



# Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

## 2025-2026

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**CHAIR'S SIGNATURE:**

**HEAD'S SIGNATURE**

# Policy Statement

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is of paramount importance and is everyone's responsibility.

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, always, work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all the pupils at this school. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

We recognise that staff at Silverdale School play a particularly important role as they can identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. **All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.** When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the 'best interests' of the child.

Our school will establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children will be able to talk freely to any member of staff at our school if they are worried or concerned about something.

All staff and regular visitors will, through training and induction, know how to recognise indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure/allegation from a child and how to record and report this information. We will not make promises to any child, and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose/allege.

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.

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 (2023) and local safeguarding partners' procedures.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually (as a minimum) and is available on the school website or from the school office.

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE 2024). Statutory guidance
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children* (2023). Statutory guidance
- *Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation* (HM Government, July 2020). Statutory guidance
- *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* guidance (DfE September 2021). Statutory guidance
- *Children Missing Education* (DfE September 2016). Advice for schools

- *Children Missing Education* (DfE August 2024). Guidance for Local authorities
- *Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage* (DfE Jan 2024). Statutory guidance
- *Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales* (HM Government 2023). Statutory guidance
- *Guidance (non-statutory) for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings*. (Safer Recruitment Consortium February 2022)
- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused* (HM Government March 2015). Advice for practitioners
- *Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers* (HM Government, May 2024)
- Local authority/safeguarding partnership advice and guidance
- *Working together to improve school attendance* (guidance applies from August 2024)

### **Policy statement and principles**

#### **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. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow procedures to ensure that children receive effective support and protection.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is of paramount importance and is everyone's responsibility.

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.

We recognise that staff at our school play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. **All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.** When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the **best interests** of the child.

Our school will establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children will be able to talk freely to any member of staff at our school if they are worried or concerned about something.

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Our curriculum provides 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.

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 (2023) and local safeguarding partners' procedures.

### **Policy aims**

- To demonstrate the school's commitment regarding safeguarding and child protection to pupils, parents and other partners
- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To maintain the highest standard of a culture of safeguarding within Silverdale School

This policy is reviewed and updated annually (as a minimum) and is available on the school website or from the school office.

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

## **DEFINITION OF SAFEGUARDING**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

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

### ***Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024***

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Effective safeguarding means practitioners should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families' lives.

### ***Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023***

## TRAINING AND INDUCTION

**All** new members of staff or volunteers will be informed of safeguarding procedures, including the recording and reporting procedures as part of the induction process.

They will receive safeguarding training within the first half term of joining the school. This programme will include information relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, online safety, how to manage a disclosure/allegation from a child, how to record concerns and the role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). The training will also include information about whistleblowing in respect of concerns about another adult's behaviour and suitability to work with children.

In addition to the safeguarding induction, we will ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' DfE.

To achieve this, we will ensure that:

- All members of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training on an annual basis, including online safety.
- We will evaluate the impact of this training.
- All members of staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff briefings / meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- All regular visitors, temporary staff and volunteers to our school will be given an induction and a leaflet outlining our safeguarding procedures; they will be informed of who the DSL and deputies are and what the recording and reporting system is. (See Appendix A).

The Governing Board 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 are effective and support a robust school approach to safeguarding. The training will be regularly updated.

We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance, Annex B of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' provides links to guidance on specific safeguarding issues. In addition, throughout the school year we will brief staff on key issues identified by the school.

All staff are expected to read these key documents and fully **understand** their responsibility to keep children safe:

- Part One and Annex B of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' DfE;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Whistleblowing policy;
- Safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education;
- Role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies).

## Opportunities to teach safeguarding

We will teach children how to keep themselves safe, including in relation to contextual factors.

Preventive education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares children for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny / misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence / harassment and preventing radicalisation.

This will be underpinned by our Relational Policy and pastoral system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE / PSHE delivered and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum.

The three core themes of: Health and Wellbeing; Relationships and Living in the Wider World are taught over and within the curriculum. Within these themes, the overarching concepts which are developed in the PSHCE scheme of work are:

- **Identity** - their personal qualities, attitudes, skills, attributes and achievements and what influences these; understanding and maintaining boundaries around their personal privacy, including online.
- **Relationships** - including different types and in different settings, including online and the importance and understanding of what constitutes a healthy relationship.
- **A healthy balanced lifestyle** (including physically, emotionally and socially) - including within relationships, work-life, exercise and rest, the importance of hobbies, spending and saving and lifestyle choices including drug, alcohol and tobacco education.
- **Risk** - identification, assessment and how to manage risk, rather than simply the avoidance of risk for self and others and **safety** - including behaviour and strategies to employ in different settings, including online in an increasingly connected world.
- **Diversity** and **equality** - in all its forms, with due regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- **Rights** - including the notion of universal human rights and **responsibilities** - including fairness and justice and **consent** in different contexts.
- **Change** - as something to be managed and **resilience** - the skills, strategies and 'inner resources' we can draw on when faced with challenging change or circumstance.
- **Power** - how it is used and encountered in a variety of contexts including online; how it manifests through behaviours including bullying, persuasion, coercion and how it can be challenged or managed through negotiation and 'win-win' outcomes.
- **Career** - (including enterprise, employability and economic understanding (following guidance from The Gatsby Frameworks 2019/20)).

Many aspects of these concepts are covered across various curriculum areas - in particular, in topic, Science, PE, Computing and R.E. Most aspects are taught through discrete PSHE sessions and Circle Time.

## PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

### What staff should do if they have a concern about a child

All staff **must** report **any** concerns they have about a child and not see these as insignificant. Staff should **not** assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share the concern.

On occasions, a referral can be justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure/allegation of abuse. More often however, concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the DSL to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity.

A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

Staff **must** immediately report **any**:

- Suspicion that a child is injured, marked, or bruised in a way which is not readily attributable to the normal knocks or scrapes received in play / everyday, normal activities
- Explanation given which appears inconsistent or suspicious
- Behaviours which give rise to suspicions that a child may have suffered harm (e.g. worrying drawings, play, actions);
- Concerns that a child may be suffering from inadequate care, ill treatment or emotional maltreatment
- Concerns that a child is presenting signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect
- Significant changes in a child's presentation, including non-attendance
- Hint or disclosure/allegation of abuse from any person
- Concerns regarding person(s) who may pose a risk to children (e.g. living in a household with children present);

Children can sometimes show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to. All staff should be aware of this and remain vigilant.

### What staff should do if a child is in danger or at risk of harm

If staff are concerned that a child could be at risk of harm, they must report to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputies (DDSL) **immediately**.

If this is not possible, they should make a direct referral to children's social care.

### What staff should do if they have a concern about honour based abuse (HBA), including FGM

If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the DSL. As appropriate, the DSL will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

Where FGM has taken place, there has been a **mandatory reporting duty** placed on teachers since 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015. 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 in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure/allegation 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.

Further information can be found in the [Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#) and the [FGM resource pack](#) particularly section 13.

### **Responding to disclosure/allegation**

Disclosures/allegations or information may be received from children, parents or other members of the public. School recognises that those who disclose/allege such information may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Accordingly, all staff will handle disclosures/allegations with sensitivity.

Such information cannot remain confidential, and staff will immediately communicate what they have been told to the DSL.

Staff will not investigate but will, wherever possible, elicit enough information to pass on to the DSL in order that s/he can make an informed decision of what to do next.

Staff will:

- Listen to and take seriously any disclosure/allegation or information that a child may be at risk of harm
- Try to ensure that the person disclosing/alleging does not have to speak to another member of school staff
- Clarify the information
- Try to keep questions to a minimum and of an 'open' nature e.g. 'Can you tell me what happened?' rather than 'Did x hit you?'
- Try not to show signs of shock, horror or surprise
- Not express feelings or judgments regarding any person alleged to have harmed the child
- Explain sensitively to the person that they have a responsibility to refer the information to the DSL
- Reassure the child that they will be taken seriously, supported and kept safe
- Listen to and consider (wherever possible) the child's wishes and feelings about the current situation as well as future plans
- Ask any necessary questions to determine the child's wishes and feelings
- Explain that only those who 'need to know' will be told
- Explain what will happen next and how the child will be involved (as appropriate);
- Ensure there is appropriate support made available

The 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/allegation 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. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff.

All concerns about a child should be reported without delay and recorded in writing using the agreed procedures. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff **must** discuss this with the DSL.

Following receipt of any information that raises concern, the DSL will consider what action to take and seek advice from children's social care as required. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions will be recorded in writing.

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

All referrals will be made in line with local children's social care procedures.

The school adheres to child protection procedures that have been agreed locally through the local safeguarding partners. Where we identify children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with local threshold guidance.

If, at any point, there is a **risk of immediate serious harm** to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care **immediately** and **if a criminal offence has been committed contact the police**. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, then the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration by raising concerns again with the DSL and/or the Headteacher. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, or the police if:

- The situation is an emergency and the DSL, their alternative and the Headteacher are all unavailable.
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety.

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 governing board. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point, then they should contact children's social care directly with their concerns.

## **Vulnerability**

Staff should consider children who may be particularly vulnerable to abuse and may require early help.

This could include:

- Any child with additional needs including children with Special Educational Needs /

Disabled children (SEND)

- Children facing housing issues such as frequent moves and homelessness
- Those living in families with chaotic lifestyles
- Families with increased stress, parental mental ill health and/or drug and alcohol dependency
- Those children living elsewhere, with friends, relatives, privately fostered, in care or are leaving care
- Asylum seekers / refugees
- Those vulnerable to discrimination based on a protected characteristic
- Children living in households with domestic abuse
- Children at risk of so called 'honour'-based abuse including FGM and forced marriage
- Children with communication difficulties
- Children without adequate parenting/supervision which could lead to abuse, risk-related behaviour and exploitation
- Children who identify as LGBT will be provided with a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff
- Children who have experienced multiple suspensions, are at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.

A child who is:

- A young carer
- Showing signs of being drawn into anti-social and/or criminal behaviour/involved in gangs
- Frequently missing from school/home/care home
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- At risk of being radicalised
- At risk of being exploited (criminal/sexual)
- Showing signs of neglect and abuse
- At risk of modern slavery/trafficking.

This is not an exhaustive list but merely an example of vulnerabilities that staff must consider when identifying safeguarding concerns.

### **Early help assessment**

Staff will be alert to the need of supporting pupils through the early help planning processes if early help assessment and intervention is required. This will occur as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. If an early help assessment is appropriate, the DSL (or deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment, as appropriate.

Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment and, in some cases, where education is the fundamental factor, act as the lead practitioner.

Early help assessments should be kept under review and referred to children's social care for assessment if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

### **Statutory children's social care assessments and services**

Concerns about a child's welfare will be referred to the local authority children's social care by the DSL. **Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) will be made immediately.**

Referrals will follow the local authority referral process.

The DSL should be aware of the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult while a child is being questioned by the police. The appropriate adult will "support, advise and assist" the young person, and also "observe whether police are acting properly and fairly to respect [the

young person's] rights and entitlements and inform the officer of the rank of inspector or above if they consider that they are not". Further information can be found in the statutory guidance – PACE Code C 2023.

Where a child in school has a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan, the school will liaise with children's social care, attend meetings and provide comprehensive and detailed reports.

All reports for Child in Need/Child Protection conferences will be prepared in advance, using the guidance and report template. The information contained in the report will be shared with parents before the conference as appropriate. To complete such reports, all relevant information will be sought from staff working with the child in school. All staff should be prepared to contribute to the report writing process.

## CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

Children can abuse other children. This is now referred to as child-on-child abuse and can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school online and face to face. There may also be reports where the children concerned attend two or more different schools.

Child on child abuse will not be tolerated. All staff will take a zero-tolerance approach to any abusive behaviours and will stop and challenge inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which may be sexual in nature. We recognise that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse that such abuse may still be taking place and all staff should be vigilant.

A difficult feature of child-on-child abuse is that the perpetrators could be victims themselves and possibly are being abused by other family members, other adults and children.

In cases where child on child abuse is identified we will follow our procedures for dealing with concerns, recognising that both the victim and perpetrator will require support.

The school takes the following steps to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse:

- Promoting an open and honest environment where children feel safe and confident to share their concerns and worries
- Using the Relationship, Sex and Health Education and PSHE Curriculum to educate and reinforce our messages through stories and other activities
- Ensuring school is well supervised, especially in areas where children may be vulnerable or have identified they are vulnerable
- Ensures staff are aware of the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and how to identify them
- Addresses inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively minor)
- Has clear robust policies on dealing with key issues of behaviour such as cyber bullying
- Ensures staff and children are aware of the policies
- Ensures robust supervision and be aware of potential risky areas in the school
- Increases supervision during key times
- Takes steps to prevent isolation
- Separates children if needed
- Where risk is identified, an individual child risk assessment is put in place, reviewed and updated appropriately.

Each alleged incident will be recorded, investigated and dealt with on an individual basis based on the following principles:

- All information will be recorded in writing using the agreed procedures (by completing a Child Protection Concern form on Behaviourwatch)
- All children involved (victim and alleged perpetrator) in school will be spoken to separately by the DSL
- Where the incident also involves a child at a different establishment the DSL will ensure effective liaison and information sharing
- All children involved (victim and alleged perpetrator) will be appropriately supported throughout the process
- The DSL will balance the child's wishes against their duty to protect the child and other children
- The school will work with our local safeguarding partners where appropriate
- The DSL may need to go against the victim's wishes and make a referral to children's social care or the police. This will be handled sensitively, the reasons explained to the victim and appropriate support made available
- Parents will be informed of the incident and how their child will be dealt with and supported (unless this would put a child at greater risk).

Victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported in the following ways:

- Support will be tailored on a case-by-case basis
- All children involved will be supported by an allocated member of staff
- The needs and wishes of the victim will be taken into account, along with protecting the child
- Wherever possible, the victim and witnesses will be able to continue their normal routine.
- The victim will never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report
- All reasonable steps will be taken to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment
- Adequate measures will be put in place to protect the children involved and keep them safe
- A needs and risk assessment will be made, and a safety plan put in place when required which will be reviewed and adapted where necessary
- Early help assessment, children's social care and other agencies will support where appropriate.

Research tells us girls are more frequently identified as being abused by other children, and girls are more likely to experience unwanted sexual touching in schools. Boys are less likely to report intimate relationship abuse. Boys report high levels of victimisation in areas where they are affected by gangs. There is an increasing evidence base emerging about the sexual exploitation of

boys (both by adults and children). We recognise that both boys and girls experience child on child abuse but can do so in different ways.

We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways such as:

- Child Sexual Exploitation / Child Criminal Exploitation
- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Physical abuse
- Radicalisation
- Abuse in intimate friendships / relationships
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Gang associated and serious violence
- Initiation / hazing type violence and rituals
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and /or videos
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Upskirting (which is a criminal offence).

There are several factors that make children more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse:

- Experience of abuse within their family
- Living with domestic violence
- Young people in care
- Children who go missing
- Children with additional needs (SEN and/or disabilities).

Some of the reasons why children abuse other children:

- The child may have been emotionally, physically, or sexually abused themselves.
- The child may have witnessed physical or emotional abuse.
- The child may have viewed sexually explicit / violent movies, video games or other materials.
- The child may have just acted impulsively without meaning to harm anyone; Relationship abuse is unacceptable behaviour between any two people.

## Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos

The term 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' is used to mean the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by children under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline.

The term 'nudes' is used as it is most recognised by children and more appropriately covers all types of images sharing incidents.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated. Such images may be created and shared consensually by children who are in relationships, as well as between those who are not in a relationship. It is also possible for a child in a consensual relationship to be coerced into sharing an image with their partner.

Incidents may also occur where:

- Children find nudes and semi-nudes online and share them claiming to be from another child
- Children digitally manipulate an image of a child into an existing nude online
- Images created or shared are used to abuse other children e.g. by selling images online or obtaining images to share more widely without consent to publicly shame.

The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes can happen publicly online, in 1:1 messaging or via group chats and closed social media accounts.

Nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams may include more than one child. Creating and sharing nudes and semi-nudes of under-18s (including those created and shared with consent) is illegal which makes responding to incidents involving children complex. There are also a range of risks which need careful management from those working in education settings.

Many professionals may refer to 'nudes and semi-nudes' as:

- Youth produced sexual imagery or 'youth involved' sexual imagery indecent imagery. This is the legal term used to define nude or semi-nude images and videos of children under the age of 18
- 'Sexting'. Many adults may use this term, however some children interpret sexting as 'writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know' rather than sharing images;
- Image-based sexual abuse. This term may be used when referring to the non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.

## **Initial response**

When an incident involving nudes and semi-nudes comes to the attention of any member of staff:

- Confiscate the phone and switch it to 'flight mode' – if possible
- The incident should be referred to the DSL (or deputy) as soon as possible with the phone
- The DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This may include the staff member(s) who heard the disclosure/allegation and the safeguarding or leadership team who deal with safeguarding concerns
- There will be subsequent interviews with the children involved (if appropriate)
- Parents and carers will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process in order to best support the child unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put the child at risk of harm
- A referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately if there is a concern that a child has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm at any point in the process.
- A disclosure/allegation may not be a single event, and the child may share further information at a later stage.

Any direct disclosure/allegation by a child should be taken seriously. A child who discloses/alleges they are the subject of an incident of sharing nudes and semi-nudes is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure/allegation in school is a last resort and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves.

## Initial review meeting

The initial review meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to establish:

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

An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care through the MASH (multi-agency safeguarding hub) or equivalent will be made if at this initial stage:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs)
- What you know about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The images involve sexual acts and any child in the images or videos is under 13
- You have reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, for example, they are presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

The DSL should be aware of the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult while a child is being questioned by the police. The appropriate adult will "support, advise and assist" the child, and "observe whether police are acting properly and fairly to respect [the child's] rights and entitlements, and inform the officer of the rank of inspector or above if they consider that they are not". Further information can be found in the statutory guidance – PACE Code C 2023.

If none of the above apply, the DSL may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. They can still choose to escalate the incident at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed later.

The decision to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care will only be made in cases where the DSL is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to any child involved and the risks can be managed within the school's support and disciplinary framework and, if appropriate, their local network of support.

## Assessing the risks

The circumstances of incidents can vary widely. If at the initial review stage a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL (or equivalent) should conduct a further review (including an interview with any child involved) to establish the facts and assess the risks.

When assessing the risks and determining whether a referral is needed, the following should be also considered:

- Why was the nude or semi-nude shared? Was it consensual or was the child put under pressure or coerced?
- Has the nude or semi-nude been shared beyond its intended recipient? Was it shared without the consent of the child who produced the image?
- Has the nude or semi-nude been shared on social media or anywhere else online? If so, what steps have been taken to contain the spread?
- How old are any of the children involved?
- Did the child send the nude or semi-nude to more than one person?
- Do you have any concerns about the child's vulnerability?
- Are there additional concerns if the parents or carers are informed?

The DSL will decide whether a child is at risk of harm, in which case a referral will be appropriate, whether additional information or support is needed from other agencies or whether the education setting can manage the incident and support any child or young person directly. The DSL will always use their professional judgement in conjunction with that of their colleagues to assess incidents.

## Supporting the child involved

The DSL or another member of staff (who the child feels more comfortable talking to) will discuss future actions and support with the child. This discussion will consider the views of the child as well as balancing what are considered to be appropriate actions for responding to the incident.

The purpose of the discussion is to:

- Identify, **without viewing wherever possible**, what the image contains and whether anyone else has been involved
- Find out whether the image has been shared between two people or shared further. This may be speculative information as images or videos may have been shared more widely than the child or young person is aware of
- Discuss what actions and support might be needed, including preventing further distribution.
- When discussing the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, the DSL/member of staff will:
- Reassure the child that they are not alone, and the school will do everything that they can to help and support them. They should also be reassured that they will be kept informed throughout the process
- Recognise the pressures that children can be under to take part in sharing an

image and, if relevant, support their parents and carers to understand the wider issues and motivations around this

- Remain solution-focused and avoid any victim-blaming questions such as 'why have you done this?' as this may prevent the child from talking about what has happened. For example, they will use questions such as 'describe what happened' or 'explain to me who was involved'
- Help the child to understand what has happened by discussing the wider pressures that they may face and the motivations of the person that sent on the image(s)
- Discuss issues of consent and trust within healthy relationships. Explain that it is not ok for someone to make them feel uncomfortable, to pressure them into doing things that they do not want to do, or to show them things that they are unhappy about. Let them know that they can speak to the DSL or equivalent if this ever happens.
- Explain the law on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes. It is important to highlight that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them and should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.
- Signpost to the IWF (Internet Watch Foundation) and [Childline's Report Remove tool](#);
- Report Remove helps children and young people to report an image shared online, to see if it is possible to get the image removed. This must be done as soon as possible in order to minimise the number of people that have seen the picture.

### **Informing parents and carers**

Parents or carers will be informed and involved in the process at an early stage unless informing them will put a child or young person at risk of harm. Any decision not to inform the parents or carers will be made in conjunction with other services such as children's social care and/or the police, who would take the lead in deciding when they should be informed.

### **Supporting parents and carers**

Children and young people can be involved in an incident in several different ways. They may lose control of their own image, receive an image of someone else or share an image of another person. In any of these situations, parents and carers may find it difficult to know how to deal with the knowledge that their child has been involved in an incident and may display differing emotions.

Whatever their feelings, it is important that we listen to their concerns and take them seriously. We will also help to reassure parents and carers by explaining that it is normal for young people to be curious about sex.

In all situations, parents or carers will be:

- Given information about the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, what they can expect to happen next, and who will be their link person within the school
- Given support to deal with their own feelings of upset and concern including signposting to further resources that can help them to understand the sharing of

- nudes and semi-nudes or support services they can contact, where appropriate
- Given support on how to speak to their child about the incident
- Advised on the law around the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes
- Kept updated about any actions that have been taken or any support that their child is accessing, unless the child involved has specifically asked for this not to happen and is judged to be old enough to make that informed decision
- Informed about sources of support for their child, in case they are feeling anxious or depressed about what has happened. This could include speaking to a Childline counsellor [online](#) or on 0800 11 11 or a GP. If they are concerned that their child is suicidal, they should contact 999
- Directed to [NCA-CEOP](#) if the child discloses/alleges any further details to them that may suggest they are being groomed or sexually exploited.

### **Searching devices, viewing and deleting nudes and semi nudes**

Staff and parents or carers must not intentionally view any nudes and semi-nudes unless there is good and clear reason to do so as outlined below.

Wherever possible, responses to incidents will be based on what DSLs have been told about the content of the imagery.

The decision to view any imagery will be based on the professional judgement of the DSL. Imagery will never be viewed if the act of viewing will cause significant distress or harm to any child or young person involved.

If a decision is made to view imagery, the DSL would need to be satisfied that viewing is:

- The only way to decide about whether to involve other agencies because it is not possible to establish the facts from any child involved.
- Necessary to report it to a website, app or suitable reporting agency to have it taken down, or to support the child or parent or carer in making a report.
- Unavoidable because a child has presented it directly to a staff member or nudes or semi-nudes have been found on an education setting's device or network.
- If it is necessary to view the imagery, then the DSL will:
- Never copy, print, share, store or save them; this is illegal. If this has already happened, we will contact the local police for advice and to explain the circumstances.
- Discuss the decision with the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team.
- Ensure viewing is undertaken by the DSL or another member of the safeguarding team with delegated authority from the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team.
- Ensure viewing takes place with another member of staff present in the room, ideally the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team. This staff member does not need to view the images
- Wherever possible, make sure viewing takes place on the school premises, ideally in the headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team's office

- Ensure wherever possible that they are viewed by a staff member of the same sex as the child or young person in the images
- Record how and why the decision was made to view the imagery in the safeguarding or child protection records, including who was present, why the nudes or semi-nudes were viewed and any subsequent actions. This will be signed and dated
- If any devices need to be taken and passed onto the police, the device(s) will be confiscated, and the police will be called. The device will be disconnected from Wi-Fi and data and turned off immediately to avoid imagery being removed from the device remotely through a cloud storage service. The device will be placed in a secure place, in a locked cupboard until the police are able to come and collect it.

If nudes or semi-nudes have been viewed by a member of staff, either following a disclosure/allegation from a child or young person or because of a member of staff undertaking their daily role (such as IT staff monitoring school systems), the DSL will make sure that the staff member is provided with appropriate support. Viewing nudes and semi-nudes can be distressing for both children and adults and appropriate emotional support may be required.

In most cases, children and young people will be asked to delete the imagery and to confirm that they have deleted them. They will be given a deadline for deletion across all devices, online storage or social media sites. They will be reminded that possession of nudes and semi-nudes is illegal. They will be informed that if they refuse or it is later discovered they did not delete the imagery, they are continuing to commit a criminal offence, and the police may become involved.

All incidents relating to nudes and semi-nudes being shared will be recorded using the school's procedures. Copies of imagery should not be taken or stored.

It is important that children and young people understand the school's policy towards nudes and semi-nudes. The content of this policy and the protocols the school will follow in the event of an incident will be explored as part of teaching and learning. This will reinforce the inappropriate nature of abusive behaviours and reassure children that school will support them if they experience difficulties or have concerns.

**For more information:** [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)

## CYBERCRIME

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly

categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- Denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources;
- 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. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the **Cyber Choices** programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

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.

Additional advice can be found at: [NCA Cyber choices](#), [NPCC- When to call the police](#) and [The National Cyber Security Centre](#)

The Prevent duty requires all education providers 'to help prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism'. This includes safeguarding learners from extremist ideologies and radicalisation. Exploitation and radicalisation are safeguarding concerns and will be dealt with in the appropriate way.

Extremist influences could include, but are not limited to:

- family members having direct contact or involvement with extremist or terrorist groups.
- staff members of an education or community setting promoting an extremist ideology
- peers promoting an extremist ideology or sharing extremist material.
- access or exposure to online extremist material via social media or the internet - for example, propaganda including pictures, videos, blogs and fake news.
- exposure to extremist, terrorist or other violent activity in overseas settings.
- access or exposure to extremist leaflets, magazines or stickering.
- exposure to extremist groups hosting marches, protests or stalls.

All staff should look out for concerning changes in behaviour and report them to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

### **The Counter Terrorism & Security Act (2015):**

This Act places a duty on specified authorities including schools, Further and Higher Education, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism otherwise called 'the Prevent duty'.

### **Definitions**

1. **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

2. **Extremism** is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as: Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different 3 faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

3. **Extremism** is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as: The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts;

- Foster hatred, which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

4. There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

5. Learners may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

6. Indicators of vulnerability include:

- Identity Crisis – the learner is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society
- Personal Crisis – the learner may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging
- Personal Circumstances – migration, local community tensions and events affecting the learner’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy
- Unmet Aspirations – the learner may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling of failure; rejection of civic life
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment and poor resettlement / reintegration
- Special Educational Need – learners may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

7. More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.

## **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 (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes, and networks that young people can come across online so particular individuals / groups may not become apparent)
- 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 • 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

## **Procedure for referrals:**

The Point of Contact for school is The Headteacher (DSL) or Attendance and Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of the school are aware and work together to protect students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism, or forms of extremism, which lead to terrorism
- Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism
- Attending Channel meetings as necessary, or ensuring that the school is represented, and carrying out any actions as agreed
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner with appropriate personnel and/or local agencies.

## **Role of the Head teacher It is the role of the Head Teacher to:**

- ensure that the School and its staff respond to preventing radicalisation on a day-to-day basis
- ensure that the School curriculum addresses the issues involved in radicalisation
- ensure that staff conduct is consistent with preventing radicalisation

## **Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead**

It is the role of the designated safeguarding lead to:

- ensure that staff understand the issues of radicalisation, that they are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns
- receive safeguarding concerns about learners who may be vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation or are showing signs of radicalisation
- make referrals to appropriate agencies with regard to concerns about radicalisation
- liaise with partners, including the local authority and the police

## **Role of staff**

It is the role of staff to understand the issues of radicalisation, that they are able to recognise the signs of vulnerability or radicalisation and know how to refer their concerns.

## **Curriculum**

We are committed to ensuring that our learners are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. We encourage our learners to be inquisitive learners who are open to new experiences and are tolerant of others. Our values support the development of the whole child as a reflective learner within a safe respectful learning environment. 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.

## **Online Safety**

The internet provides children and young people with access to a wide-range of content, some of which is harmful. Extremists use the internet, including social media, to share their messages. The filtering systems used at our school blocks inappropriate content, including extremist content. Where staff, learners or visitors find unblocked extremist content they must report it to a senior member of staff. We are aware that children and young people have access to unfiltered internet when using their mobile phones. Learners are not allowed access to their phones during the school day as they are handed to staff upon entry.

## **CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES OR CERTAIN HEALTH ISSUES**

Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with SEND are significantly more likely to be abused than their peers.

Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children. These can include:

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

Staff will support these children in expressing any concerns they may have and will be particularly vigilant to any signs or symptoms of abuse. The DSL and SENDCO will work together when dealing with reports of abuse involving children with SEND.

## MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following our child protection policy, and staff **MUST** speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

We will ensure that our staff understand the support they can provide to pupils who may be experiencing mental health concerns, and we will ensure that staff follow the following principles as set out in 'Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools 2018'. We recognise that early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

**Prevention:** we will seek to create a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos

**Identification:** we will support staff and pupils to recognise emerging issues as early and accurately as possible

**Early support:** we will support and help pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions wherever possible and seek access to specialist support for those pupils who require such interventions.

## RECORDING, RECORD KEEPING AND INFORMATION SHARING

**All** concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing on the agreed reporting form (Appendix L) and where applicable logged on the school's electronic system)

Each record should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- A list of any actions taken immediately in response to the incident or concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of each action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- Information from a child written verbatim
- Date and signature / record of who completed the record

If there is any doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.

**All** concerns should be passed to the DSL **without delay**, either written or verbal (followed as soon as possible by a written report).

Child Protection information will be kept in a separate Child Protection file for each child, stored in a separate secure cabinet [and / or electronically on the school Safeguarding Platform. Settings will ensure that Child Protection information is secure and can only be accessed and viewed by those permitted to]. Only Child Protection information will be kept in the file and this file will be kept up to date. Records of concern, copies of referrals, invitations to Child Protection conferences, core groups and reports will be stored here. All Child Protection files will include:

- a chronology
- a contents front cover
- will record significant events in the child's life.

Child Protection files will be the responsibility of the DSL and Head teacher. Child Protection information will only be shared with relevant staff / agencies on a 'need to know' basis, in the child's interests and on the understanding that it remains strictly confidential.

When a child leaves our school, the DSL will contact the DSL at the new school and will ensure that the child protection file is forwarded to the receiving school in an agreed secure manner. This should be as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days at the start of a new term to allow a school or college to have support in place for when a child arrives. We will retain evidence to demonstrate we have acted accordingly when dealing with safeguarding matters and how the file has been transferred; this will be in the form of a written confirmation of receipt from the receiving school and/or evidence of recorded delivery. Where a parent elects to remove their child from the school roll to home educate, the school will decide to pass any safeguarding concerns to the Local Authority. Where child protection files are electronic the DSL will speak with the DSL of the receiving school and ensure they are aware of the protection concerns.

All sharing of information will follow our GDPR policy.

## PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT STAFF

### **What staff should do if they have safeguarding concerns about another member of staff**

If staff have safeguarding concerns or an allegation of abuse is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) posing a risk of harm to children this should be reported to the Headteacher. Where there are concerns about the Headteacher this should be referred to the chair of the governing board.

In the event of concerns/allegations about the Headteacher, or where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the Headteacher, this should be reported to local authority designated officer (LADO).

### **What staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school**

The school will maintain a safeguarding culture which encourages all staff and volunteers to feel able to raise concerns. Where staff have concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding systems, these should be raised following the school's whistleblowing policy. Contact details are on the Key External Contacts page.

## MANAGING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND

### Allegations that meet the harms threshold

All allegations will be investigated thoroughly and as a matter of urgency. They will be dealt with quickly, fairly and consistently. Protection will be provided for the child and the person subject to the allegation will be supported.

We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in the local authority arrangements for managing allegations and Part 4 of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*', DfE are adhered to and where appropriate, we will seek advice from the LADO.

Allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in school would apply when staff (including volunteers and supply staff) have (or alleged to have):

- 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.

The last bullet point includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk.

Where appropriate, an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person works will be undertaken. If in doubt we will seek advice from the LADO.

When an allegation is made against an adult that meets the above criteria it should be reported immediately to the Headteacher who is the 'case manager'.

This includes allegations made against agency and supply staff, volunteers and contractors. Should an allegation be made against the Headteacher, this will be reported to the chair of the governing board.

If neither the Headteacher nor chair of the governing board is contactable on that day, the information must be passed to and dealt with by either the member of staff acting as Headteacher / the DSL or the vice chair of the governing board or the LADO.

The case manager will conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures and KCSIE to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the

allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion involving the police and / or children's social care will be convened.

Cases of suspected abuse will be referred to children's social care.

The case manager will immediately discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. Where the case manager deems there to be an immediate risk to children or a criminal offence has been committed, the police will be contacted immediately. All discussions agreed actions and communications will be recorded in writing using the cause for concern form. The LADO should be informed within one day of any allegations made to the case manager and any actions taken.

If the initial discussion leads to no further action, the case manager and the LADO will record the decision and justification for it and agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned.

The case manager will ensure that the individual who is subject to the allegation is informed as soon as possible explaining the likely course of action guided by the LADO, and the police where necessary. The case manager will appoint a named representative to keep the person informed about the progress of the case and consider any appropriate support.

The case manager will ensure that parents of the child or children involved are formally told about the allegation as soon as possible and kept informed of the progress of the case, only in relation to their child. They will be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality and unwanted publicity about any allegations made against teachers in schools whilst investigations are in progress.

The case manager will monitor the progress of the case to ensure that it is dealt with as quickly as possible in a thorough and fair process.

The case manager will carefully consider whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children at the school, or until the allegation is resolved. It will be considered only in cases where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the school is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious it might be grounds for dismissal. The case manager will seek views from

HR and the LADO, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved. Where an individual is suspended, they will be provided with a named contact in school.

The case manager will discuss with the LADO whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) should be made where an allegation is substantiated, and the person is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services or resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services.

The school has a legal obligation to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required; where it considers an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child; or if a person poses a risk to a child.

In the case of a member of teaching staff, the case manager must consider making a referral to the TRA to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

If an allegation is made against a supply teacher, agency worker or contractor, the Headteacher will liaise closely with the agency involved. The Headteacher will ensure that any allegations are dealt with following the school's procedures and in liaison with the LADO.

If an allegation is made against a governor, the Headteacher will follow local authority arrangements for managing allegations, liaising with the LADO.

Details of allegations following an investigation that are found to have been malicious or false will be removed from personnel records, unless the individual gives their consent for retention of the information. For all other allegations a written record of details of the investigation and the outcome will be retained in the individual's personnel file in line with KCSIE and a copy provided to the individual.

In cases where allegations are proven to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious the LADO and case manager will consider whether the person who made the allegation needs help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. A referral to children's social services may be deemed appropriate.

Allegations proven to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious will not be included in employer references.

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Headteacher will consider whether disciplinary action should be taken against a child, or whether the police should be asked to consider action against an adult.

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

On conclusion of a case in which the allegation is substantiated, the case manager and the LADO will review the case to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures or practices to help prevent similar events in the future.

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the

police. Non recent allegations of abuse should be reported to the LADO who will liaise with other agencies. Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago it happened.

### **Low-level concerns**

Please refer to our [Low Level Concerns Policy \(SILVP0131\)](#) for full details.

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 or tone
- Low-level concerns about a member of staff should be reported immediately to the Headteacher. Where the concern 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 Headteacher will notify the employer so that any patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

All low-level concerns will be recorded by the 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.

## SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work.

All staff will be provided with a copy of our school's Code of Conduct at induction which sets out the school's expectations of staff behaviour. We will review our Code of Conduct regularly and ask staff to ensure that they are familiar with the current version. Staff are expected to carry out their duties in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

There will be occasions when some form of physical contact is inevitable, for example if a child has an accident or is hurt or is in a situation of danger to themselves or others around them.

However, at all times the agreed policy for positive handling must be adhered to.

If staff, visitors, volunteers or parent helpers are working with children alone they must ensure they are visible to other members of staff. They will be expected to inform another member of staff of their whereabouts in school, who they are with and for how long. Doors, ideally, should have a clear glass panel in them and be left open.

Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct in school and outside of school, online and offline, which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

Further advice can be found in 'Guidance for safer working practices for adults who work with children and young people in education settings' (2022). All staff and volunteers are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

We will ensure that the Headteacher and at least one member of the governing board have completed appropriate safer recruitment training. At all times the Headteacher and governing board will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE.

The school will follow the recruitment and selection procedures when making decisions about the suitability of prospective employees. This will include conducting the relevant checks, including an online search as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates. Any information identifying any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, will be explored with the applicant at interview. Appropriate references and information will be sought prior to interview and before any job offers. As staff will be engaging in a regulated activity by working with children, they will undergo a DBS check before they commence employment.

We will maintain a Single Central Record of all safer recruitment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements.

We will continue to be vigilant in school and encourage staff to discuss matters both within, and where it is appropriate, outside of the workplace, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children.

### **Visitors**

The school has clear protocols for visitors to ensure they are suitable and supervised as appropriate.

All visitors will be expected to confirm they have an appropriate DBS and will be asked to show photo ID on arrival. The school will keep a record of all visitors.

Visitors will be expected to understand that the school promotes British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and that they will need to uphold these during their visit.

For some visits, the school will request a copy of the material to be used to assess its content and relevance to the age group.

If during the visit the supervising member of staff deems the content to be inappropriate, they will stop the visitor and discuss an alternative approach.

During the visit, visitors will be supervised by a member of school staff. Where the visitor will be working on a one-to-one basis with a child, specific safeguarding arrangements will be put in place.

## MANAGING SAFEGUARDING

### The Governing Body

The Governing Body is 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.

Governing bodies and proprietors will ensure that all Governors and Trustees 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 schools and colleges are effective. The training will be regularly updated.

The Governing Board 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 local authority guidance and the requirements of the local safeguarding partners' policies and procedures
- The school contributes to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- The school is compliant with online safety legislation by regularly reviewing the effectiveness of school filters and monitoring systems
- They uphold the obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their 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)
- A senior member of staff from the leadership team is designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection and that there is a deputy DSL(s) who is appropriately trained to deal with any issues in the absence of the DSL. There will always be cover for this role
- All staff receive a safeguarding induction and are provided with a copy of this policy and the staff code of conduct
- All staff undertake appropriate child protection training that is updated regularly, at least annually
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against members of staff, volunteer and contractors, in line with statutory guidance
- Safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE;
- Governors remedy without delay any weakness in regard to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to their attention
- Appropriate arrangements are 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 Board will receive an annual safeguarding report that will detail the

training that has taken place and will inform the Governing Board how the school meets its statutory requirements.

The Governing Board will undertake a range of safeguarding visits over the year to monitor safeguarding compliance.

The Governing Board will receive an annual safeguarding report that will detail the training that has taken place and will inform the Governing Board how the school meets its statutory requirements.

The Governing Board will undertake a range of safeguarding visits over the year to monitor safeguarding compliance.

### **The headteacher is responsible for:**

- Identifying a senior member of staff from the leadership team to be the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- Identifying members of staff to act as the DSL in his/her absence to ensure there is always cover for the role
- Ensuring that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing board, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by all staff.
- 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
- Liaise with the local authority designated officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff.

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

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team (SLT). They take the lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in school. The DSL will carry out their role in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in Annex C of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE.

The DSL will provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the DSL.

During term time the DSL and/or a deputy will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If in *exceptional* circumstances, a DSL is not available on the school site in person, we will ensure that they are available via telephone and any other relevant media.

The DSL will manage referrals and will refer cases of suspected abuse to children's social care and refer cases to the Channel programme if there is a radicalisation

concern.

The DSL will liaise with safeguarding partners and other agencies where necessary.

Through regular training, knowledge and experience the DSL will be equipped to attend and contribute to child protection case conferences, strategy discussions and other interagency meetings.

The DSL will maintain detailed, accurate written records and child protection files ensuring that they are kept confidential and stored securely.

When children leave school, the DSL will ensure child protection records are transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and a confirmation of receipt will be obtained. This should be as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days at the start of a new term to allow a school or colleague to have support in place for when a child arrives. Where child protection files are electronic the DSL will speak with the DSL of the receiving school and ensure they are aware of the protection concerns.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of the school's safeguarding policy and the procedures they need to follow. They will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child protection training during induction.

The DSL will help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about the issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and leadership staff.

### **Training responsibilities**

The DSL:

- is appropriately trained, receiving annual updates and refresher training provided by the Local Authority (every 2 years)
- ensures a record of staff compliance for child protection and safeguarding training
- ensures staff are kept up to date with key priorities within the LA, including learning from serious practice reviews

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 Safeguarding Leads:**

are appropriately trained and carry 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 the functions above.



## Reference Document A

<b>Key School Contact Details</b>	
<b>Headteacher</b>	Name Emma Webster Telephone 0191 605 3230 Email emma.webster@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk
<b>Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)</b>	<b>Designated safeguarding lead</b>  Name Emma Webster Telephone 0191 605 3230 Email emma.webster@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk  Name Michael Pearson Telephone 0191 605 3230 Email michael.pearson@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL)</b>	
	<b>Deputy Safeguarding Leads</b> Name Lesley Rushtom Telephone 0191 605 3230 Lesley.rushtom@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk  Name Mandy Atkinson Telephone 0191 605 3230 mandy.atkinson@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk  Name Sara Bowery Telephone 0191 605 3230 Sara.bowery@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk  Name Adrienne Powell Telephone 0191 605 3230 Adrienne.powell@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk  Name Jamie Gilbert Telephone 0191 605 3230 jamie.gilbert@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk  Name Alan Henny Telephone 0191 605 3230 Alan.henny@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk
<b>Chair of Governors</b>	<b>Chair of Governors</b> Name Andrew Graydon Telephone 0191 605 3230 Email andrew.graydon@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk
<b>Link Safeguarding Governor</b>	<b>Link Safeguarding Governor</b> Name Harriet Shambrook Telephone 0191 605 3230 Email harriet.shambrook@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk  Name Lenolie Campbell Telephone 0191 605 3230 Email lenolie.campbell@silverdaleschoolnt.org.uk

## Key External Contact Details

<b>Local authority designated officer (LADO)</b>	<b>Hayley Muir</b> Quadrant Silverlink North Cobalt Business Park North Tyneside NE27 OBY Telephone: <b>0345 2000 109 (Office Hours)</b> <b>0330 333 7475 (Out of Hours)</b>
<b>Children's social care through North Tyneside's Front Door Service</b>	<b>0345 2000109 (Office Hours)</b> <b>0330 333 7475 (Out of Hours)</b>
<b>MASH Professional Helpline</b>	<b>0191 643 5555</b>
<b>Multi-agency safeguarding hub</b>	<b>Sue Burns</b> NTSCP Business Manager 0191 643 7391 NTSCP@northtyneside.gov.uk
<b>Police / law and order</b>	Emergency: 999  Non-emergency: 101  We are also aware that the local police force are able to offer support and advice to schools and that the Department for Education has dedicated a telephone helpline <b>020 7340 7264</b> and email <a href="mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk">counter.extremism@education.gov.uk</a> to enable staff and governors to raise concerns relating to extremism directly.  Anti-terrorist hotline 0800 789 321 <a href="mailto:prevent@northtyneside.gov.uk">prevent@northtyneside.gov.uk</a>
<b>Adult Social Care Gateway Team</b>	0191 643 2777
<b>NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (Mon-Fri 8am-8pm)</b>	Address: Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH Helpline: 0800 028 0285
<b>Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)</b>	Address: PO Box 3961, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 4HF <a href="mailto:customerservices@db.gov">customerservices@db.gov</a> Tel: 03000 200190
<b>Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA)</b>	Address: Cheylesmore House, 5 Quinton Rd, Coventry CV1 2WT <a href="mailto:misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk">misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk</a> Tel. Teacher misconduct: 0207 593 5393
<b>OFSTED</b>	<a href="mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk">whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk</a> Whistleblowing hotline: 0300 1233 155 (8am -6pm Mon-Fri)

## Reference Document B

### Links to other procedures in School

This policy does link to other school procedures and therefore must be read in conjunction with other related policies in school. This includes but is not limited to the following list.

1. Anti-bullying (including racist, disability, and homophobic or transphobic abuse)
2. Attendance management (Children Missing Education policy)
3. Allegation management - adults
4. Relationships policy
5. Complaints
6. Confidentiality, data protection and information sharing
7. E-safety, use of the internet, photography and mobile phones
8. Exclusions
9. First aid
10. Health & Safety
11. Inclusion and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
12. Induction procedures
13. Intimate care policy
14. Lettings & school security
15. Medication policy
16. Wellbeing policy
17. Child on Child abuse-managing allegations made against other children/young people including sexual violence and sexual harassment as outlined in Part 5 of the current Keeping Children Safe in Education
18. Physical intervention & use of reasonable force
19. Promoting equality & diversity
20. Preventing radicalisation and extremism
21. PSHE policy, including RSE policy (Relationship and Sex Education)
22. Recruitment, selection DBS and vetting
23. School trips and visits
24. Staff code of conduct
25. Visitors, supply staff, agency workers and volunteers (including Governors)
26. Whistle blowing