported and disclosed are logged in CPOMS.

Poverty/Unemployment/Poor mental health – we work closely with parents and carers to ensure that they are receiving benefits which they are entitled to, including FSMs. We provide support through our Pupil Premium allocation where appropriate such as subsidising visits and providing money for school uniform. A symptom of poverty and unemployment is poor mental health. We have systems and processes in school to support children and offer guidance to parents and carers where we know this is an issue. We work closely with EPS, CAMHS, Early Help, Social Care, Mind and CDC to ensure best possible outcomes. We support parents who have limited parenting skills and signpost Early Help where parents and carers are willing to engage. We know that poor parenting skills can often lead to neglect and poor behaviour in school. We liaise closely with outside agencies to support parents and address the issues the children face.

Low educational outcomes in households – Education and skills according to IDACI in our LSOA show that education and skills are among the lowest in the country. We know that this area can impact negatively on attendance, particularly persistent absentees where some families do not appreciate the impact of absence from school. We have further developed our practices as we come out of the pandemic to ensure that we take the appropriate action when attendance is poor and encourage regular attendance. Our policies are based on the LA Attendance Pathway. Low aspiration is also a symptom of low levels of education and skills in households where children can have their life chances limited by their lack of experience. It is important that children receive the best education which offers a broad and balanced curriculum and plentiful opportunities to develop their cultural capital.

CSE/CCE – we know that there has been an issue with CSE and CCE in our local area. Staff attend training on identifying the signs and we are able to make the appropriate referrals where required. We know our families well and are alert to where there have been issues in families and how this may affect younger siblings in the future. CCE/CSE are part of our basic safeguarding training which is delivered to all staff annually.

Drug and alcohol use – The use of drugs and alcohol is often a symptom of other issues such as poverty and poor mental health. Where we feel children may have been at risk due to drug and alcohol misuse in the home, we are confident to discuss this with parents and make the appropriate referrals.

Poor engagement with services – we know that there is a stigma to working with Social Care and Early Help. Whilst we have families working with outside agencies under section 47 and section 17 of the Children's Act, there are many children and families who require support through Early Help but are unwilling to engage. Our universal offer is therefore crucial and we do a lot of work with parents at a school level which ordinarily would be done with Early Help. Although the pandemic has made this more difficult, we intend to resume parenting workshops and direct work as soon as possible.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 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.

4.2 The Local Governing Body and our academy trust – DSAT, are accountable for ensuring the effectiveness of this policy and our compliance with it. Although our Governing Body takes collective responsibility to

safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils, we also have a named governor who champions safeguarding within the school.

4.3 The Governing Body and DSAT will ensure that:

- The safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually, is available publicly via our school website and has been written in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022', Local Authority advice and the requirements of the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) policies and procedures.
- The school contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018); this means working with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.
- The school contributes to multi-agency plans to provide additional support to those children subject to child protection plans. This will mean that we will allow access to children's social care should they need to conduct a section 17 or a section 47 assessment (see chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 for more information on these assessments)
- The school has due regard to the **Prevent Duty** Guidance 2015, under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which aims to prevent children and young people from being drawn into extremism and terrorism.
- The school has due regard to the **mandatory** reporting duty, which came into force in October 2015, of the **Female Genital Mutilation** Act 2003 which places a **statutory duty** on teachers (along with social workers and healthcare professionals) to report to the police where they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18 years.
- A member of the senior leadership team is designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that there is a named deputy member of staff identified to deal with any issues in the absence of the designated safeguarding lead professional. There will always be cover for this role.
- All staff receive a safeguarding induction and are provided with a copy of this policy, Part One and Annex A of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022*' and the school's Code of Conduct.
- All staff and governors undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training that is updated regularly; in addition, all staff members will receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via e-mail, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- Our governing body will also undertake appropriate training to ensure they are able to carry out their duty to safeguard all of the children at our school. Training for Governors to support them in their safeguarding role is available from Governor Development Service or other local training providers.
- Safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with Part Three of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (2022)
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against members of staff and volunteers in line with Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

- They remedy without delay any weakness in regard to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to their attention.
- Ensure all relevant persons are aware of the school's local safeguarding arrangements, including the governing board itself, the SLT and DSL.
- Ensuring that the Single Central Record (SCR) is well maintained.

Safeguarding will be a standing item on Governing Body agendas. Governors will receive regular updates throughout the academic year and a minimum of one full safeguarding report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Updates and the report will show all safeguarding activity that has taken place, for example, meetings attended, reports written, training or induction given. It will not identify individual pupils. DSAT will conduct a safeguarding audit annually which will be reported to the Board of Trustees.

4.4 The Headteacher/Head of School

The Headteacher/Head of School will ensure that the above policies and procedures, adopted by the governing body, are followed by ALL staff. The Headteacher/Head of School is also responsible for:

- Identifying a member of the senior leadership team to be the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- Identifying an alternate member of staff to act as the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in his/her absence to ensure there is always cover for the role;
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and such concerns are addressed sensitively in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing procedures;
- Liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff.
- For ensuring the school is aware of and will follow the local safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensuring that the Single Central Record (SCR) is well maintained.

4.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for safeguarding and child protection. The key role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to:

- understand and keep up-to-date with local safeguarding arrangements
- act as the main point of contact with the three safeguarding partners
- manage referrals from school staff or any others from outside the school
- work with external agencies and professionals on matters of safety and safeguarding
- raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents
- ensure that child protection information is transferred to the pupil's new school
- be aware of pupils who have a social worker
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will carry out their role in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in Annex C of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022'*. The DSL and the Deputy DSL will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role; this training will be updated every two years. In addition to their formal training, the DSL and Deputy DSL will update their knowledge at regular intervals (at least annually) via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads etc.

The DSL and Deputy will provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.

The DSL and Deputies will liaise with and make referrals to Children's Social Care and other agencies where necessary, take part in strategy discussions and other multi-agency meetings and contribute to the assessment of children, including Early Help assessments.

The DSL will maintain detailed, accurate written records of concerns and referrals ensuring that they are kept confidential and stored securely.

When a child leaves our school, the DSL will make contact with the DSL at the new school and will ensure that the child protection file is forwarded to the receiving school in an appropriately agreed manner. We will retain evidence to demonstrate how the file has been transferred; this may be in the form of a written confirmation of receipt from the receiving school and/or evidence of recorded delivery but as CPOMS is the main vehicle for storing safeguarding information it may be done electronically.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow. They will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection information during induction and have been trained to the appropriate level recommended by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 and the Rotherham LSCP.

5. PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING CONCERNS

5.1 The school adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the new Safeguarding Partnership. The three local safeguarding partners that have established arrangements to work together with all appropriate agencies are;

1. Local Authority
2. Clinical Commissioning Group
3. The Chief Police Officer

5.2 It is *not* the responsibility of school staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, has a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

5.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our school. Any member of staff or visitor to the school who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL or, if unavailable, to the Deputy DSL. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

5.4 If a child is in **immediate danger or risk of harm**, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police immediately. Anyone can make a referral but in situations where referrals are not made by the DSL, they should be informed as soon as possible afterwards that a referral has been made by someone else.

5.5 All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing using the agreed reporting procedure in this school. This information should all be recorded on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System).

5.6 Following receipt of any information raising concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from Children's Social Care - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as required. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

5.7 All referrals will be made in line with Rotherham LSCP online child protection procedures.

5.8 If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, we will consider following the Rotherham LSCP escalation procedures to ensure our concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

5.9 Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with MASH, or the police, if the situation is an emergency and the DSL, their deputy and the Headteacher are all unavailable and they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety.

5.10 Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point should contact the MASH directly with their concerns.

5.11 If staff members have concerns about another staff member then this should be referred to the headteacher or Head of School. Where there are concerns about the headteacher or Head of School, this should be referred to the chair of governors or DSAT.

5.12 Where there are concerns about the way that safeguarding is carried out in the school, staff should refer to our Whistleblowing Policy (see policy on school website) and on the staff notice board.

6. WORKING WITH PARENTS & CARERS

6.1 The school is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to support them to understand our statutory responsibilities in this area.

6.2 When new pupils join our school, parents and carers will be informed that we have a safeguarding policy. A copy will be provided to parents on request and is available on the school website. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to MASH.

6.3 We are committed to working with parents positively, openly and honestly. We ensure that all parents are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents' rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have consent or it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard a child from harm. Our responsibility is to promote the protection and welfare of all children and our aim is to achieve this in partnership with our parents.

6.4 We will seek to share with parents any concerns we may have about their child *unless* to do so may place that child at increased risk of harm. A lack of parental engagement or agreement regarding the concerns

the school has about a child will not prevent the DSL making a referral to MASH in those circumstances where it is appropriate to do so.

6.5 In order to keep children safe and provide appropriate care for them, the school requires parents to provide accurate and up to date information regarding:

- Full names and contact details of all adults with whom the child normally lives;
- Full names and contact details of all persons with parental responsibility (if different from above);
- Emergency contact details – at least two in order to be able to make contact with a responsible adult should a concern arise ie, illness, not being collected at the end of the school day, a child going missing or a safeguarding concern.
- Full details of any other adult authorised by the parent to collect the child from school (if different from the above).

The School will retain this information on the pupil file. The school will only share information about pupils with adults who have parental responsibility for a pupil or where a parent has given permission and the school has been supplied with the adult's full details in writing. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

7. SAFER RECRUITMENT

7.1 At all times the Headteacher/Head of School, Governing Body and DSAT will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of Part Three of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022'*. We have written recruitment and selection policies and procedures in place and we always ensure that at least one member of every interview panel, when recruiting new staff, has completed safer recruitment training (as per the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009). We will take advice from DSAT HR Department to ensure we access training and updates as required.

7.2 We will use the recruitment and selection process to deter, reject or identify unsuitable candidates. Part Three of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 describes in detail those checks that are, or may be, required for any individual working in any capacity at, or visiting, the school. We will always act reasonably when making decisions about the suitability of any prospective employee based on checks and evidence, including criminal record checks (Disclosure and Barring Service), barred list checks and prohibition checks (for teaching posts), together with references and interview information. As part of our recruitment processes, we will undertake online checks of candidates and will not accept the use of CVs.

7.3 We will maintain a Single Central Record of all safer recruitment/pre-appointment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements. The Single Central Record will contain information on all staff members on the following:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check/certificate
- A prohibition from teaching check
- A section 128 check (for management positions in independent schools (including free schools and academies))
- A check of professional qualifications
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK

- Further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK
- Any other relevant information we feel should be included on the SCR such as volunteers, childcare disqualification, safeguarding and safer recruitment training records etc.

Safer Recruitment training is available to all relevant staff and governors who are involved in the recruitment process.

STAFF CONDUCT AND THE USE OF 'REASONABLE FORCE'

7.4 Guidance about acceptable conduct and safe practice will be given to all staff and volunteers during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children. There are circumstances, however, when it is appropriate for staff in our school to use 'reasonable force' to safeguard children and young people.

7.5 'Reasonable Force' covers the broad range of actions used by our staff that involves a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. Staff in our school will be trained in how to use reasonable force and a list of those who have been trained will be kept by the Headteacher.

8. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

8.1 Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for the children at our school. We do recognise however that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to concerns being raised about their behaviour or an allegation of abuse being made.

8.2 Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.

8.3 We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in our school are safe to work with children (this includes governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff). We will always ensure that appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is sought. The LADO is a statutory post appointed by the Local Authority who is responsible for co-ordinating the response to concerns that an adult who works with children may have caused or could cause harm to children.

8.4 If an allegation is made or information is received about an adult who works in our school which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Headteacher/Head of School immediately. This would also include where relationships and 'associations' that staff have in school and outside (including online) may have an implication for the safeguarding of children in our school. Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher, this will be reported to the Chair of Governors & DSAT. The guidance in KCSIE (Part Four) should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers and volunteers has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or

- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- Any 'low level' concerns should be logged, even if they do not meet the threshold for harm

8.5 The Headteacher/Head of School or Chair of Governors will seek advice from the LADO within one working day and will ensure that we will take part in further information gathering, discussions and allegation meetings as required by the LADO. No member of staff or the governing body will undertake further investigations before receiving advice from the LADO.

8.6 Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns with the Headteacher/Head of School or Chair of Governors should contact the LADO via MASH on 01709 336080.

8.7 Referral to DBS

The school will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed a child or poses a risk of harm to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed an offence and has been removed from working in regulated activity. The duty will also apply in circumstances where an individual is deployed to another area of work that is not in regulated activity or they are suspended.

8.8 Low Level Concerns about Staff Behaviour

Allegations or concerns about an adult working in the school whether as a teacher, supply teacher, other staff, volunteers or contractors

We recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the headteacher without delay; any concerns about the headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors or to DSAT (abradley@dsat.education) .

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors should be reported to the headteacher/Head of School.

Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

The headteacher/Head of School has to decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see below). If a referral is made to LADO then it should also be reported to the contractor's employer.

Allegations

It is an allegation if the person* has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (also includes behaviour outside the school).

(*Person could be anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.)

Allegations should be reported to the LADO 'without delay' via MASH.

Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school or college, or a combination of these.

Low-level Concerns

Concerns may be graded Low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation; and the person* has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher/principal should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

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

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing, including:

- name* of individual sharing their concerns
- details of the concern
- context in which the concern arose
- action taken

* if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible)

Records must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Schools and colleges should decide how long they retain such information, but it is recommended that it is kept at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

9 RELEVANT POLICIES AND TRAINING

9.1 All staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

9.2 To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school are appropriately safeguarded the following policies are also included under our safeguarding umbrella:

- Safeguarding policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour
- Recruitment & Selection
- Whistle-blowing
- Attendance and Children Missing Education
- E-safety
- Health and Safety including site security
- Equality Policy
- Meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions
- Intimate Care
- First aid
- Educational visits including overnight stays

10. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’](#) DfE (2018)
- [‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’](#) DfE (2022)
- [Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#) July 2018
- [‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused?’](#) NSPCC
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/what-if-suspect-abuse/>
- Education Inspection Framework <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif>
- [Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Useful Contact numbers and e-mail addresses/websites:

Local Authority Children's Social Care – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for all referrals, advice and support including referral to Early Help and Family Engagement services:

- 01709 336080

South Yorkshire Police non-emergency number – 101
In an emergency ring 999

[Rotherham LSCP](#)

National Helplines/Websites:

NSPCC Confidential helpline – 0808 800 5000
help@nspcc.org.uk

Childline – 0800 1111

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/?gclid=CIm4ldHXl8wCFYdAGwodwhEM5g>

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/>

[educateagainsthate.com](https://www.educateagainsthate.com)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation>

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