



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025/26

(Policy also covers Low-Level Concerns - Page 42)

| ROLE/ORGANISATION | NAME | CONTACT DETAILS |
|---|---|--|
| Chief Executive Officer, Ascent Academy Trust | David Stanton | 01384 818265 can be used to gain additional contact details |
| Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and Head Teacher | Sarah Allen | 01384 818265 sallen@woodsetton.dudley.sch.uk |
| Deputy DSL and Deputy Head Teacher | Matthew Halliday | 01384 818265 mhalliday@woodsetton.dudley.sch.uk |
| Local authority designated officer (LADO) | Yvonne Nelson-Brown Sukhchandan Kaur | Yvonne.Nelson-Brown@dudley.gov.uk Allegations@dudley.gov.uk Sukhchandan.Kaur@dudley.gov.uk |
| Local Advisor Board Chair | Kate Hermon | khermon@woodsetton.dudley.sch.uk |

Approved by: K.Hermon **Date:** September 2025

Last reviewed on: September 2025

Next review due by: September 2026

1. Purpose and Aims

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.

The Woodsetton School aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. School staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
- 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 our children who:

- have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities.
- maybe young carers.
- may experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, 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 radicalization.
- are asylum seekers.
- are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health.
- 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 (DfE's) statutory guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#), the [Maintained Schools Governance Guide](#) and [Academy Trust Governance Guide](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners (see section 3).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- 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 one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques

- Part 1 of the schedule to the [Non-Maintained Special Schools \(England\) Regulations 2015](#), which places a duty on non-maintained special schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- [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](#), 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 disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). 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 pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making 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
- 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 requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

3. Local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

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>

Three safeguarding priorities have been identified for 2024-2026:

- Mental Health of Children, Young People and Adults with care and support needs, including the impact of parental mental health
- Transitional Safeguarding
- Exploitation

These are detailed further on the above website and are included in whole-school training.

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. Section 15.1 provides 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.

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 Mrs. Sarah Allen (Head Teacher). 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. During out of school hours and through school holidays, the DSL can be contacted through the use of the **School Safeguarding Mobile Phone: 07938012292** or via the email:

safeguarding@woodsetton.dudley.sch.uk

When the DSL is absent, the deputy – Mr. Matthew Halliday (Deputy Head Teacher) – will act as cover.

If the DSL and Deputy DSL are not available, Mrs. Rebecca Gibbons (Assistant Head teacher) or Mrs. Nicola Morris (Family Support Worker) will act as cover (for example, during out-of-hours/out-of-term activities).

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

- Work closely with teachers acting as a source of support and share information & provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters
- Set out procedures so that staff promptly share their safeguarding concerns in writing – this will be done using The Woodsetton School Reporting system – <https://Woodsetton.cpoms.net>.

Records should include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome. These records will be kept confidential and stored securely in separate personal files.

- 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 and college leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school or college, 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.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and carers including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- 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 and,
- 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
- Work closely with Mental Health Lead

- 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 and designated officers (LADO) for safeguarding and child protection concerns as appropriate, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children's Act 1989.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and Deputy DSL are set out in their job description.

6. The Headteacher, Local Advisory Board, Trustees and Members, Proprietors

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.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually as a minimum and is made available publicly.
- Ensuring that staff (including temporary & supply staff) understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website including that parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this
- 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, including online and cyber security.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable (Early Years and Primary Schools)
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service/Teaching Regulatory Agency/TRA as required
- 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
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones and cameras in the setting
- Promoting good oral health and signposting accordingly to services

The Local Advisory Board, Trustees or Proprietors will approve this policy at each review, ensure it complies with the law and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Local Advisory Board/Trustees will appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) lead.

The Woodsetton School has appointed Kate Hermon as their Safeguarding LAB Member to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.

Mr. David Stanton as the Chair of the Trustee Board will act as the 'case manager' if an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see appendix 2).

The Local Advisory Board/Trustees will be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

All Local Advisory Board Members and Trustees will:

- Have read and understood Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.
- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners

The Local Advisory Board Members and Trustees, will seek assurance of the following areas:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support.
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.
- The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure
- That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised.
- 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) the members will:

- 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.

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

7.1 Our safeguarding responsibilities include:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:

- 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 refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm. **Children includes everyone under the age of 18.**

Three Safeguarding Partners as 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 LAB Members/Trustees 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. The school plays a crucial role in preventative education by embedding safeguarding and well-being in the school curriculum. This information can be found in the School's Safeguarding in the Curriculum Policy 2025-26.

All staff

- ✓ will read, understand and agree to abide by part 1 and Annex A of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025-2026**, and review this guidance at least annually.
- ✓ 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)
- ✓ Provide a safe space for pupils to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

- a. Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy,
- b. the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct,

- c. the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and [deputy/deputies],
- d. the behaviour policy,
- e. online safety which includes the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring,
- f. and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education

They will also be aware of:

- The safeguarding response for the collection of pupils and non-collection of pupils at the end of the session/day, to ensure all staff are aware of the safeguarding checks and reporting of concerns
- 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, neglect and exploitation, including domestic and sexual abuse (including controlling and coercive behaviour, as well as parental conflict that is frequent, intense, and unresolved), as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, grooming, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)
- New and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm
- 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
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning can be targeted by other children
- That a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

8.0 Training

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

8.1 The DSL and Deputy DSL

The DSL and deputy/deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years to ensure they are able to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children including those of SEND Children specifically. 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. The DSL should also undertake Prevent Awareness Training.

| Name of Staff Member | Role | Training Expires |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Sarah Allen | DSL / Head Teacher | |
| Matthew Halliday | Deputy DSL / Deputy Head Teacher | |
| Rebecca Gibbons | Assistant Head Teacher | |
| Nicola Morris | Family Support Worker | |

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.

The lead DSL is also part of Dudley's Safeguarding in Education Reference Group (SERG) to further develop information sharing, external links and training across the Academy, Trust and Local Authority.

8.2 Staff Safeguarding Training

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training, online safety training including IT filtering and monitoring roles and responsibilities, 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, neglect and exploitation. This training will be regularly updated and will be in line with local and statutory guidelines.

In addition, all staff will:

- ✓ undertake annual training on 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/students.
- ✓ receive 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.
- ✓ receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety, as required but at least annually. Regular updates throughout the academic year could include (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.
- ✓ receive robust safeguarding training in line with the whole school training package, this will be delivered as part of their induction process.

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.

8.3 Volunteers and Contractors will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

All volunteers and contractors will receive safeguarding procedures and guidance on their arrival at the school - this will include how to report a concern, the behavioural expectations of the visitors to ensure that children are safe, appropriate use of mobile technology including filtering and monitoring. Safeguarding information will be provided as required during their time working with the school to ensure that they are compliant.

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 electronic visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, 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.

On leaving the premises, all visitors will be asked to sign out of the school and as part of this process, will be asked to speak to a member of the safeguarding concerns if they have seen or heard any information that would be deemed as a safeguarding issue. This is logged on the schools signing in inventory.

8.4 Local Advisory Board Members and Trustees

All Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees receive training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) at induction, which is regularly updated. This will ensure that all Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge, in addition that they can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.

All Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees will undertake training relating to online filtering and monitoring, in addition one LAB Member will be trained in Cyber-security.

As the chair of the Local Advisory Board Members 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.

9. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children at The Woodsetton School, particularly in the context of Child Protection. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information is stored in a secure place with restricted access to designated people and is maintained in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Key Factors:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests

- The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy)
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 13.

10. Communication with parents

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

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

If we believe that notifying the parents 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 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).

We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

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

See next section for reporting systems used within school.

12. Whole Staff Responsibilities

All Staff, volunteers and Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees 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 the Multi Agency Support Team relevant to the child's home address (for Dudley children this the Dudley Front Door - Tel: 0300 555 0050) 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.

Dudley Report it page <https://dudleysafeguarding.org.uk/>

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

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.

This should be done using the School Safeguarding System –

<https://Woodsetton.cpoms.net>

- If this ICT system cannot be accessed, this should be done in paper format and signed and dated before being passed on to the DSL. 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 below 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 site](#) or **contact 0300 555 0050.**

To refer into Dudley Exploitation hub (DEX): CS.Hub@dudley.gov.uk also complete a Request for Support and Advice Form to be submitted via the portal.

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.

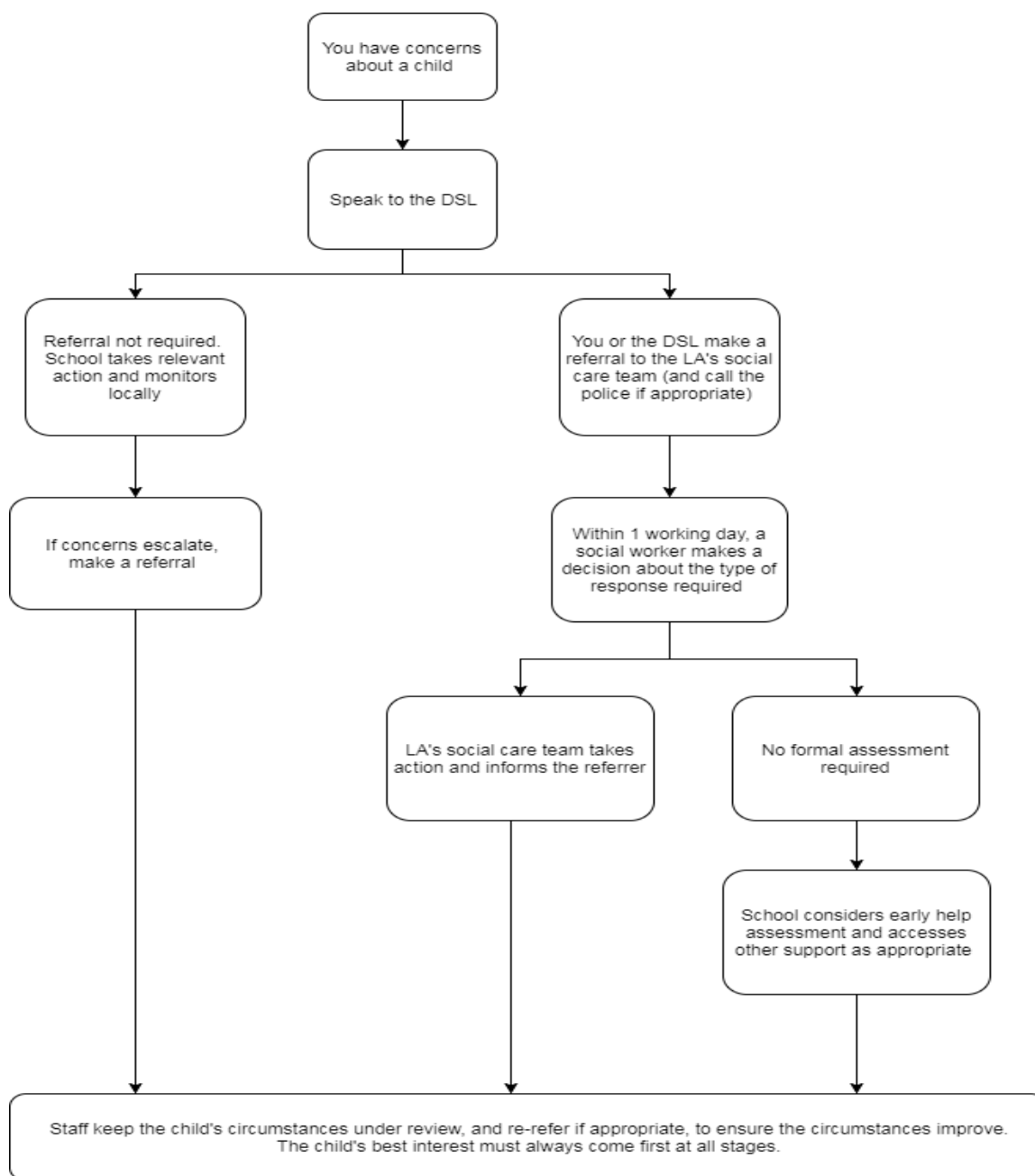
If it is appropriate to refer the case to Local Authority Children’s Social Care or the Police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so. If you make a referral directly you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

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.

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.)



13. Record keeping

At The Woodsetton School:

- We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.
- All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing and held in **CPOMS or the child's Safeguarding File within school**. 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. These are held separately to all other files and are accessible to the Safeguarding Team. Electronic Records are held in CPOMS and are checked / acted upon by Safeguarding Team members.
- Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period after they have left the school.
- If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their safeguarding & child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, within 5 school days of starting at 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.
- Allegations / concerns raised to the Head Teacher regarding members of staff can also be added to CPOMS using the Staff allegation button and only the Head Teacher has access to this area.

14. Dudley's Thresholds and Early Help

If early help is appropriate, the DSL/DDSL 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.

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>

15. When to be concerned

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 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, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. 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.

The following may be indicators of physical abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- *Multiple bruises in clusters, or of uniform shape;*
- *Bruises that carry an imprint, such as a hand or a belt;*
- *Bite marks;*
- *Round burn marks;*
- *Multiple burn marks and burns on unusual areas of the body such as the back, shoulders or buttocks;*
- *An injury that is not consistent with the account given;*
- *Changing or different accounts of how an injury occurred;*
- *Bald patches;*
- *Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning;*
- *Unaccountable covering of limbs, even in hot weather;*
- *Fear of going home or parents being contacted;*
- *Fear of medical help;*
- *Fear of changing for PE;*
- *Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance;*
- *Violence or aggression towards others including bullying; or*
- *Isolation from peers.*

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*

The following may be indicators of emotional abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- *The child consistently describes him/herself in very negative ways – as stupid, naughty, hopeless, ugly;*
- *Over-reaction to mistakes;*
- *Delayed physical, mental or emotional development;*
- *Sudden speech or sensory disorders;*
- *Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies;*

- *Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches;*
- *Self-harming, drug or solvent abuse;*
- *Fear of parents being contacted;*
- *Running away;*
- *Compulsive stealing;*
- *Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia; or*
- *Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis.*

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 or oral sex) 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.

The following may be indicators of sexual abuse (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- *Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge;*
- *Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness or scratching;*
- *Reluctance to go home;*
- *Inability to concentrate, tiredness;*
- *Refusal to communicate;*
- *Thrush, persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains;*
- *Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia;*
- *Attention seeking behaviour, self-mutilation, substance abuse;*
- *Aggressive behaviour including sexual harassment or molestation;*
- *Unusual compliance;*
- *Regressive behaviour, enuresis, soiling;*
- *Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately;*
- *Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group;*
- *Reluctance to undress for PE or swimming; or*
- *Bruises or scratches in the genital area.*

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.

The following may be indicators of neglect (this is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- *Constant hunger;*

- *Stealing, scavenging and/or hoarding food;*
- *Frequent tiredness or listlessness;*
- *Frequently dirty or unkempt;*
- *Often poorly or inappropriately clad for the weather;*
- *Poor school attendance or often late for school;*
- *Poor concentration;*
- *Affection or attention seeking behaviour;*
- *Illnesses or injuries that are left untreated;*
- *Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight;*
- *Failure to develop intellectually or socially;*
- *Responsibility for activity that is not age appropriate such as cooking, ironing, caring for siblings;*
- *The child is regularly not collected or received from school; or*
- *The child is left at home alone or with inappropriate carers.*

16. Specific Safeguarding Issues

The Woodsetton School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people both within the school environment and outside. Because of the day-to-day contact with children and young people, education staff are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in children's behaviour or their failure to develop. It is therefore important; '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, Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees and volunteers working in the school.

Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.

The Woodsetton School is a special school for pupils with complex needs aged 4-11, all of whom are vulnerable. Staff arrangements are in place to meet the needs of all children in school which promotes their safety. In addition, there are numerous ways in which the safety and dignity of pupils are prioritised, including:

- The safe storage, administration and recording of prescribed medication by qualified first aiders in school (further details in our Medicines Policy).
- Rigorous training, which is updated annually for staff in hoisting, minibus wheelchair clamping, Diabetes, PEG feeding, epilepsy, asthma and anaphylaxis.
- Personal plans for individual pupils for Intimate Care, medical conditions, site evacuation, risk assessment of the school site, trips, evacuation, all in addition to group/class plans.

Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) pupils are part of mixed classes with some pupils from Key Stage 1. It is managed by Caterpillar class teacher, Miss Drake under the leadership of the Head Teacher, Mrs. Allen who is trained to advanced level in Safeguarding and Child Protection. Staff in EYFS are trained alongside staff in the main body of school in Safeguarding and Child Protection, Makaton signing, and TEAM TEACH, enabling them to communicate effectively with pupils and quickly spot signs of concern such as changes in behaviour and communication.

Annex B also includes information on further issues to be aware of, including children's involvement in the court system, children with family members in prison, and county lines.

17. Child on Child abuse

We recognise that children can 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 and an unsafe environment for pupils.

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. 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 sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

Child on child abuse can 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)

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise that even if there are 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.
- 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. This could include:

- The DSL putting in 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
- The DSL may 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.

We will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images
 - Being 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
 - Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
 - Ensuring pupils know they can talk to any member of staff by informing them through assemblies, posters and through our curriculum
 - Ensuring staff are trained to understand 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
 - 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 Consensual and Non-consensual sharing of indecent images

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

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), 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:

Police 999 or 101 - 8513087

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.

Curriculum Coverage

Further information on how this will be addressed within our school curriculum can be found in the School's Safeguarding in the Curriculum Policy 2025-26.

18. 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. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

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.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

- Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable
- Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
- Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
- Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
- Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
- Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
- Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practicing FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practiced in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

- Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
- Having limited level of integration within UK society
- Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
- Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to consider the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

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 using [The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) or fm@fco.gov.uk
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

19. Serious violence

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.

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

20. Child Criminal Exploitation

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

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be trafficked, forced to work in cannabis factories, modern slavery, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), involved in gangs and knife crime, forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Involved in gangs and knife crime
- 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

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse.

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

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.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

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 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 go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse 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 missing, 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](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf)

23. Missing pupils

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

The Woodsetton School has in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing from school, we will:

- Notify the Head Teacher, Inform Parents and all relevant agencies immediately (police, social care etc) and as a matter of urgency.
- Review all safeguarding procedures that has led to this incident without delay.

With regards to other issues of a child missing from education, The Woodsetton School will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of the school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- Have ceased to attend the school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend the school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- Have been permanently excluded.

All staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.

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

The school puts significant emphasis on attendance and closely monitors all pupils attendance, contacting home when a student is absent.

The school will hold at least two emergency contacts for each student.

24. Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

The DSL and deputy/deputies will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

25. Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of 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.

Older children may also experience and/or be the perpetrators of domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. This can include sexual harassment.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

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. West Midlands police forces are part of [Operation Encompass](#)

Operation Encompass helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable support to be given to the child according to their needs.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a 'safe time from the team' call can be booked.

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, (see KCSiE 2025).

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 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (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 up 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

The Woodsetton School values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both pupils/students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others

goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

Our school, like all others, is required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The SPOC for The Woodsetton School is Mrs. Sarah Allen

The SPOC is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff of the school are aware of who is the SPOC in relation to protecting students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing students from becoming involved in terrorism, and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism
- Raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of the school in relation to protecting students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Monitoring the effect in practice of the school's RE curriculum and assembly policy to ensure that they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs
- Raising awareness within the school about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting students from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism
- Acting as the first point of contact within the school for case discussions relating to students who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism
- Collating relevant information from/ in relation to referrals of vulnerable students into the Channel project process
- Attending Channel project meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed
- Reporting progress on actions to the Channel** Co-ordinator, and
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner.

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 Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees 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

The Schools Senior Mental Health Lead is Mrs. Sarah Allen (DSL)

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.

The Woodsetton School can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies. More information can be found in the mental health and behaviour in school's guidance. Public Health England has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among young people.

29. LGBT+ pupils

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.

Schools should therefore ensure that they are aware of the increased risk factors and know how to access appropriate support for these young people when required.

Diversity is celebrated and valued within the Woodsetton School.

30. Online Safety

KCSIE outlines that our policies on online safety and the use of mobile and smart technology should also be reflected in your child protection and safeguarding policy. Among other things, this should include filtering and monitoring on school devices and the school network.

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.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- ✓ **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
- ✓ **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as 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** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- ✓ **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

At the Woodsetton School a whole school approach is taken to online safety. We endeavour to ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place. Our Children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and sex and relationship education (SRE).

As schools and colleges increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum.

For example:

- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim
- 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 will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- 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
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones

- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For full details about our school's policies in these areas, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policies which can be found on our website or requested from the school office.

30.1 Opportunities to teach safeguarding

At the Woodsetton School children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

This may include covering relevant issues for schools through **Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) which is a compulsory element from September 2021.**

30.2 Mobile phones and cameras

For further information on the use of mobile phones, cameras and sharing of images please see our e-safety policy and our Acceptable Use policy. There is also additional guidance on Screening and confiscation which has been included in its own separate Woodsetton Policy.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

We recognise that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore the school has developed a policy to outline the required protocol for all employees, pupils, volunteers, Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees and parents/ carers. Staff, volunteers, parents must not use personal phones or devices to take pictures of pupils at any time, even when on educational visits.

The Woodsetton School have appropriate internet filtering and monitor all activity accordingly. Please see our e-safety policy for further information.

31. Children in Care (CiC), Post Children in Care and those in Kinship Care

The Woodsetton School Designated person is Mrs. Sarah Allen who will aim to work in partnership with the Virtual School Coordinator 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 Children in Care, Kinship Care and previous Children in Care safe. We will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about Children in Care's 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 (see above), who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of Children in Care, Kinship Care and previous Children in Care 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 and Safeguarding Team in school to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding Children in Care, those in Kinship Care and previous Children in Care are quickly and effectively responded to.
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of Children in Care, those in Kinship Care and previous Children in Care, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support CiC and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans

We will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep Children in Care and previous Children in Care safe.

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

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff in our school recognise that additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse and neglect in pupils who attend The Woodsetton and who have complex needs. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation than other pupils
- The potential for pupils with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

The named SENCo for the School is Mrs. Sarah Allen.

When working with children in The Woodsetton School, practitioners need to be aware that additional possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child;
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment;
- Poor toileting arrangements;

- Lack of stimulation;
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint;
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification such as deprivation of medication, food or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries;
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child's means of communication;
- Ill-fitting equipment. for example, callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting;
- Misappropriation of a child's finances; or
- Inappropriate invasive procedures.

34. 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. At least 1 person conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

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.

34.1 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

34.2 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
- ✓ Cover our shortlisting process which 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.

34.3 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

34.4 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

34.5 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.

34.6 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
- ✓ Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available

- ✓ 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

As we are a school with children under the age of 8 years old, 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.

34.7 Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- ✓ Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- ✓ Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- ✓ Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

34.8 Existing staff

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'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.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, 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 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.

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

We will also:

- 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

Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees

All schools include:

- ✓ All Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees 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.
- ✓ All Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).
- ✓ The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees will also have the following checks:

- ✓ Identity
- ✓ Right to work in the UK
- ✓ Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

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.

Pupils staying with host families

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

35. 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 or volunteer), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher or volunteer) posing a risk of harm to children, **speak directly to the Headteacher** (NOT to DSL, unless DSL is also the Headteacher). If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the Chief Executive Officer, Mr. David Stanton.

Schools must 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”**

35.1 Duties as an employer and an employee

This part of the guidance is about managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school or college. This guidance should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers and volunteers has:

- **behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;**
- **possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;**
- **behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or**
- **behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.**

For the procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about staff – See Part Four of KCSiE.

35.2 Procedure for dealing with complaints and allegations about the headteacher or proprietor

If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, these should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer, Mr. David Stanton. (In proprietor-led independent schools, concerns about the proprietor(s) directly to the local authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Local Authority Designated Officer: Yvonne Nelson-Brown – 01384 813061

Yvonne.nelson-brown@dudley.gov.uk

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

The headteacher/proprietor will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale.

35.3 Allegations about supply teachers

We will ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately when we are not the employer. Schools cannot simply cease to use this teacher / member of supply staff. Processes should be developed to manage this akin to the disciplinary procedure and the school should advise supply agencies of its process for managing allegations.

35.4 Staff concerns that do not meet the harm threshold.

LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY SECTION

35.4i. What is a low-level concern?

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult has acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- doesn't meet the threshold of harm or is not considered serious enough for the school or college to refer to the local authority.

Low-level concerns are part of a spectrum of behaviour. This includes:

- inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour
- behaviour that might be considered inappropriate depending on the circumstances
- behaviour which is intended to enable abuse.

Examples of such behaviour could include:

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

35.4ii. How do we need to respond to low level concerns?

Having clear procedures for responding to low-level concerns is part of creating a school culture of openness and trust. It helps ensure that adults consistently model the school's values and helps keep children safe. It will also protect adults working in school from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

At The Woodsetton School we expect all staff to adhere to school policy and practice and therefore, report any concerns they may have about other staff members should they feel there is a low-level concern. This should be done in the same way as any other referral / concern about a staff member and should be directed to the Head Teacher in the first instance.

Where the Head Teacher is not available, the information will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), i.e. the most senior member of SLT acting in this role. Low-level concerns about the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be reported to the Head Teacher, Mrs Sarah Allen and those about the Head Teacher will be reported to the CEO of Ascent Academy Trust, Mr David Stanton. Where the low-level concern has been reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they will inform the Head Teacher of the details as soon as possible.

Recording concerns

A summary of the low-level concern should be written down, signed, timed, dated and shared by the person bringing the information forward. Where concerns are reported verbally to the Head Teacher, a record of the conversation will be made by the Head Teacher which will be signed, timed, and dated. This information will be held securely by the Head Teacher.

Responding to low-level concerns

Where a low-level concern has been raised this will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

The Head Teacher will:

- Speak to the person reporting the concern to gather all the relevant information
- Speak to the individual about the concern raised to ascertain their response, unless advised not to do so by the LADO or police (HR advice may also need to be taken).

Where necessary, further investigation will be carried out to gather all relevant information. This may involve speaking to any potential witnesses. The information reported and gathered will then be reviewed to determine whether the behaviour:

- is consistent with the school's Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct: no further action will be required
- constitutes a low-level concern: no further action is required, or additional training/guidance/support may be required to rectify the behaviour via normal day to day

management processes. The employee should understand that failure to improve or a repeat of the behaviour may lead to further action being taken, e.g. via the Capability and Disciplinary Procedures.

- is serious enough to consult with or refer to the LADO: a referral should be made to the LADO and HR advice taken.

Allegations procedure within the Safeguarding Policy and Disciplinary Policy will be followed:

- when considered with any other low-level concerns that have previously been raised about the same individual, should be reclassified as an allegation and referred to the LADO or Police: a referral should be made to the LADO and HR advice taken. In this case, the Local Authority and school's Staff Behaviour and Code of Contact Disciplinary Policy will be followed.

When considered with any other low-level concerns that have previously be made, records will be made of:

- all internal conversations including any relevant witnesses
- all external conversations, e.g. with the LADO
- the decision and the rationale for it
- any action taken.

Can the reporting person remain anonymous?

The person bringing forward the concern will be named in the written record. Where they request to remain anonymous, this will be respected as far as possible. However, there may be circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. where a fair disciplinary investigation is needed or where a later criminal investigation is required.

Should staff report concerns about themselves (ie self-report)?

It may be the case that a person finds themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or might appear compromising to others; or they may have behaved in a manner which on reflection they consider falls below the standard set out in the Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct. In these circumstances they should self-report. This will enable a potentially difficult situation to be addressed at an early opportunity if necessary.

Where behaviour is consistent with the Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct

Feedback will be given to both parties to explain why the behaviour was consistent with the Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct.

Should the low-level concerns file be reviewed?

The records will be reviewed periodically, and whenever a new low-level concern is added, so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified and referred to the LADO if required. A record of these reviews will be retained.

References

Low-level concerns will not be included in references unless a low-level concern, or group of concerns, has met the threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated.

What is the role of the Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees?

The Head Teacher will regularly inform the Chief Executive Officer about the implementation of the low-level concerns policy including any evidence of its effectiveness, e.g. with relevant data. The safeguarding LAB member may also review an anonymised sample to ensure that these concerns have been handled appropriately.

36. Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers are able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. Please refer to the School's separate Whistleblowing Policy.

Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff policies, are in place for such concerns to 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, staff may seek free confidential help from the independent charity, **Public Concern at Work**, Tel: 0207 404 6609 or through whistle@pcaw.co.uk

Staff members can also raise concerns with the [NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/our-services/whistleblowing-advice-line/) on 0800 0280285 from 8.00am to 20.00pm Monday to Friday and from 9.00am to 18.00pm at weekends.

37. Safeguarding in the Curriculum

We will provide opportunities for pupils/students to develop skills, concepts, attitudes and knowledge that promote their safety and well-being. Relevant issues will be addressed through the PSHE curriculum, for example self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness, power, sex and relationship education, e-safety and bullying. Issues will be addressed through other areas of the curriculum, for example, circle time, English, History, Drama, Art.

All policies which address issues of power and potential harm, for example bullying, equal opportunities, handling, positive behaviour, will be linked to ensure a whole school approach. The Child Protection and Safeguarding policy cannot be separated from the general ethos of the school, which should ensure that pupils/students are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.

LAB Members and Trustees should ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. Schools should consider this as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

This may include covering relevant issues for schools through **Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Relationships and Sex Education (for all secondary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) which is now compulsory.**

For KCSIE 2025 further revised guidance on Relationships, Sex and Health Education is due in this next academic year.

38. Special Circumstances

Further School Policies can be requested from School or found on the School Website:

[Home | The Woodsetton School](#)

- Behaviour
- Staff (Behaviour and Code of Conduct)
- Complaints
- Health and safety
- Attendance
- Online safety and IT / Acceptable Use policy
- Equality
- Sex and relationship education
- Curriculum
- Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children

- **First aid and Medication**
- **Privacy notices**
- **GDPR**
- **Whistleblowing**
- **Safer Recruitment**
- **Anti-bullying**
- **IT / Acceptable Use Policy**
- **Collecting children**
- **LGBTQ+**

This policy adheres to the principles under data protection law. For further information please review the school's data protection policy published on the school's website

Appendix 1

Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

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 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 – printed on yellow for a general concern, red for urgent /serious concern)

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

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

Complete the reporting form (*Appendix 3*) reception / staff room noticeboard and hand it directly to the appropriate person. **Do not** leave it in their pigeon hole or on their desk for them to ‘find’. It may be urgent and require an immediate response.

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.

DUDLEY Local Contacts Section

(Relevant contact details are displayed on posters around the school)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Dudley Front Door: | 0300 555 0050 |
| Emergency Duty Team | 0300 555 8574 |
| Local Authority Designated Officer: | Yvonne Nelson-Brown – 01384 813061 |
| Police | 999 or 101 - 8513087 (PC Andy Peters) |
| Child Abuse Investigation Unit | 101 or 0345 113 5000 |
| Local Authority Prevent Officer | Mark.Wilson@dudley.gov.uk |

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 on an Inter-Agency Referral form, by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

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

It is not the responsibility of anyone working within The Woodsetton 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.

The Woodsetton 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 The Woodsetton School 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/ DSG (if the DSL is the Headteacher) 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 Local Advisory Board Members / Trustees. The DSLA will inform the Chair of the Governing Body and will liaise with the Designated Officer for Managing Allegations and HR.

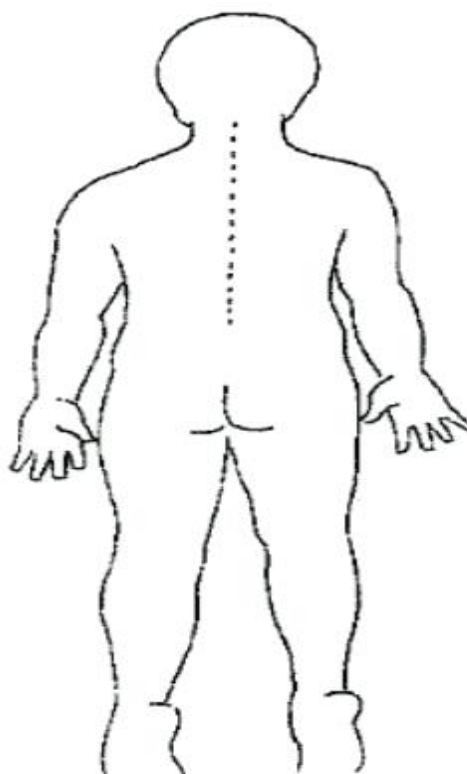
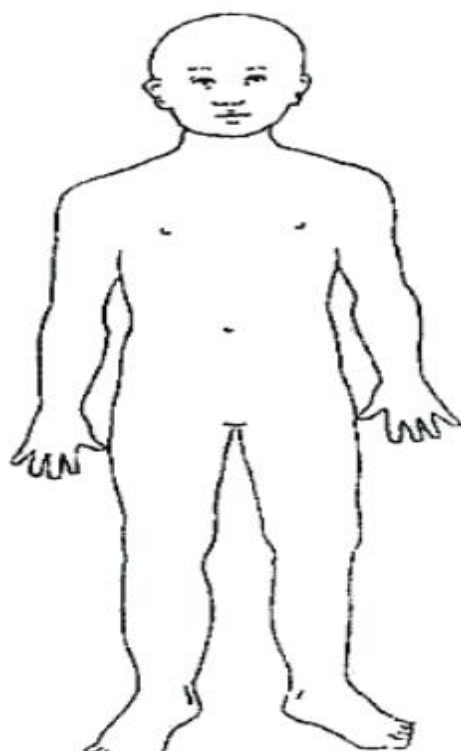
Internal Enquiries and Suspension

- The Headteacher will liaise with the Chair of the GB 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 Head of Human Resources and the DO (Designated Officer for Managing Allegations).
- Irrespective of the findings of the Social Care Team or Police inquiries the Headteacher/Chair of Governing Body 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 Governing 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 school progress, attendance, behaviour, presentation, peer relationships and parental knowledge: | | |



Body Map