Ashwood Park Primary School

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

September 2026

Designated Lead Person for Child Protection: Rob Perkes Co Head Teacher 01384 818545
Out of Hours: 07379 906201

Deputy Designated Lead Person for Child Protection: Keith Butler Head Teacher, Kelly Williams Assistant Head Teacher, Helen Raine Assistant Head Teacher, Caroline Francis SENCO 01384 818545

Named Governor for Safeguarding & Child Protection: To be confirmed c/o 01384 818545

Child in Care Lead: Rob Perkes 01384 818545

School E-Safety Lead: Rob Perkes/Liam Dimmock 01384 818545

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), for allegations against staff:
Yvonne Nelson Brown
Sukhchandan Kaur
Tel: **01384 - 813110**
Referral email: **allegations@dudley.gcsx.gov.uk**

Chair of Governors: Jo Marchant contact no 01384 818545

Vice-Chair of Governors: Caroline Walker no 01384 818545

MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub): 0300 555 0050
Out of Hours Duty Team: 0300 555 8574

PREVENT: Safe and Sound (Dudley's Community Safety Partnership)
https://www.dudleysafe&sound.org/prevent

Virtual School for CLA: Emma Thomas 01384 813493

Private Fostering E mail Angela.Marsh@dudley.gov.uk

CSE Team: Nicki.Fernandes@dudley.gov.uk

SCHOOL NURSE: contact no: Admin Team 01384 408990 Team lead Laura Bickley 01384 408992

MENTAL HEALTH LEAD: Caroline Francis 01384 818545

Approved by:	Governing Body	**Date:** September 2026
Last reviewed on:	September 2026 (R Perkes)	
Next review due by:	September 2027 (Earlier if changes in legislation)	

1. Purpose and Aims

This policy is written in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSiE 2025).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6650a1967b792ffff71a83e8/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf

COVID-19

Ashwood Park Primary School will continue to follow government and local authority guidance when issued.

Rationale

At Ashwood Park Primary School we believe that all children and young people have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. They have a right to expect schools to provide a safe and secure environment. It is a guiding principle of the law and child protection procedures that the protection and welfare of a child must always be the first priority. Failure to provide an effective response can have serious consequences for the child.

Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Ashwood Park Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people both within the school environment and outside. Because of our day-to-day contact with children and young people, education staff are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in children's behaviour or their failure to develop. We need, therefore, 'to be alert to the possibility of abuse occurring, be aware of the procedures to be followed if you have suspicions and have the confidence to follow those procedures.' This policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in school.

Ashwood Park Primary School recognises its legal duty under s.175/157 Education Act 2002 to work with other agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and protecting them from "significant harm". The protection of our pupils from suffering or being likely to suffer significant harm is the responsibility of the school and wider community, superseding any other considerations.

Aims

Ashwood Park Primary School is committed to the safeguarding of all pupils in the school and child protection forms part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities. Our aim is to ensure that all pupils are safe in school and that measures are put in place to support any child, who is at risk of harm. Overall, the policy provides information for all adults working with children to carry out their duty of care responsibly. Ashwood Park Primary School will provide information and training for all staff and other adults to carry out this duty of care.

Prevention

The six main elements of the policy are:

- ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- supporting pupils, who have been abused in accordance with his/her child protection plan
- establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
- ensuring there are links with other safeguarding policies and practice; for example, physical intervention, anti-bullying, behaviour policy, attendance, medical conditions, first aid, intimate care, emergency evacuation, educational visits, sexual exploitation, sexting, disability, homophobic abuse, racism, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, radicalisation and extremism. (Further guidance on these issues is available on the DSPP website)

- https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/children/professionals-working-with-children/safeguarding-children-procedures/

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help prevention. The school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school, whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities, which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm

At Ashwood Park we have a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding which means we consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. We understand that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and that everyone who is exposed to children and their families has a role to play.

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues
- Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory

practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities
- Are young carers. Our School is aware of the needs of young carers, we recognising that caring responsibilities can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. Through early identification we will ensure young carers receive support at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health services.
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, LGBTQ+, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual and criminal exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are Children in Care or previously Children in Care
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

2. Statutory Framework

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance and other relevant legislation:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and Working-together to safeguard children https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils

The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to have completed safer recruitment training

- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- Statutory guidance on FGM, which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and The Crime and Policing Act 2026), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting a specific group of pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as: sexual violence, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or racial discrimination
- Operation Encompass statutory guidance, which explains that the police must notify our school of any incidents involving domestic abuse
- The Crime and Policing Act 2026.
- The Childrens Wellbeing and School Act
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the '2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations') and Childcare Act 2006, which set out who is disqualified from working with children-
- This policy also meets the requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

3. Local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

This policy follows locally agreed multi-agency procedures that have been put in place by the Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership (DSPP).

Home - Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership

The school's policy has been written taken into consideration our locally agreed multi-agency procedures that have been put in place by the three safeguarding partners:

- ✓ (The local authority (LA)
- ✓ Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA
- ✓ The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

. The links for Dudley's procedures are below:

https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/

https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/DSPP-Support-Level-Guidance-and-Framework-March-2023.pdf

4. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to 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.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Page 18 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Further definition of neglect are detailed in the policy.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video. It also includes AI-generated intimate images.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is Mr Rob Perkes. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding. This includes online safety,and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Out of hours: **07379 906201, rperkes@ashwood.dudley.sch,uk**

When the DSL is absent, the deputy DSL Mr Keith Butler will act as cover.

If the DSL and deputy are not available, Mrs Helen Raine (AHT) or Mrs Caroline Francis (SENCO) will act as cover.

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

- Work closely with teachers and share information & provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and safeguarding and child protection matters
- Set out procedures so that staff promptly share their safeguarding concerns in writing
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school, and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children.
- Refer cases of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care.
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to Channel programme.
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children, particularly in relation to Early Help
- Liaise with the Headteacher to inform them of issues – especially ongoing enquiries under section47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further statutory guidance can be found in Statutory guidance – PACE Code C 2019.
- Work closely with Attendance and Mental Health Leads
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Have a good understanding and takes the lead of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school, this is included in the DSL's job description
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel Panel, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly

- The DSL will also keep the headteacher informed of any issues and liaise with local authority case managers (LADO) for safeguarding and child protection concerns as appropriate.
- The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job descriptions.

6. The Headteacher and Governing Body

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

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary & supply staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure & Barring Service/Teaching Regulatory Agency
- Complete appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this
- Complete appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable
- Making sure each child in the Early Years and Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones and cameras in the setting
- Promoting good oral health and signposting accordingly to services

The Governing body will approve this policy at each review, ensure it complies with the law and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Governing Body/ will appoint a senior lead (Mr Ben Davis-Safeguarding Governor) to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.

The Chair of governors Mrs Jo Marchant will act as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate.

Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes:

- Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training
- Reviewing the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

All Governors have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.

The Governing Body should ensure all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction.

7. Safeguarding Policies and Procedures/Legal Responsibilities and duty to share information

7.1 Our safeguarding responsibilities include:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

The following three **Safeguarding Partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will decide to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

7.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

7.3 All staff

- Will read KCSIE Part 1 in full.
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed, understand, and will follow the guidance
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g., sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Follow school procedures for the collection and non-collection of pupils at the end of the session/day. This includes all children being dismissed to an identified parent/carer/adult at the end of the school day from classroom doors or the playground for Y3& Y4. Year 6 parents may give written consent for children to walk home by themselves.

  OSCA children are collected from their classroom internal doors by identified staff members. They are registered upon arrival and any children who are expected but have not arrived are reported to the School Office immediately so that checks can be followed. DSL/HT to be informed.

Any children who have not been collected will be taken to the school office so that parents can be contacted. DSL/HT to be informed.

All children have to be collected by a known adult from after school clubs.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy the behaviour policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- The Early Help process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child exploitation (CSE/CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, modern slavery and radicalization.
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online.
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection.

8. Training

To ensure that the DSL and deputies, also all staff, governors and volunteers are able to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities the following training will be in place.

8.1 The DSL and [deputy/deputies]

- The DSL and [deputy/deputies] will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. Online safety training will be undertaken annually and regularly updated to keep knowledge of staying safe online and the risks associated up to date, this includes including filtering and monitoring and cyber security
- In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments). They will also undertake Prevent Awareness training.

8.2 Staff safeguarding training

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety training, at induction, together with managing allegations and whistle-blowing procedures, to ensure

they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. This training will be regularly updated and will be in line with local and statutory guidelines.

All staff will:

- undertake annual Cyber-Security training
- have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:
- manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

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

- Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.
- All new staff will receive robust safeguarding training in line with the whole school training package, this will be delivered as part of their induction process before they commence working with our pupils/students.
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8.3 Volunteers and Contractors

All volunteers and contractors will receive appropriate training, as applicable.

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

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

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID
- Or the organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out

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

8.4 Governors

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

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding

As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

All Governors will undertake training relating to online filtering and monitoring, in addition one Governor will be trained in Cyber-security.

Governors are responsible for:

Ensuring our school has a policy in respect to the use of restrictive interventions

- Ensuring our school has appropriate cyber security systems in place
- Reviewing the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems at least once every academic year – as well as details on who should carry out these reviews

8.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families

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

9. Confidentiality

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Our school adopts the principles outlined in the DfE Information Sharing Duty (September 2026). Data protection legislation (the Data Protection Act 2018 (the DPA 2018) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). GDPR does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of safeguarding children. In fact, data protection legislation provides a framework which enables information sharing in that context. The first and most important consideration is always whether sharing information is likely to support the safeguarding of a child.

Where the information sharing duty applies, our school must share information with another organisation, or a requestor, if it is considered that sharing may help the recipient's relevant functions, including assess need, decide, provide support or take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child, including when a child potentially poses a risk to others. Our school may be a requestor of such information, from an external agency, to support us to effectively safeguard our children.

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The Designated Safeguarding lead and Deputies will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only. All staff know they have a professional responsibility to share information with other statutory agencies to safeguard children.

All staff know they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. If a child wishes to confide in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, the member of staff will appropriately state that they cannot promise confidentiality and will need to pass the information on to help keep the child or other children safe.

10. Communication with parents

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

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

If we believe that notifying the parents/carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will usually notify the parents of all the children involved.

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

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

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

Parents should contact the school safeguarding lead if they have safeguarding concerns. In the event that the school is closed then parents can also access Children's services on:

0300 555 0050

Out of hours duty team: 0300 555 8574

Or School DSL on 07379 906201

11 Reporting systems for our pupils

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring pupils feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this, we will:

- Put systems in place for pupils to confidently report abuse
- Ensure our reporting systems are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for pupils
- Make it clear to pupils that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback

12. Whole Staff Responsibilities

All Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

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

Make a referral to Multi Agency Support Team relevant to the child's home address, for Dudley children this is Dudley Front Door and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.**

Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

Dudley ***Report it*** page: https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL as well as adding the record to CPOMS with any attached documents. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so

Aside from the above professionals, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

It is important to also understand the following:

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

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

12.2 Reporting concerns and making a referral

If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm or is in immediate danger) Figure 1 (page 17) **illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.**

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or take advice from Local Authority Children's Social Care. Referrals should be made by completing a Request for Advice and Support Children's Services Portal siteor contact 0300 555 0050.

Make a referral to Local Authority Children's Social Care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

If it is appropriate to refer the case to Local Authority Children's Social Care or the Police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so. If you make a referral directly you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The Local Authority will decide within 1 working day of a referral about what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the Local Authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves. Advice and further information on Dudley Professional Resolution should be accessed from the Lead for Safeguarding in Education, Dudley local authority further information is available on the Dudley Safeguarding partnership website.

13. Record keeping

- We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule. Access is restricted to the DSL and identified senior members of staff.
- Records are electronic and are stored on CPOMs. Paper based records prior to 2017 are stored securely in a central place separate from academic records. Individual files are kept for each child: the school will not keep family files.
- All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded on CPOMs. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.
- Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. Staff will be informed of relevant details only when the DSL feels having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child and/or family.
- Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period after they have left the school in line with current data legislation and guidance.
- If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their safeguarding and child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, within 5 days of starting the new education setting, and separately from the main pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information (using the pupil safeguarding form) to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child. We will record where and when these records have been sent and or received.
- School will usually ask parents for consent to share information with other agencies however the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Level 1 and 2 Family Help

Family help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life.

Any pupil may benefit from family help, but in particular staff will be alert to the potential need for family help for pupils who:

• Have SEND (whether or not they have a statutory EHC plan).

- Are young carers.

• Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups.

• Are frequently missing/going missing from care or from home. Misuse drugs or alcohol.

• Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation.

• Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.

• Are returned home to their family from care. Show family signs of abuse and/or neglect.

• Are at risk of being radicalised or exploited. Are privately fostered.

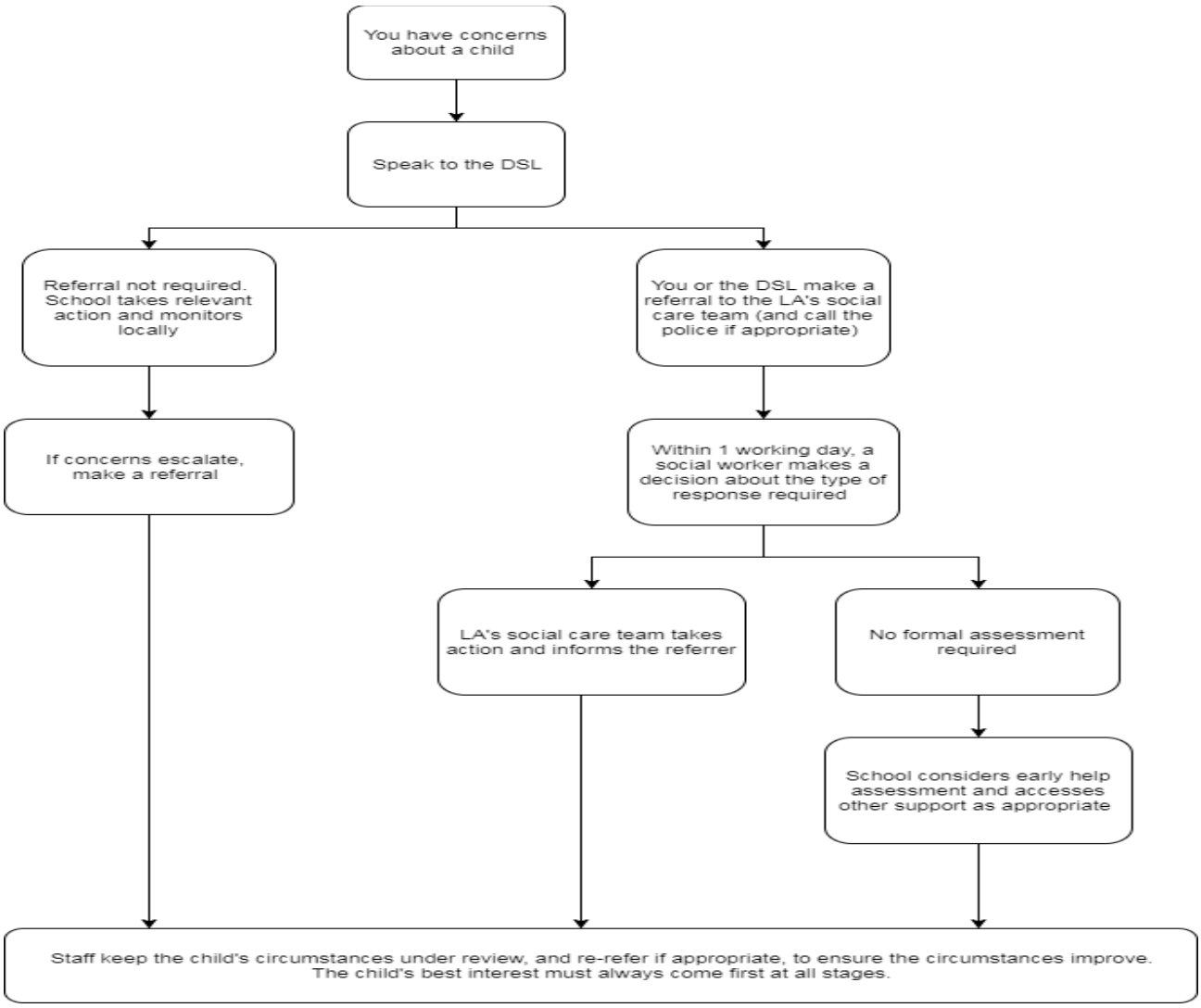
• Poor attendance.

- At a point of crisis

• Poor housing conditions

Family help will also be used to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour to prevent escalation. All staff will be made aware of the local family help process and understand their role in it. The DSL or appropriate professional will take the lead where family help is appropriate. Level 2 and Level 3 Family Help requires consent and engagement from parents/carers. A discussion will take place at Multi Agency Allocation Meeting (MAAM) as to what best suits the needs of the family, this can be single agency and joint agency.

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger) (Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action.)



14. Dudley's Thresholds and Family Help

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

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

Level 1 - No referral is required. Professionals should contact Dudley's Family information Service on 01384 814398 to obtain information about support available for children, young people and families.

Dudley Safeguarding Partnership threshold guidance is below, this should be considered when completing Request for Help and Support Form

https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/DSPP-Support-Level-Guidance-and-Framework-March-2023.pdf

Or contact **Brierley Hill Family Centre** for further advice.

18 Parkes Street, BRIERLEY HILL, West Midlands. DY5 3DY

Telephone 01384 813322

E-Mail fs.brierleyhill@dudley.gov.uk

15. When to be concerned

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

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

15.1 Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

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

Emotional abuse may involve:

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

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

The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape, oral sex or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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

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

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

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

16. Specific Safeguarding Issues

17 Child on Child abuse

17 Child on child abuse

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

17.1 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

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

For some (but not all) forms of child-on-child abuse it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent

- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including where generated by AI), which may include or be driven by misogyny/misandry

Child on child abuse can also include the following:

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

We recognise the intersection of misogyny/misandry and harmful sexual behaviour. We will actively identify, challenge and address how misogynistic/misandrist attitudes contribute to the normalisation of inappropriate behaviour and increases the risk of leading to child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, within our school environment

We will be alert to the prevalence of harmful online material and extreme misogynistic/misandrist ideologies, including misogynistic influencers, and recognise the impact this content could have on shaping pupils' attitudes

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

17.2 Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

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

You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it

You are required to discuss with the DSL if you are concerned about a pupil being exposed to misogynistic or misandrist content

The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence

The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a

named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)

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

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

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
- **Ensure staff are trained to understand**:

✓ How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports

✓ That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”

✓ That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:

✓ Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to

✓ A friend may make a report

✓ A member of staff may overhear a conversation

✓ A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong

✓ That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation

- ✓ That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
- ✓ The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
- ✓ That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
- ✓ That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side

- The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.
- Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn't (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

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

17.4 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')

This is a suggested approach based on guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety advice for education settings for all staff and for DSLs and senior leaders.

Responsibilities when responding to an incident

All incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, regardless of whether they are consensual or non-consensual, require a safeguarding response. If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nude or semi-nudes, including where generated by AI, you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

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

Initial review meeting

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

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

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

- The incident involves an adult. Where an adult poses as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person, the incident may first present as a child-on-child incident. See appendix 4 for more information on assessing adult-involved incidents
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to SEN)
- What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

Further review by the DSL

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

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

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

Informing parents/carers

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

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through dialling 101.

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

18 So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

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

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

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

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

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

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

18.1 Female Genital Mutilation - If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM

The Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises *'all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs.'*

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

Any teacher who discovers (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a **pupil under 18** must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

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

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

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

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

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

18.2 Forced Marriage

Implementation of the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022, Since February 2023 it has been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used.

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

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

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

The DSL will:

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

19 Serious violence

Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation.

Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the DSL/DDSL. The DSL will assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict.

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

Early, evidence-based support for those considered at risk, as well as at critical points when concerns emerge, is vital, DSL/DDSL will make appropriate referrals and ensure that the right level of support is accessed, and where necessary communications with Police.

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

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups

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

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

20 Child Criminal Exploitation

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and the victim may identify as being part of this group. CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female, and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. This may constitute modern slavery. The DSL/DDSL will ensure a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral is completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

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

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

21 Child sexual exploitation

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities,

such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. This can be committed by an individual or an organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. As with CCE, victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a significant concern, as professionals continue to encounter cases where children are manipulated, groomed, and exploited without fully understanding the abuse they are experiencing.

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

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

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

22 Children who are absent from education

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

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

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

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

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

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance__applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf

25 Domestic Abuse

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

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as witnessing the ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.

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

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

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

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

26 Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Preplanning, effective training

and effective policies will provide schools and colleges with the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports.

Ultimately, the school will make any decisions on a case-by-case basis, with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the police as required.

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

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

When supporting victims, staff will:

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

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

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Challenging inappropriate behaviours
- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the reporting procedures within school ensuring that the DSL is informed immediately

27 Radicalisation and Extremism

27.1 Preventing radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to**:**

- Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or

- Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
- Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results outlined in either of the above points

Terrorism is an action that:

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

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

Schools have a duty to prevent children from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. The DSL, or designated Prevent lead, will undertake in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies. They'll make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

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

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

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

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

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance
- Rejecting activities, they used to enjoy
- Converting to a new religion
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- Possessing extremist literature
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

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

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

Staff should **always** take action if they are worried.

Further information on the school's measures to prevent radicalisation are set out in other school policies and procedures.

Dudley's LA Prevent Officer is Mark.Wilson@dudley.gov.uk

27.2 If you have concerns about extremism

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

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

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

The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

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

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

28 Mental Health - If you have a mental health concern

The school's Mental Health Lead is Caroline Francis.

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

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

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action.

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

Mental health problems can also, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns (for example, self-harm).

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, staff, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which staff will recognise. These could include:

• significant changes in behaviour, • ongoing difficulty sleeping,

• withdrawing from social situations,

• not wanting to do things they usually like, and

• physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Not every child who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, staff can identify children who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention.

Positive mental health is a concern of the whole community and is embedded in our curriculum. Our school promotes the development of emotional well-being and resilience in all pupils and staff, as well as providing support for those with additional needs. Staff members are trained in mental health and we work closely with mentoring and counselling services.

We understand that there are risk factors, which increase someone's vulnerability, and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter balance and promote further growth of resilience.

It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our pupils. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and intervention is identified and implemented.

The DSL will work closely with Senior Mental Health Leads.

Department for Education guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools for more information.

29. LGBT+ pupils and Children Questioning their Gender

We recognise that a child being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm. However, pupils who are (or who are perceived by other children to be) lesbian, gay, or bisexual can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. Any concerns should be shared with the DSL/DDSL

Some pupils may be vulnerable due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, either because they are subject to homophobic, bi-phobic or transphobic bullying or because of negative responses from parents/carers or others, which may result in increased risk of self-harm, suicide or homelessness.

Several studies also evidence that LGBT+ young people may be at increased risk of becoming victims of CSE.

At Ashwood Park we are aware of the increased risk factors and know how to access appropriate support for these young people when required.

LBGT inclusion is part of the statutory RSE and Health Education curriculum.

Schools are not to initiate any action regarding children questioning their gender; where a child or their parent raises a request relating to social transition the DSL will Avoid making immediate decisions in response to requests and instead ensure that concerns are managed through our

safeguarding procedures.

Individual staff members must not make ad-hoc or informal adjustments in the classroom.

To comply with statutory duties, children must not be permitted into toilets, changing

rooms or residential accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex.

30. Online Safety

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

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

Filtering and monitoring systems (Smoothwall) are in place at Ashwood Park on school devices and the school network, which report concerns to the Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads.

Reviews are carried out by the SLT member responsible for filtering and monitoring, with the support of the school's designated safeguarding lead and IT support. This includes checks that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations, and a record should be kept of these checks. The leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place, how to manage them effectively and how to escalate concerns when identified.

Further details on Online safety can be found in Ashwood Park's E Safety Policy.

We have put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk from the school's IT systems.

The 4 key categories of risk

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

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories,
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes,
- conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying, and commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel pupils, students or staff are at risk, please speak to the DSL/DDSL, also can report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (https://apwg.org/)

At Ashwood Park Primary we:

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example through computing modules, RSE and PSHE lessons. This includes the safe use of social media, the internet and technology, keeping personal information private, how to recognise unacceptable behaviour online and how to report any incidents of cyber-bullying.
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We facilitate awareness training sessions for parents.
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that: staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras

Screening and confiscation guidance
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching__Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

Teaching Online Safety in schools 2019
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811796/Teaching_online_safety_in_school.pdf

31 Children in Care (CiC) and Post Children in Care

Our school's designated member of staff is work in partnership with the Virtual School on how funding can best support the progress of a CiC. The name of the Virtual Headteacher is Emma Thomas Emma.Thomas@dudley.gov.uk

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

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads

We have appointed a designated teacher, Rob Perkes Deputy Head Teacher, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

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

32 Children with a social worker

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

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

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

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

33.Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Our policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group of children.

- These can include: • assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration,
- 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, without outwardly showing any signs,
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse,
- the need for intimate care or that they are isolated from others,
- they are more likely to be dependent on adults for care, and
- may have issues over cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or the consequences of doing so.
- We offer extra pastoral support for pupils with SEN and disabilities through specialist support.
- An incident relating to the management of a pupil's medical condition (including allergies) would not in and of itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners. A safeguarding referral would only be needed where an incident highlighted concern that the pupil or might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their medical condition. This might occur where relevant information about a pupil's medical condition is not provided to school, or where they are repeatedly sent without essential medication, thereby putting the pupil at risk.

Clarification around pupils with SEND and specialist support can be sort through the SENCO and teacher in Charge of the Resource Base for the Deaf Children.

SENDCO Mrs Caroline Francis

Lead Teacher for the Resource Base for the Deaf Children- Miss Emily Thompson

34 Collection of pupils and non-collection of pupils at the end of the session/day

Please refer to our late/ non-collection policy.

35 Safer Recruitment procedure

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

Application forms

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders
- Shortlisting
- Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:
- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns
- Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:
- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they can share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
    - If they have a criminal history
    - Whether they are included on the barred list
    - Whether they are prohibited from teaching

    - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
    - Any relevant overseas information
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true
- We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

Seeking references and checking employment history

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

When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is

destroyed, we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken

- Separate barred list checks will be carried out in the following circumstances:
- Newly appointed staff or volunteers if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available and where other relevant checks have been completed
- Individuals that have worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than 3 months prior to their appointment to the school.
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
    - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
    - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach
    - We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in **place, and any advice sought.**

Regulated activity means:

A person will be engaging in regulated activity with children if they work on a frequent basis in our school, or in connection with the purposes of our school, where the work gives opportunity for contact with children. A person will also be in regulated activity if, as a result of their work or volunteering, they:

• will be responsible, on a frequent basis in a school for teaching, training instructing, caring for or supervising children, providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational wellbeing, or driving a vehicle only for children, or

• engage in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

Existing staff and volunteers

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff or volunteer's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children
- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Any self employed individual working in our school they will need to obtain a DBS check if one is not available or we will request to see the certificate if the individual has obtained their own check so to ensure that the DBS check is at our required level.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity

- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Governors

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

Maintained schools add:

All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

Academies (including free schools), and independent schools, add:

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

36 Procedure for dealing with Allegations about Staff - Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, contractor or volunteer), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, contractor or volunteer) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the chair of governors.

Procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about staff – KCSiE Part 4

Ashwood Park Primary School will follow the ‘‘Allegations Procedures” (DSPP Procedures).

If any concerns or allegations are made against members of staff, in the first instance these will be discussed with the Designated Officer for Managing Allegations (LADO) or duty Independent Reviewing Officer. It is useful at this stage to also provide full names of the member of staff and child involved in the allegation, their dates of birth, addresses and details of any previous concerns, as this will avoid delay. All allegations against people who work with children will be passed on to the Local

Authority Designated Officer (Managing Allegations) in accordance with the Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and the DSPPB Safeguarding Children Procedures. A Managing Allegations Referral form will need to be completed.

LADO Yvonne Nelson Brown 01384 813110 **allegations@dudley.gcsx.gov.uk**

School will work with other agencies to investigate when a member of staff has 'behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about the headteacher

Concerns about the Headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will contact the LADO.

Procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about a school governor

If an allegation is made against any governor, including the Chair of Governors, the Headteacher will contact the LA Designated Officer.

The headteacher/chair of governors will then follow the procedures:

- if any allegation is made a quick resolution should be a clear priority; any unnecessary delays should be eradicated
- in response to an allegation all other options should be considered before suspending a member of staff;
- allegations that are found to be malicious should be removed from the personnel records
- pupils that are found to have made malicious allegations are likely to have breached school behaviour policies; the school will therefore consider the appropriate sanction
- we as the employer have a duty of care to all staff; support for the individual is the key to fulfilling this duty
- when an allegation is made it is extremely important that every effort is made to maintain confidentiality

Staff concerns that do not meet the harm threshold.

The section is based on 'Section 2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Amend or add to this as applicable to reflect your own approach, and definition of low-level concerns, consider the following

- Sharing low level concerns
- Responding to low level concerns
- Record keeping

37. Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers should raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, are reflected in staff training and such concerns should be raised with the school's senior leadership team.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

Ashwood Park's Whistle-blowing Policy (displayed in the staff room)

General guidance can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available as an alternative

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-office-launches-child-abuse-whistleblowing-helpline

38. Safeguarding in the Curriculum

Child Protection and wider child safety issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate, especially in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Relationships Education (Sept 2020), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Citizenship, Rights Respecting Schools, British Values and Growth Mindset. Assemblies, visitors to school and themed weeks such as Health, Online safety and Anti-Bullying also support the safety and well-being of the children in our care.

39. Special Circumstances

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the school, which should ensure that pupils are:

- treated with respect and dignity
- taught to treat each other with respect
- feel safe
- are listened to

The following policies and guidance link to our safeguarding procedures.

- Behaviour
- Staff [behaviour/code of conduct]
- Complaints
- Health and safety
- Attendance
- Online safety
- Sex and relationship education
- Privacy notices
- GDPR
- Whistleblowing
- Anti-bullying
- IT / Acceptable Use policy

40. Contextual Safeguarding

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. Assessment of pupils' behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

Many factors within the local community affect incidents and behaviour in school. Our DSLs, alongside all of our staff, are mindful of such environmental factors and their effect on the safety and welfare of individuals when completing concern logs on CPOMS and making referrals to Front Door.

APPENDIX 1

Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse/Reporting a Concern

When a child tells me about abuse s/he has suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.

- Never enter into a pact of secrecy with the child. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the child know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Tell her/him that you believe them. Children very rarely lie about abuse; but s/he may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed.
- Tell the child that it is not her/his fault.
- Encourage the child to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected.
- Do not tell the child that what s/he experienced is dirty, naughty or bad.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation on CPOMs or a reporting form using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations. (*See Appendix 3 Reporting form). Teachers and/or DSL will record an incident summary on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) and the DSL will scan the reporting form.*

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

Immediately afterwards (Reporting Concerns)

You must not deal with this yourself. Seek support from the DSL/Deputy DSL. Clear indications or disclosure of abuse must be reported to children's social care without delay, by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headteacher.

Complete a CPOMs incident or the reporting form (*Appendix 3*) available in the E Safeguarding file / staff room noticeboard and hand it directly to the appropriate person. **Do not** leave it in their tray or on their desk for them to 'find'. It may be urgent and require an immediate response.

Safeguarding Mobile: 07379 906201

If the DSL or deputy is not available, contact Children's Services on 0300 555 0050. Out of hours 0300 555 8574

At no time should an individual consider taking photographic evidence of any injuries or marks. This could lead to managing allegations procedures.

Children making a disclosure may do so with difficulty, having chosen carefully to whom they will speak. Listening to and supporting a child/young person who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support for you will be available from your Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher.

APPENDIX 2

What to do if you are concerned:

(Concerns outside the immediate environment (e.g. a parent or carer)

- Report your concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who should contact Social Care Team or the Police as soon as possible.
- If the *Designated Safeguarding Lead* is not available, then the Head Teacher or the person currently responsible for the school should be informed. (This is to ensure there is no delay in seeking advice or making a referral).
- Social Care Team and the *Designated Safeguarding Lead* will decide how to involve the parents/carers. Parents should not be informed if to do so would 'increase risk to the child'.
- Maintain confidentiality on a **need to know** basis only.

Information for social care or the police about suspected abuse

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The reasons for your concern
- Full name and date of birth of the child
- Names and dates of birth of the child's family/household members
- Other agencies/professionals involved with the family
- The child's first language and any special needs
- The child's developmental needs, family and environmental factors and parenting capacity
- Any work you may have already undertaken with the child and family

All incidents will be reported through the Dudley Front Door, by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If Ashwood Park believe that a reported concern has not been evaluated and allocated appropriately, the Resolution and Escalation process will be followed.

Responding to allegations or suspicions (about someone working with children or young people)

It is not the responsibility of anyone working within Ashwood Park Primary School in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

Ashwood Park Primary School will ensure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

All allegations or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and treated in accordance with these procedures. They will be applied when there is an allegation or concern that any person, who works with children, in connection with their employment, voluntary or personal activity, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are likely to pose a risk of harm to children

These behaviours will be considered within the context of the four categories of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect). This includes concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people, for example:

- Having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual (s16-19 *Sexual Offences Act 2003*)
- 'Grooming', i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence (s15 *Sexual Offences Act 2003*)
- Other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature (e.g. inappropriate text/email messages or images, gifts, socializing. etc.)
- Possession of sexual images of children/pseudo-photographs of children

The definition of working with children includes paid and unpaid staff, volunteers and carers (including foster and adoptive carers). It may include everyone, who works School Ashwood Park Primary including administrative and other support staff.

Action if there are concerns

Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the Headteacher will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Headteacher/Chair of Governors who will decide on whether disciplinary action should be taken and the next steps to take.

Concerns about suspected abuse

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer must be reported to the Headteacher, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The Headteacher will refer the allegation to the Social Care Team who may involve the Police. All allegations against people who work with children must be passed onto the DO (Designated Officer for Managing Allegations).
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Care Team.
- If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the concern must be shared with the Headteacher. If the Headteacher is the subject of the concern/ allegation, the concern must be shared with the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will liaise with the Designated Officer for Managing Allegations and HR.

Internal Enquiries and Suspension

- The Head Teacher will liaise with the Chair of Governors and make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social care inquiries. Advice can also be sought from the Human Resources Section and the DO (Designated Officer for Managing Allegations).

- Irrespective of the findings of the Social Care Team or Police inquiries the Headteacher/Chair of Governors will assess all individual cases to decide whether an individual can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient

evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the Chair of Governors and Headteacher must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability; it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

APPENDIX 3
Form for recording and reporting concerns about a child (double sided with body map)

Form for recording and reporting concerns about a child		
Full name of child:	**Class:**	**Year:**
Date of birth (if known):		
Your name:	Position:	
Date and time of incident/disclosure/concern:		
Please provide details of the incident/disclosure/concern, including times, dates, description of injuries (body map included yes/no), and, if applicable, exact words spoken by the child (please continue on additional numbered pages if needed):		
Signed:	Time and date of reporting:	
Name of staff member reported to:	Further action taken by staff member:	
Signed:	Date:	
Any other information helpful for referral (**to be completed and discussed with pastoral team/ designated safeguarding lead**). Include academic progress, attendance, behaviour, presentation, peer relationships and parental knowledge:		

Body Map

