Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Updated for KCSIE September 2026

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1. Key Contacts

Post	Postholder	Contact details
Headteacher	Jane Ronan	Tel No – 020 8800 9305 office@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Ciara Neli	Tel No – 020 8800 9305 office@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk
Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Claire Reynolds	Tel No – 020 8800 9305 office@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk
Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Jorgina Joseph	Tel No – 020 8800 9305 office@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk
Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Jane Ronan	Tel No – 020 8800 9305 office@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk
Chair of Governors and Link Governor for Safeguarding	Angela McNicholas & Martha Hawting (co-chairs) Sheri Nathaniel (link governor)	Email addresses: amcnicholas@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk mhawting@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk snathaniel@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)		**Phone**: 020 8489 2968 **Email**: Following an initial conversation, you must complete a LADO referral form (Word, 100KB) (docx, 5 page(s)) and return it to lado@haringey.gov.uk. **Website**: *Allegations against staff and volunteers who work with children | Haringey Council*
Prevent referrals and advice	Haringey Prevent | Haringey Council ***Contact the Prevent team:*** *Email prevent@haringey.gov.uk* Act Early website: ACT Early | Prevent radicalisation ACT Early Support Line on 0800 011 3764	
Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership	Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership – For HSCP Enquiries please email: hscp@haringey.gov.uk 5th Floor, 48 Station Road, Wood Green, London N22 7TY	
Haringey Council's Children's Services Please only use the out of hours number if you are calling outside of normal working hours. Your call will be logged and the operator will take brief details. An out of hours social worker will ring you back.	Child protection | Haringey Council **Child at risk of immediate harm:** Phone: 020 8489 4533 *Monday to Thursday: 8.45am to 5pm; Friday: 8.45am to 4.45pm* **NO immediate risk of harm to a child:** If you are a professional or volunteer working with a child or their family and there is no immediate risk of harm to the child, but the family would benefit from additional support, you should complete the online referral form via this link: Haringey Children's Services Portal **Out of office hours**, including weekends: **020 8489 0000** *Do not use this number if a child needs immediate assistance from the Police or Ambulance Services. In these cases, call 999* **Child Protection Advisors:** 020 8489 2126	
Making a MASH referral	***Contact the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)*** *Phone 020 8489 4470 Out of hours 020 8489 0000*	

	During your phone call (above) if you are a professional working with children you may be asked to complete a **MASH referral form** within 24 hours. This should be emailed securely to: mashreferral@Haringey.gcsx.gov.uk

2. What to do if you have a welfare concern in St Mary's Priory

Safeguarding concern: staff response flowchart

Act promptly, record accurately and keep the child's safety at the centre of every decision.

1 Recognise a safeguarding concern

- Something a child says or communicates that may indicate harm.
- Unexplained injuries or changes in appearance, hygiene or clothing.
- A sudden or concerning change in behaviour, mood or attendance.
- Harmful, abusive or neglectful behaviour you witness.
- A pattern of concerns that increases over time.

Record and report concerns promptly, even if you are unsure.

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2 Respond and record immediately

If the concern is urgent, speak to a DSL first.

- Reassure the child.
- Clarify only where necessary, using TED prompts: **T**ell, **E**xplain, **D**escribe.
- Record on MyConcern, using the child's own words.
- Time and date the record.

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3. Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead

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4 DSL assesses risk and acts

- Consider whether the child is at immediate risk of harm, including whether it is safe for them to go home.
- Refer as appropriate to MASH/children's social care, police, LADO, early help, or internal/community services.
- If unsure, consult MASH or if applicable the child's social worker.

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5 Record decisions and actions

- Record the rationale, action taken and outcome in the child's file.

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6 Monitor and support

- Who is responsible for monitoring and providing support.
- What is being monitored, such as behaviour, appearance or emerging patterns.
- How, when and to whom feedback will be given, and recorded.
- How long will monitoring continue.

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Urgent / out-of-hours

Do not delay where a child may be at risk

- Phone or email the DSL
- Follow the school's out-of-hours procedure.
- Make a direct referral to children's social care or contact the police where required.
- Use the school's safeguarding key contacts.

If the response is inadequate

Staff

- Follow the school's escalation procedure.
- Follow the whistleblowing procedure.

Learners and parents/carers

- Follow the school's complaints procedure.

Key principles

At every stage

- Keep the child's circumstances under review.
- Request further support whenever it is needed.
- Ensure the child's safety remains paramount.

Remember

- Act promptly.
- Record accurately.
- Share with DSL.
- Escalate if the response does not protect the child.

7. Review and request further support where necessary
If concerns continue or increase, return to the DSL.

3. Introduction and Ethos

- **The purpose of this policy is:**
  - To protect the safety, welfare and well-being of the pupils on roll at our school
  - To set out the school's overarching principles, approaches and systems to child protection and safeguarding across all aspects of school life.
  - To ensure staff are aware of their statutory safeguarding duties and responsibilities
  - To ensure staff are well-equipped and confident to recognise and report child protection concerns
  - To promote an open and listening culture where everyone can voice concerns in the knowledge they will be believed, helped and supported.
- **Our core safeguarding principles are:**
  - **Promotion**
    - making sure pupils, parents, staff and all adults that come into contact with children know the systems and the support in place to keep children safe and there is a culture of vigilance permeating across the school
  - **Prevention**
    - positive, supportive, vigilant, open and safe culture. Well taught curriculum that includes relationships and online safety, pastoral opportunities for children and safer recruitment procedures
  - **Protection**
    - following the agreed procedures, ensuring all staff are trained and supported to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns.
  - **Support**
    - for all learners, parents and staff, and where appropriate specific interventions that are required for those who may be at risk of harm.
  - **Working with parents and other agencies**
    - to ensure timely, appropriate communications and actions are undertaken when safeguarding concerns arise.
- St Mary's Priory Catholic Infant and Junior School recognises our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. **Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility** and all those directly connected (staff, volunteers, governors, leaders, parents, families and learners) are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children and have an essential role to play in making this community safe and secure.
- Staff and other adults working with children at St Mary's Priory Catholic Infant and Junior School are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- St Mary's Priory believes that the best interests of children always come first. All children (defined as those up to the age of 18) have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account and all children regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- St Mary's Priory recognises the importance of safeguarding and the promotion of children's welfare at all times. Safeguarding is embedded in all the school's processes and procedures and at the heart of our school to provide an ethos and environment that will help children to be safe and feel safe. In our school children are respected and encouraged to talk openly. All our staff understand safe professional practice and adhere to our safeguarding policies.
- Leaders and staff at St Mary's Priory will promote an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture where racism, and other forms of discriminatory behaviour are recognised, challenged and addressed as part of our safeguarding responsibilities
- St Mary's Priory expects that if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should act immediately. This includes out of hours when the DSL may not be available to speak to, in which case a direct referral should be made to social services – see contact details at the start of this policy.
- This policy is implemented in accordance with our compliance with the statutory guidance from the Department for Education, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2026 (KCSIE) which requires individual schools and colleges to have an effective child protection policy.
- The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, including governors, temporary or third-party agency staff and volunteers and are consistent with those outlined within KCSIE 2026.

4. Legislation and guidance

- This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill 2026 and related guidance. The guidance includes:

  - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
  - Working together to safeguard children (republished March 2026)
  - Allergy in schools (New guidance, July 2026)
  - Behaviour in schools (updated June 2024)
  - Children's social care national framework (updated July 2026)
  - Early Years and Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS) (revised July 2026 effective from 1 September 2026)
  - Data Protection guidance for schools (numerous guidance documents linked to Data Protection)
  - Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education (June 2025 updated August 2025)
  - Inclusion bases in schools guidance (new guidance, June 2026)
  - Information sharing for safeguarding practitioners (May 2024)
  - Martyn's law for education settings - GOV.UK (October 2025)
  - Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges (last updated June 2026)
  - Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (July 2020)
  - Non-school alternative provision: voluntary national standards - GOV.UK (September 2025)
  - Ofsted: Education Inspection Framework (November 2025)
  - *Ofsted School inspection toolkit and operating guide* (In place November 2025 updated June 2026)
  - Online safety guidance for staff (new - replaces cyberbullying guidance, July 2026)
  - Mobile phones in schools (June 2026 – new guidance, became statutory on 29 June 2026)
  - Preventing bullying (updated July 2026)
  - Preventing and tackling the bullying and harassment of school staff (new guidance, published July 2026)
  - Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges (published June 2021, updated April 2026)
  - Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements: virtual school head role extension (March 2024, last updated September 2025)
  - Protecting your setting's images from AI manipulation and abuse (published 2026 by UK Safer Internet Centre; guidance developed by UK Online Harms Early Warning Working Group members)
  - Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (last updated December 2025, teaching from 1 September 2026)
  - Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (Updated/revised December 2025, new title, came into force on 1 April 2026
  - Sharing nudes and semi nudes advice for education settings working with children and young people (March 2024)
  - Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) (March 2024)
  - School suspensions and permanent exclusions (updated June 2026)
  - Taking and using photos and videos, and using CCTV in school (published February 2023, updated July 2026)
  - The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (2014) (guidance revised April 2026)
  - The Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015
  - The Prevent Duty Guidance (Last updated January 2024 and came into force on 1 January 2024)
  - What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (Published in 2015)
  - Working together to improve attendance (last updated July 2026)

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who are pupils at a school, or who are pupils under 18 years of age. Such arrangements will have to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

- Key legislation this policy is based on:

Legislation	What it covers in relation to safeguarding
School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009	• Lists what must be recorded on the single central record • The requirement for at least one person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques.
Children's Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment),	• Provides the framework for the care and protection of children.
Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill 2026	• Creates a mandatory national register for children not in school • Implements a strict statutory duty for all school staff to report child sexual abuse • Establishes multi-agency child protection teams, • Introduces restrictions on mobile phones and harmful online services • Completely removes "supervision exemption" for volunteers. • Establishes a standalone offense for Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)—legally categorizing groomed or manipulated pupils as victims rather than criminals. • Modernises online safety rules by requiring mandatory yearly filtering reviews • Enables robust safeguarding responses to AI-generated "deepfake" intimate images, whether shared consensually or not
Crime and Policing Act 2026	
Data Protection act 2018, the UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (Data protection laws)	• Place duties on schools to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep any information held safe and secure. • Covers data access requests, review of filtering and monitoring systems and actions schools should take if a data breach occurs.
Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Section 5B(11))	• 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.
The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022	• Officially came into force on 27 February • This Act prohibits 16 and 17-year-olds from marrying or entering into a civil partnership, regardless of whether they have parental consent. • Also an offence to cause a child to marry before 18th birthday, also applies to non-binding unofficial marriage.
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974	• Sets out when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006	• Defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children

5. Human Rights, Equalities and Public Sector Equality Duty

- St Mary's Priory is aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA), Equality Act 2010 (including its Public Sector Equality Duty) and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Haringey and other local authorities in which pupils may reside.
- The governing body and senior leaders recognise that, under the HRA, it is unlawful for schools and colleges to act in a way that is incompatible with the Convention. The specific convention rights applying to schools and colleges are:
  - Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
  - Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity
  - Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination, and
  - Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education.

- The governing body and senior leaders recognise being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of these rights, depending on the nature of the conduct and the circumstances.
- The governing body and senior leaders will adhere to the Equality Act, will not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). Consideration will be given to taking positive action if a protected group is facing disadvantage in order to meet a specific need. This will be formally evaluated, risk assessed and documented with all parties being made aware of the reasonable adjustments being made. Any such provisions/adjustments will be reviewed termly and at the end of the academic year.
- The governing body and senior leaders will pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act), to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. The duty applies to all protected characteristics and means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, the governing body and senior leaders will give specific consideration to the equality implications of these such as, for example, the need to eliminate unlawful behaviours that relate to them such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, misogyny/misandry and racism.
- The governing body and senior leaders will review sport provision for mixed and single sex groups, taking account of the sport or game or activity of competitive nature where physical strength, stamina or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average boy (or vice versa). For details, please refer to the school's physical education curriculum documentation.

6. Data protection statement

- The governing body and senior leaders will adhere to the three data protection laws to protect and safeguard the data of staff and pupils to ensure any personal data is processed fairly and lawfully and that information will be held safely and securely.
- The governing body and senior leaders and senior leaders have developed data protection policies and procedures (School website), ensure staff and pupils understand how to comply with these and follow good practice to prevent data breaches. Our policy and procedures are based on the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools and reviewed regularly.
- The governing body and senior leaders have appointed a Data Protection officer who will oversee all aspects of school data protection. This includes the regular review of the school's filtering and monitoring systems and the use of AI tools by staff and pupils. For more details see section 20 below.

7. Related Safeguarding Policies

- This policy is one of an integrated suite of policies, reflecting the whole school approach to safeguarding. It should be read and actioned in conjunction with the policies as listed below:

    - Artificial intelligence (AI) policy
    - Attendance and punctuality
    - Behaviour policy
    - Child-on-child abuse policy
    - Online Curriculum policy
    - Cyber security
    - Data protection and Information sharing
    - Early Years policy
    - First aid, allergies, and managing medical needs
    - Health and safety policy
    - Image use policy *(guidance from DfE* Taking and using photos and videos, and using CCTV in schools)
    - Managing/dealing with allegations against staff policy and procedures
    - Mental health policy
    - Mobile phone policy

- Online safety policy
- Intimate care policy
- Relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) policy
- Physical Intervention policy
- Risk assessments
- Safer recruitment policy
- Social media policy
- Special educational needs policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff disciplinary policy/procedures
- Whistleblowing policy

8. Definitions of safeguarding

- In line with KCSIE 2026, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:
  - providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
  - protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
  - preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
  - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Safeguarding is what we do to prevent children suffering or coming to harm, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Child protection refers to activities undertaken by the school to protect children suffering from harm or likely to suffer from harm. A child includes anyone under the age of 18.
- The safeguarding partners that the school works with to safeguard its pupils as set out in KCSIE are: the local authority; the local clinical commissioning group; and the chief officer of Police for the area that falls under the local authority.
- Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child that covers inflicting harm or failing to prevent the infliction of harm. Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs. Exploitation is the deliberate manipulation or abuse of power used to have control over another person, usually for some form of gain - this can be for a range of reasons including personal, financial or sexual.
- At St Mary's Priory, we are aware that abuse, neglect and exploitation can take place inside and outside the school, inside or outside the home, and online. Section 11 and Appendix 1 provides a more detailed explanation of the different types of abuse and signs and symptoms and specific safeguarding issues.
- At St Mary's Priory, we recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. We also think carefully about the use of the term **'alleged perpetrator(s)**' and where appropriate '**perpetrator(s)**', especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. In managing any incident we are prepared to use any term with which the individual child is most comfortable and on a case-by-case basis.
- At St Mary's Priory, we have adopted the KCSIE 2026 use of the term 'making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes', which refers to the creation, sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images by young people under the age of 18. Images may be taken by the child themselves (sometimes referred to as 'self-generated imagery') or taken or created by another person. They may also be digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including what are sometimes described as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes'.

9. Informing staff and others of safeguarding policy

- All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) will be provided with a copy of this policy. They will be asked to say they have read and understood its contents, are familiar with the school systems and will adhere to them. The policies can be found here – staff portal – and on the school website.

- Visitors to the school site will be asked to read school guidance via the electronic sign in screen detailing our safeguarding arrangements, which also covers fire safety, first aid and health & safety. Visitors will be asked to sign to say they have read, understood and will adhere to these arrangements.
- Parents/carers can obtain a copy of the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy downloaded from the school website together with other related policies, including for online safety, recruitment and child-on-child abuse. (St Mary's Priory website). Additionally, these and other policies are available from the school office on request.
- Pupils will be made aware of the school's systems in age-appropriate ways through displays around the school site, verbally, at school assemblies, and via the school website. The DSL will ensure pupils have understood and are aware that they can raise concerns at any time, they will be listened to, taken seriously and their wishes respected (where possible), given the necessary support and kept informed of actions being taken.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

- The Governing Body takes responsibility for strategic leadership that is a 'whole school approach' for the school's safeguarding arrangements and that these will comply with their duties under legislation and have full regard to KCSIE 2026. This includes ensuring the school's policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- The Governing body will ensure the school's systems enable pupils to report what is happening to them.
- The Governing body will ensure the appointed DSL is a senior member of staff. The role of the DSL (and deputies) is set out in KCSIE Annex C, summarised in the section below and will be made explicit in the job description of postholders.
- St Mary's Priory has a nominated governor for safeguarding. The nominated governor(s) will support the DSL and have oversight in ensuring that the school has an effective policy which interlinks with other related policies; that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed; and that the policies are reviewed at least annually and when required.
- All governors will undertake safeguarding training and additional training on specific issues, such as online safety and Prevent. This will be part of ongoing and regular programme of training to build knowledge and understanding of safeguarding across all members of the Governing Body.
- The governing body will take an active role in monitoring safeguarding arrangements and providing support to the DSL in line with Part 2 KCSIE 2026. This will include visits to school, regular contact with the DSL and other staff working to protect children and reviewing information provided to them concerning pupils' welfare and safety, including for online safety. Governors will also seek the views of pupils and parents/carers as part of their monitoring arrangements to check on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.
- The governing body will receive reports and review the checks made on the school's filtering and monitoring systems
- The governing body and leadership team at St Mary's Priory Catholic Infant and Junior Schools recognises the significant level of responsibility of the DSL role. They will ensure the postholder (and any deputies) are given the additional time, funding, training, resources, and support needed to carry out the role effectively. They will also ensure there is adequate cover if the DSL is unavailable and that any staff supporting or deputising for the DSL will have access to reporting channels (MyConcern) so that no safeguarding raised concerns/issues raised by staff or parents/carers are missed and can be dealt with quickly**.**

Headteacher

- The Headteacher will ensure that the suite of policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection adopted by the school's Governing Body are understood and followed by all staff.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The school has appointed a member of the leadership team (Ciara Neli - Inclusion Lead) as the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Additionally, the school have appointed Deputy DSLs (Jane Ronan – Headteacher; Claire Reynolds – Deputy Headteacher; Jorgina Joseph – Deputy Headteacher) who will have delegated responsibilities, act in the DSL's absence and to support the DSL on a day-to-day basis.
- The school has a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), with safeguarding responsibilities shared between the DSL and the Headteacher. The safeguarding team comprise of one DSL and three Deputy

DSLs (DDSLs), with all members maintaining oversight of cases through weekly Vulnerable Children Meetings and a shared approach to safeguarding practice.

- The DSL has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems in St Mary's Priory. Whilst the activities of the DSL may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated.
- The DSL has overall responsibility for online safety and digital leadership, including understanding the filtering and monitoring systems in place. The DSL will delegate and coordinate the different aspects of online safety to relevant the headteacher, Computing Lead, IT team, Operations and Senior School Business Manager.
- Job descriptions that align to KCSIE 2026 Annex B are in place for the DSL and deputy DSLs and listed in full in Appendix 2 as set out in KCSIE Annex C. The prime roles and responsibilities of the DSL and DDSLs are to:
    - Manage and deal with reports of concerns from staff and other sources and manage referrals to local authority children's social care, Channel programme, the Disclosure and Barring service ad to the Police where a crime may have been committed
    - Working with others
    - Information sharing and managing the child protection file
    - Raising awareness
    - Training, knowledge and skills
    - Providing support to staff
    - Understanding the views of children
    - Holding and sharing information
- The DSL will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same standard as the DSL. The DSL's and any deputy DSLs' training will be updated formally every two years, but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods at regular intervals and at least annually.
- The Headteacher will be kept informed of any significant issues by the DSL.
- The DSL will take responsibility for receiving and acting on all Operation Encompass notifications and liaising with the relevant agencies.
- The DSL and DDSLs will be given the additional time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the role effectively. This may include handling of referrals to children's social care and multi-agency working, together with other training pertinent to the school's context and evolving safeguarding issues.
- The DSL will provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters, taking part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or supporting other staff to do so, and contributing to the assessment of children.
- The DSL will ensure that all staff receive the necessary safeguarding training, and that this will be regularly updated to ensure currency and keep the profile of safeguarding high.
- The DSL will ensure that where children leave the school (including in year transfers) their child protection file, including a structured summary identifying current safeguarding concerns, relevant context and ongoing support, is transferred to the new school. If appropriate, the DSL will share information in advance of the child's arrival at their new school. The DSL will review any information about a child joining the school (including in year transfers) that is received from the previous school to ensure no information is missed which could impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.
- The DSL, working with the Headteacher, will ensure that all safeguarding and welfare requirements set out in Section 3 of the Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework are implemented and adhered to and monitored. This includes oversight of EYFS safeguarding arrangements, staff suitability, supervision, paediatric first aid, intimate care, safe eating practices and the welfare of children in Nursery and Reception.
- DSL availability
    - During term time the DSL (or a deputy) will always be available (during school/office hours) for staff in the school to discuss and respond to any safeguarding concerns. This will be in person, in very exceptional circumstances this maybe by telephone and/or Microsoft Teams or other such acceptable

media. A member of the safeguarding team is on site until at least 4:15pm each day. For after these hours, and during school holiday periods, all safeguarding team contact details are shared with staff and Haringey Local Authority.

- The DSL will ensure that information can be shared across the safeguarding team. At St Mary's Priory, a confidential shared mailbox or equivalent system is in place to ensure that safeguarding concerns are received monitored and acted upon without delay (office@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk) Details of the mailbox are also published on the school website signposting who to contact in the event of a safeguarding concern, so that anyone outside the school can raise safeguarding concerns.
- The school will inform parents of the out of hours reporting arrangements and cover arrangements for out of hours and out of term activities.

Members of Staff

- All members of staff have a responsibility to:
  - Provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
  - Be aware it can happen here and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
  - Build trusted relationships with children and young people that facilitates communication.
  - Actively promote the welfare and safeguarding of pupils, including their online safety,
  - Understand the school's safeguarding policies and systems.
  - Know what to do if a child tells them that he or she is being abused or neglected and understand the impact abuse and neglect can have upon a child.
  - Understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.
  - Be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children
  - Be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online, and who may need help or protection.
  - Undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction and ongoing regular updates as required, and at least annually, so that they have the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
  - To exercise professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
  - Reassure a child that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe; never give the child the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of abuse and/or neglect; and never make a child feel ashamed for making a report.
  - Be aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.
  - Be aware of the process for community-based Family Help assessments and be prepared to identify children who may benefit from Family Help which aims to provide support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
  - Be aware of the process of making referrals to children's social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
  - Be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues.
  - Know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality and the importance of recording and information sharing.
  - Understand the wider definitions of child-on-child abuse and be aware of specific issues such as cyberbullying, sexual violence, sexual harassment and exploitation as set out in KCSIE Part 1 and Annex A.

- Be aware of the school's child-on-child abuse policy, anti-bullying strategy and the role they play in preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse.
- Be alert to the signs and impact of prejudice-based harm and ensure that concerns are considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate, recognising that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice, and other forms of discrimination. Also that such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health, and willingness to seek help.
- Be aware of the school's online safety policy and expectations for use of online technologies both inside and out of school, including the safe use of generative AI.

Children and Young People

- Children and young people (learners) have a right to:
  - Feel safe, be listened to, know their concerns will be taken seriously, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account.
  - Contribute to the development of school safeguarding policies.
  - Receive help from a trusted adult.
  - Learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

Parents and Carers

- Parents/carers have a responsibility to:
  - Understand and adhere to the relevant school policies and procedures.
  - Talk to their children about safeguarding issues and support the school in their safeguarding approaches.
  - Identify behaviours which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm including online and seek help and support from the school or other agencies.
  - Speak to school staff if they have any concerns about the welfare, well-being and safety of their children.

11. Recognising Indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation

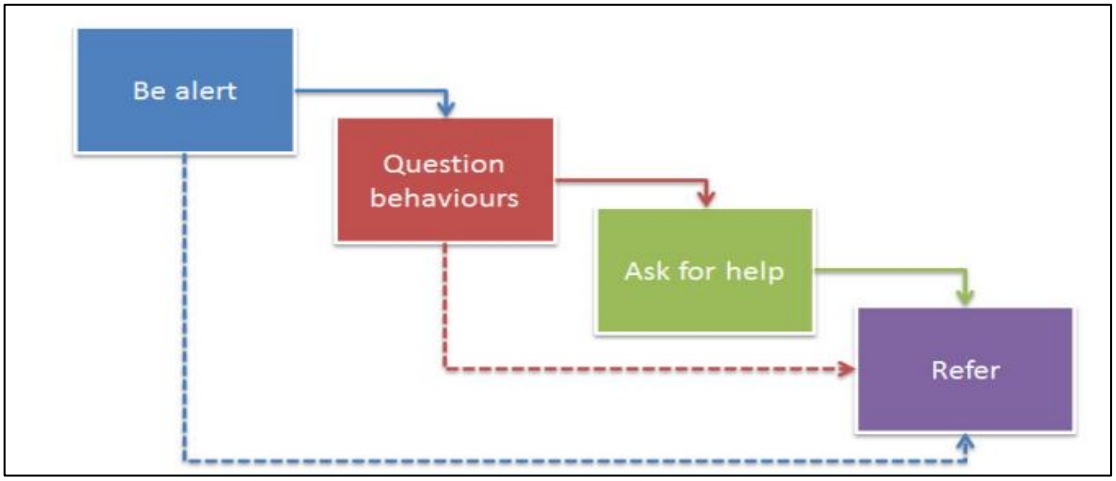
- All staff at St Mary's Priory are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below and Appendix 1), as identified by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.
- All staff understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home and online. All staff, but especially the DSL (and deputies) must take account of the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur and consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.
- Harm can also 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.
- St Mary's Priory recognises that when assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm there are four categories of abuse:
  - Physical abuse
  - Sexual abuse
  - Emotional abuse
  - Neglect

  The school recognises that abuse, neglect, exploitation and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

  For further information see Appendix 1 of this policy. Links to advice and support can be found at the end of KCSIE Annex 1.
- All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and/or alcohol misuse, deliberately missing education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. A wider range of specific issues includes (but not limited to):

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children and the court system
- Children with family members in prison
- Children absent from education (CAE), home or care
- Child-on-child abuse (including cyberbullying, racial, prejudicial and discriminatory bullying
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- County Lines
- Cybercrime
- Domestic abuse
- Honour based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage)
- Gender based abuse and violence against women and girls Gangs and youth violence
- Homelessness
- Honour based abuse (so called)
- Making & sharing nudes and semi-nudes (including those generated by AI)
- Mental health
- Modern slavery & the National Referral Mechanism
- Online safety (including awareness of the school's systems for filtering and monitoring)
- Preventing radicalisation and extremism
- Relationship abuse
- Serious Violence
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- Upskirting

- Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in KCSIE Annex A and Appendix 3 of this policy.
- Members of staff are aware that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child.
- **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.
- **All** staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.
- It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused however all concerns should be taken seriously and explored by the DSL on a case-by-case basis.
- All members of staff are expected to be aware of and follow this approach if they are concerned about a child (taken from 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' DfE 2015)



- Parental behaviours' may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff should also be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.
- Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside school and/or can occur between children offsite. Children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families.

Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

- By understanding the indicators or abuse and neglect, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family.
- **In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy.**

12. Child protection procedures – taking action

- St Mary's Priory School adheres to the Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures (Haringey LA). The full Haringey LA procedures and additional guidance relating to specific safeguarding issues can be found here Child protection | Haringey Council and on the Haringey Safeguarding Children Partnership website https://haringeyscp.org.uk/.
- Staff (volunteers, governors, contractors, agency and supply staff and visitors) must follow the school procedures set out in this and the following sections should they identity or have a worry about a child protection issue. The actions staff and other adults should take if there are any safeguarding concerns about a pupil are listed below. This will be covered in staff training, including new staff induction. Visitors will be provided with an information sheet on arrival, summarising the school systems and how they should pass on any child protection concerns. If anyone is unsure about reporting concerns, they must speak to the DSL and they can also refer to the DfE publication 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (March 2015).
- All staff are made aware of the process for making requests for support referrals for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- St Mary's Priory School recognises that some children have additional or complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them.

Action if a child is in immediate danger or suffering harm or likely to suffer harm

- As soon as a member of staff or adult working in the school becomes aware that a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger they must let the DSL know immediately.
- The member of staff must make a record of what the child (ideally contemporaneously) is telling them/has told them and also record this on MyConcern as soon as soon as possible after the alert to the DSL. The handwritten record should be scanned and added to the electronic record (see details under making a record of a concern).
- The DSL, along with the relevant Deputy DSLs will review the case and decide on the next steps. If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a request for support should be made immediately to Haringey's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), and/or the police. Referrals will follow the Haringey's referral procedures and the expectations set out in KCSIE and in Chapter 3 of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2026.
- **If the DSL or deputy DSL is not available, for example out of school hours, then any staff member or other adults can make a referral**. The contact numbers for the MASH team are listed at the front of this policy. During this call you should seek the advice about notifying parents, remembering that in some situations this could be unsafe or cause the child more harm. During your phone call if you are a professional working with children you may be asked to complete a **MASH referral form** within 24 hours. This should be emailed securely to mashreferral@Haringey.gcsx.gov.uk.
- Any member of staff/adult making a **direct referral to the MASH team** must inform the DSL as soon as possible, verbally and provide a written record of the concerns and actions taken.

Action if a concern about a child is not in immediate danger or risk

- Staff must be vigilant at all times. In doing this staff may well notice safeguarding concerns that do not place a child at immediate risk of harm. Staff must be mindful that no concern is too small not to share and that they are vital in helping the DSL to build a picture of the child's well-being, welfare, mental health and safety and take the necessary action. Examples of concerns could be a child looking unkempt, saying or making a comment that arouses your suspicions or a change in character/behaviour.
- Staff must follow school procedures and record the concern on MyConcern. The DSL will ensure that there is continuous monitoring of the MyConcern throughout the day so no concerns are missed and any necessary actions are taken. The school also uses a confidential email for sharing information, which is also routinely monitored, and can be used by staff in out of school hours or by parents/carers. The

address is office@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk . Members of staff should never hesitate in also discussing their concern with the DSL or deputy DSL. The DSL or deputy DSL will review this information, with any other safeguarding concerns they have on record, and take any necessary actions.

Guidance on receiving a disclosure from a child

Staff should follow this approach:

- Listen to what the child has to say. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions. Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing in telling you. Let them know they are being taken seriously and that nothing they say is or will cause a problem. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner.
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset. Do not in any circumstance promise to keep what they have told you a secret. Explain you will have to pass this information on and what will happen next.
- If possible, make a handwritten record as the child speaks. If this is not possible, make a handwritten record as soon as possible afterwards. Follow the school procedure to also make a report on MyConcern.
- Speak to a DSL or deputy DSL immediately if the child is in **immediate risk** or **has been harmed** as noted above.
- Under no circumstances should the staff member undertake any investigation into the concern.
- Any allegations about staff must be reported directly to the headteacher, or in their absence, a deputy headteacher, unless the allegation is against the headteacher in which case the chair of governors should be informed. See later section.

Making a record of a concern or disclosure

- Any child protection concerns should be entered into MyConcern. If the concern is a direct disclosure from a child then this should be recorded in writing so there is a contemporaneous record of the disclosure, which can be used as evidence should a case go to court. Any notes you make by hand or other evidence such as photo you of a concerning drawing or words used by the pupil in their books/on paper should be attached to also from part of the contemporaneous record. The start, end time, location and date should be added to the report. A summary of the report should be made on MyConcern and the DSL or deputy informed immediately. Any photographic evidence and/or a copy of the contemporaneous handwritten notes should also be uploaded and attached to this record.

Decision making on actions to take

- Staff at St Mary's Priory will always work in the best interest of the child in deciding what actions to take following a safeguarding concern being raised.
- The options to take:
  - managing any support of the child internally via the school's own pastoral processes, including considering where doing so does not place the child at additional risk and whether the DSL or deputy DSL should inform parents/carers to further support the child's wellbeing,
  - undertaking a family help assessment
  - making a referral to statutory services, for example as the child may need, is in need or is suffering to likely to suffer harm.
- All decision of actions being taken are recorded in detail on MyConcern together with the rationale for the decision and any subsequent follow up.

13. Notifying parents and carers of child protection concerns

- St Mary's Priory recognises the important role that parents and carers play in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of their children. Wherever appropriate, we will work openly and collaboratively with parents/carers to ensure children receive the support and protection they need.
- Parents/carers will be informed of child protection concerns unless there is a valid reason not to do so. For example, if to do so would put a child at risk of harm or would undermine a criminal investigation. Such discussions will be undertaken by the DSL or deputy DSL, although this may be delegated to another member of staff who is part of the safeguarding team, and maybe already working in with the family.
- When parents/carers are informed, this will be done sensitively, honestly and in a manner that supports the child's welfare. The conversation will cover the nature of the concern, the actions being taken (where appropriate), and any support being proposed.

- The DSL or deputy DSL will liaise with Haringey's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), before making a decision not to inform parents/carers of a child protection concern. Where a decision is made not to inform parents immediately, the rationale for this decision, including any advice received from the MASH team, will be clearly recorded within the child's safeguarding records. Records will include the decision-making process, actions taken, and any subsequent review.
- In the event of a request for support to the Haringey's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) being necessary. Parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought by the DSL in line with guidance provided by Haringey's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- Parents/carers will normally be notified in the case of allegations of abuse made against other pupils, unless it is unsafe to do so. The same applies to the person(s) the allegation is made against if they are a child.

14. Multi-Agency Working

- St Mary's Priory recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work within the Haringey multi-agency safeguarding (MASH) arrangements. The leadership team and DSL and DDSLs will work to establish strong and co-operative local relationships with professionals in the safeguarding partners and other agencies and sources of support in line with statutory guidance.
- The school recognises the importance of multi-agency and partnership working and is committed to working alongside all agencies to provide a coordinated response to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. This includes contributing to Haringey LA processes as required. Such as, participation in relevant safeguarding multi-agency plans and meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings, Family Help or other early help multi-agency meetings.

15. Community based Early Help assessment & statutory children's social care assessments

Community based Early Help assessment

- St Mary's Priory, in line with Working together to safeguard children (2026), recognises the importance of early recognition and intervention in safeguarding children. The school understands that early identification and response to emerging concerns can improve a family's resilience and reduce the chance of a problem getting worse.
- St Mary's Priory recognises that safeguarding is a shared responsibility and that children and families may require different levels of help, support and protection at different times. The school will work in partnership with social care, the police and health services to ensure that children receive appropriate help at the earliest opportunity and that safeguarding concerns are responded to promptly. The school will adopt a child-centred approach, with the child's wishes, feelings, experiences, strengths, identity, culture and individual circumstances considered, alongside the views and circumstances of parents, carers and, when appropriate, the wider family network.
- Staff receive training so they can recognise when a child or family may benefit from additional support and are familiar with the Haringey's safeguarding local arrangements for accessing community-based Early Help and to be alert to the potential for early help, identify children that may benefit from early help and raise their concerns with the DSL.

Community based Family Help assessment

- St Mary's Priory recognises that Family Help is a voluntary process, requiring the family's consent to receive support and services. However, consent will not be treated as a barrier where safeguarding concerns require a statutory response.
- The school follows the guidance in paragraph 144 of Working Together to safeguard children (2026) in conducting effective Family Help assessments.
- If the DSL views that a Family Help assessment is appropriate they or the deputy DSL will lead on liaising with other agencies and in setting up inter-agency assessment, as required. Staff may be required to contribute and/or provide support in the early help assessment. They will ensure the appropriate early help support is put in place to support the child.
- The DSL will keep all Family Help cases under constant review and consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. If, after the request for support or any other planned external intervention, a child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will take further actions. This may include a request for advice and support to Haringey's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Children in Need

- Where a child appears to meet the definition of a child in need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, the school will make a referral to Haringey's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), The DSL or deputy DSL may discuss this with the Haringey's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), and ahead of making the formal referral.
- The school will contribute relevant information to a Section 17 assessment and will work with the allocated lead practitioner and other agencies to identify the child's needs, agree appropriate support and put in place a child in need plan for voluntary family support.
- The school recognises that such assessments are ongoing processes and any new information or changes in circumstances will be communicated to the lead practitioner and/or other relevant professionals. If needed, the school will work with allocated lead practitioner and other agencies in any reconsideration of the level of support or intervention to be reconsidered.

Statutory social care assessments

- At St Mary's Priory, if a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm we will immediately make a referral to Haringey's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), and (and if appropriate the police).
- Referrals will follow the local referral process and the expectations set out in KCSIE and in Chapter 3 section 3 of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2026.
- As part of the referral and children's social care assessment, we will provide as much information as possible so that all the available evidence is considered to enable a contextual approach to address such harm. We will fully participate in the multi-agency assessment, support working with the child/children and effective strategy discussion. This includes consideration of extrafamilial harm and contexts outside of home.
- At St Mary's Priory, we will ensure we do all we can to support the (section 17 or Section 47) assessment and any child protection arrangements put in place to safeguard the child/children. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, follow Haringey's escalation procedures.

16. Confidentiality, information sharing and record keeping

Confidentiality

- All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep any information confidential, they also have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise confidentiality in situations which might compromise a child's safety or wellbeing.
- The Headteacher or DSL (and DDSL and members of the safeguarding Team) will share information about a child on a 'need to know' basis to help maintain confidentiality.
- Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping below and allegations of abuse against staff in the section below and in the school's policy – staff portal .

Information Sharing

- The Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. The school may legitimately share information without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; and, if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- At St Mary's Priory, we understand our responsibility to share, hold and use information for safeguarding purposes. We recognise our duty to share relevant information with appropriate agencies in matters relating to child protection at the earliest opportunity. A statutory Information Sharing Duty, outlined in KCSIE 2026, comes into force on 30 September 2026. We follow the DfE Guidance on Information Sharing (May 2024) and will also adhere to any guidance published by the DfE and/or Information Commissioners Office in relation to the Information Sharing Duty. We recognise that early information sharing is vital in the effective identification and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and in promoting children's welfare, including in relation to educational outcomes.
- The safety of the child is always paramount, any concerns about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of ensuring the welfare and safety of pupils.

- Staff should never promise a student that they will not pass on child protection concerns to the relevant staff and agencies. However, the child should be reassured that:
  - their disclosure will be taken seriously, and it is not creating a problem
  - their disclosure will only be shared with relevant staff
  - staff will be sensitive to their feelings and concerns
  - their wishes will be heard
  - they will be kept informed of actions and support.
- St Mary's Priory has an appropriately trained Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) to ensure that our school is compliant with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements.
- DfE Guidance on Information Sharing (May 2024) provides further detail. The 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and can support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This can be found in our staffroom and in the staff portal.
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputies).

Record keeping

- Staff must record all safeguarding concerns and disclosures on the school's safeguarding recording system (MyConcern**)** as soon as practicable and without delay. Records should be factual, clear and accurate and, where a child has made a disclosure, should include the child's own words wherever possible. Where staff make handwritten notes, these should be signed and dated and be added to the child's electronic safeguarding record as soon as practicable.
- Where there is an immediate safeguarding concern, the member of staff must speak to the DSL or DDSL immediately. Reporting an urgent concern takes priority over completing the written record; the record should then be completed as soon as practicable. Where injuries have been observed, a body map should be completed where appropriate.
- Safeguarding records should include, where relevant:
  - a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, disclosure or incident;
  - the child's account or words;
  - details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
  - details of actions taken, decisions reached and the outcome;
  - the rationale for decisions, including whether a referral was made and, where a referral was not made, the reasons for this decision;
  - details of relevant discussions with the child, parents/carers, DSL, other staff or relevant agencies; and
  - details of any further action, monitoring or review required.
- If members of staff are in any doubt about recording requirements, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.
- Safeguarding records are kept for individual children and are maintained separately from all other records relating to the child in the school. Safeguarding records are kept in accordance with data protection legislation and are retained centrally and securely by the DSL (an DDSLs). Safeguarding records are shared with staff on a 'need to know' basis only.
- Relevant records of telephone calls, face-to-face conversations, meetings, emails and other communications relating to safeguarding concerns should also be recorded on the safeguarding system to maintain a clear and, where appropriate, chronological record of the child's safeguarding history.
- Relevant information held within other school records, such as attendance and punctuality, behaviour, first aid, medical information or records of support provided to the child, should be considered where it may contribute to understanding the child's safeguarding circumstances. Where relevant, this information should be cross-referenced or incorporated into the safeguarding record.

Sharing information between schools – child leaving the school

- All child protection and safeguarding records will be transferred securely and in accordance with current data protection legislation and safeguarding guidance when a child moves to another school. The child protection file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, under confidential cover, and directly

to the DSL at the receiving school. The school will request and retain confirmation that the file has been received securely.

- In addition to transferring the child protection file, the DSL will consider whether any safeguarding information should be shared with the DSL at the receiving school before the child leaves. Where appropriate and lawful, relevant information will be shared securely to ensure continuity of safeguarding arrangements and support, particularly where there are ongoing concerns, support plans, referrals, or other information that the receiving school needs to be aware of to safeguard and support the child effectively.
- Information will only be shared where there is a lawful basis for doing so and in accordance with the principles of data protection, confidentiality and information sharing. The DSL will ensure that only relevant and necessary information is shared and that safeguarding considerations take precedence where there is a risk of harm to the child.
- Where a child protection or safeguarding file is extensive, the DSL will provide a structured safeguarding summary to accompany the file. The summary will highlight the key safeguarding concerns, significant events and chronology, actions taken, referrals and involvement of external agencies, current risks, protective factors, and any ongoing support or safeguarding arrangements. It will also identify any actions or follow-up required by the receiving school. The summary will be factual, concise and professionally recorded, and will not replace the full child protection file, which will be transferred securely to the receiving school.

Sharing information between schools – child joining the school

- The DSL will confirm receipt of any child protection or safeguarding file from the child's previous school and ensure that it is stored securely and separately from the main pupil record, in accordance with current data protection legislation and safeguarding guidance.
- The DSL will review the child protection file as soon as practicable and consider whether any information requires immediate action, including current safeguarding concerns, referrals, risk assessments, safety plans, support arrangements or involvement from external agencies. Where necessary, the DSL will liaise directly with the previous school's DSL and/or relevant agencies to ensure continuity of safeguarding support.
- Where safeguarding concerns are known or identified before or during a child's admission, the DSL will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place from the child's first day at the school. Relevant staff will be informed on a need-to-know basis. Where appropriate, the DSL will also make direct contact with the previous school's DSL to discuss the concerns and ensure that a full and effective safeguarding handover takes place.
- Where the child protection file is extensive, the DSL may request or agree a structured safeguarding summary from the previous school to support an effective handover. The summary should highlight key safeguarding concerns, significant events and chronology, actions taken, referrals and agency involvement, current risks, protective factors, ongoing support arrangements and any actions requiring follow-up. The summary will support, but will not replace, the full child protection file.
- The DSL will maintain a clear record on MyConcern of the safeguarding information received, discussions with the previous school or relevant agencies, decisions made, actions taken and the outcome of the safeguarding handover.

17. Staff Induction, Awareness and Training

- School leaders, including the DSL will read the entire KCSIE document, and be familiar with the links embedded in KCSIE that provide additional and explanatory information and guidance.
- All members of staff have been provided with a copy of part one of KCSIE (2026) which covers safeguarding information for all staff. School leaders and all members of staff who work directly with children will also be expected to read Annex A within KCSIE 2026.
- All members of staff have signed to confirm that they have read and understood KCSIE Part One and Annex A. The school keeps a record of staff confirmation that they have read these documents. This is kept by the Headteacher (to be added to the SCR).
- **All** staff are expected to be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding. This will be explained to them as part of staff induction and updated on a regular to ensure they are fully aware of current practice. This includes:
    - safeguarding and child protection policy, which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse or a signpost to this

  - behaviour policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
  - safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods
  - staff behaviour policy (often known as code of conduct) – this should include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle blowing.
  - role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).
- At St Mary's Priory, we aim to keep the profile and importance of safeguarding high with staff, pupils, parents, governors/trustees, visitors and other adults who are associated or work with the school.
- All staff members (including agency and third-party staff) will receive appropriate child protection training induction.
- All staff will receive the following training:
  - annual safeguarding and child protection update/refresher training
  - annual online safety training which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
  - regular training in cyber security
  - ongoing training in the safe use of generative AI
  - a range of other specific safeguarding issues have been prioritised by leaders as most pertinent to the school. This includes training in Prevent, mental health, child-on-child abuse and domestic violence.
- All staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates via staff meetings and emails, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- The DSL will ensure that all new staff and volunteers (including agency and third-party staff) receive child protection training including in online safety, behaviour management and the staff code of conduct to ensure they are aware of the school internal safeguarding processes as part of their induction.
- All staff members (including volunteers, agency and third-party staff) will be made aware of the school expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the staff code of conduct, Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), online safety policy, social media policy and Safer Use of AI policy.
- Staff will be encouraged to contribute to and shape school safeguarding arrangements and child protection policies via input at staff meetings and ongoing training.
- The DSL and Headteacher will provide regular reports to the governing body detailing safeguarding training undertaken by all staff and will maintain up to date register of who has been trained.
- Although the school has a nominated lead(s) for the governing body, all members of the governing body will access appropriate safeguarding training which covers their specific strategic responsibilities on a regular basis.

18. Safer Working Practice

- All members of staff are required to work within our clear guidelines on safer working practice as outlined in the school staff code of conduct.
- Staff will be made aware of St Mary's Priory behaviour management and restrictive intervention policies, and that any physical interventions/use of reasonable force must be in line with agreed policy and procedures and DfE guidance - see section 38 below.
- All staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (such as email, mobile phones, texting, social networking) and the use of generative AI in their work. Staff will adhere to relevant school policies including staff code of conduct, Acceptable Use/online safety policies, social media and policies relating to pupils' health and safety.

19. Staff Supervision and Support

- Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.
- The induction process will include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if members of staff have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- The school will provide appropriate supervision and support for all members of staff to ensure that:

  - All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
  - All staff are supported by the DSL in their safeguarding role.
  - All members of staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time.

- The DSL will also put staff in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they so wish. Staff can also approach organisations such as their Union, the Haringey Education Support Partnership or other similar organisations directly.
- The school will ensure that members of staff who are working within the foundation stage are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (September 2026).

20. Online safety

- It is recognised by St Mary's Priory School that the use of technology presents challenges and risks to children and adults both inside and outside of school. As a school we will empower, protect and educate the community in their use of technology and establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate. The school sees technology and its use permeating all aspects of school. Our integrated approach to online safety is set out in detail in:
  - Online safety policy
  - Safer Use of AI policy
  - Mobile phone and social media policies
  - Use of images policy
  - Remote learning policy
  - Threaded through other policies, including policies for the curriculum, subject teaching, behaviour, child-on-child abuse and RSE/PSHE.
  - Role and responsibilities of the DSL
- The school identifies that the breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk as set out in KCSIE:
  - **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories,
  - **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes,
  - **conduct:** online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying,
  - **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If staff feel pupils, pupils or staff are at risk, it should be reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (https://apwg.org/) and to the DSL.
- The Headteacher and DSL have overall responsibility for online safeguarding within the school but will liaise as necessary with other members of staff.
- St Mary's Priory School uses a wide range of technology. This includes computers, laptops, tablets, Chromebooks, the internet, our learning platform (Google Classroom and Tapestry), email systems, messaging systems, generative artificial intelligence, and other digital devices and systems. All school owned devices and systems will be used in accordance with our acceptable use policies and with school's appropriate safety and security measures in place. All devices owned by staff, pupils and visitors will also be used in accordance with our acceptable use policies and the appropriate safety and security measures.
- St Mary's Priory recognises the specific risks that can be posed by mobile technology, including mobile phones and cameras. In accordance with KCSIE 2026 and EYFS 2026, school has appropriate policies in place that are shared and understood by all members of the community. Further information regarding the specific approaches relating to this can be found in our online safety, social media and acceptable use policies which can be found in the staff room, staff portal and school website.
- St Mary's Priory will do all we reasonably can to limit children's exposure to online risks through our school IT systems and will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and that these meet the DfE standards for filtering and monitoring (March 2026). These are:

1. identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems
2. review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
3. block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning
4. have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs, which also covers use of generative artificial intelligence.

- To ensure we meet the standards for filtering and monitoring, we will:
  - consider the number of and age range of their children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks
  - be informed in part, by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty
  - ensure the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified
  - inform all users that use of our systems can be monitored, and that monitoring will be in line with data protection, human rights and privacy legislation.
  - require pupils, staff and visitors if they discover unsuitable sites or material,
    - report the concern immediately to a member of staff
    - report the URL of the site to technical staff/services
  - record and report to the DSL, Headteacher, Senior Business & Operations Manager and appropriate technical staff, any filtering breaches or concerns identified through our monitoring approaches.
  - immediately report any access to material believed to be illegal to the appropriate agencies, such as the Internet Watch Foundation and the Police.
  - ensure that in implementing appropriate filtering and monitoring - “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding
  - ensure any use of generative artificial intelligence is covered by the school’s filtering and monitoring systems
  - regularly check on the effectiveness of the filtering and monitoring systems and keep formal records of these checks, and report findings to governors
  - review the standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support schools and colleges in meeting this standard.
  - School filtering is provided by London Grid for Learning (LGfL) and is approved by the UK Safer Internet Centre.
- St Mary’s Priory recognises consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes as a safeguarding issue; all concerns must be reported to and dealt with by the DSL (or deputy). The school will adhere to its protocol/procedures, which follow the DfE Searching Screening and Confiscation Advice (updated July 2023) and UKCIS Education Group Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings (updated March 2024).
- St Mary’s Priory acknowledges that whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of school online safety responsibilities, it is only one part of our approach to online safety. Strategies will include:
  - Pupils will use appropriate search tools, apps and online resources as identified following an informed risk assessment.
  - Pupils’ internet use will be supervised by staff according to their age and ability.
  - Pupils will be directed to use age-appropriate online resources and tools by staff.
- St Mary’s Priory will ensure a comprehensive whole school curriculum response is in place to enable all learners to learn about and manage online risks effectively as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

  St Mary’s Priory will build a partnership approach to online safety help parents/carers to become aware and alert to the risk posed by the use of online technologies and how to keep their children safe when online. We will do this through the provision of information on the school website, our communication channels (such as official social media, newsletters and offering specific online safety events for parents/carers or highlighting online safety at existing parent events).
- St Mary’s Priory will ensure that online safety training for all staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of our overarching safeguarding approach. This will include ensuring they understand the school’s acceptable use policy, developing their knowledge of the risks posed by the use of online technologies,

and their understanding of applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, cyber security and the safe and effective use of generative artificial intelligence.

- The DSL will respond to online safety concerns in line with the school's safeguarding and associated policies such as child-on-child abuse and behaviour. Internal sanctions and/or support will be implemented as appropriate. Where necessary, concerns will be escalated and reported to relevant partner agencies in line with local policies and procedures.

- St Mary's Priory will carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks their children face
- We will adopt the following approach and make use of the LGFL online safety audit tool.

21. Remote Learning

- St Mary's Priory will ensure any remote sharing of information, communication and use of online learning tools and systems will be in line with privacy and data protection requirements.
- All communication with learners and parents/carers will take place using school provided or approved communication channels; for example, school provided email accounts and phone numbers and/or agreed systems e.g. Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams for schools or equivalent.
- Staff and learners will engage with remote teaching and learning in line with existing behaviour principles as set out in our school staff code of conduct and Acceptable Use/online safety policies. When delivering remote learning, staff will follow our policy and guidance for remote learning, which is published on our website.
- Staff and learners will be encouraged to report issues experienced at home and concerns will be responded to in line with our child protection and other relevant policies.
- Parents/carers will be made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access. Parents /carers will be informed who from the **school** their child is going to be interacting with online and who they contact in case they need help and/or support.
- Parents/carers will be encouraged to ensure children are appropriately supervised online and that appropriate parental controls are implemented at home.

22. Mobile phone policy

- At St Mary's Priory a mobile phone policy is in place to ensure a mobile phone-free environment in line with the Statutory guidance on Mobile phones in schools. The policy states that only pupils who have permission to walk home alone have phones, and these are handed into the class teacher at the start of the school day. They are handed out at the end of the school day, and are not permitted to be turned on before leaving the school site. The policy is published on our school website so parents/carers, staff and pupils are fully aware of this.

23. Taking and using photos and videos

- St Mary's Priory recognises that images of pupils can pose safeguarding risks. For example, misuse or abuse of images or vulnerability to blackmail.
- All images of pupils who can be identified count as personal data. At St Mary's Priory, we follow the same principles that apply to all personal information. We therefore seek the consent from parents/carers when their child starts at the School, and this is stored on the child's Arbor profile. Parents/carers may withdraw consent at any time.
- All images are stored securely; this includes those used for administration purposes. Any photos taken on school cameras or devices must be transferred to a secure school server as soon as possible, in line with data protection rules. This does not apply to photos taken at school events by parents/carers and pupils for personal use.
- St Mary's Priory has procedures in place to deal with any incidents of image abuse, including support for the pupil, informing parents/carers, reporting to police and use of the 'report/remove' for under 18s to get the image removed from the internet.

24. Regulations and safeguarding requirements relating to school premises – toilets & Changing

Toilets

- At St Mary's Priory we provide separate toilets for boys and girls. We do not allow pupils into toilets designated for the opposite biological sex. This includes where we are responding to a request to support any degree of social transition for children who are questioning their gender.
- Therefore, if a gender-questioning child does not want to use the toilet designated for their biological sex, we consider how we can provide an alternative toilet facility without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. These alternative arrangements will be made so as not to compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child, or of any other children. We will keep detailed records of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly.

Changing Rooms and Showers

- At St Mary's Priory, we provide suitable and sufficient changing accommodation for our pupils. Our children come into school wearing their sports/PE uniform on set days. In line with KCSIE 2026 paragraph 113, if a child has cause to change clothes, we do not allow the child, aged 11 years or older at the start of the school year, to undress in front of a child of the opposite biological sex. If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the changing rooms designated for their sex, we put in place alternative arrangements for changing or washing facility without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. We will ensue these alternative arrangements do not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or of any other children. We will keep detailed records of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly.

25. Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities or Health Issues

- St Mary's Priory acknowledges that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. These children may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse both offline and online and face additional barriers in recognising abuse and neglect. These can include:
    - assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
    - these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
    - the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
    - communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse
    - the need for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others
    - cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.
- Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionally impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as bullying and exploitation.
- Children with communication difficulties will be supported to ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.
- All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour/mood change or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability and be aware that children with SEN and disabilities may not always outwardly display indicators of abuse. To address these additional challenges, our school will always consider extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities. Details of support and provision can be found in the school's SEND policy and annual report.
- The DSL (or deputy) will work closely with the SENDCo to share information and plan support and monitor as required.

26. Safeguarding Children with medical conditions

- Medical needs will be managed alongside safeguarding responsibilities, recognising that a child's health, wellbeing and safety are closely connected. Not all incidents of managing a medical incident or care of a child's medical condition (including allergies) would warrant a safeguarding report on MyConcern. This would be needed if the incident or series of incidents highlighted that a child may be at increased risk of

being abused, neglected or exploited by persons both inside or outside the family because of their medical condition. If such a report is logged, the DSL (or Deputy DSL) will then assess the next steps and if any further referrals are needed.

- Relevant medical information will be shared with staff on a need-to-know basis, and individual healthcare plans or other appropriate arrangements will be put in place where required. Staff will follow agreed procedures for administering medication, responding to medical emergencies and seeking appropriate medical assistance.

27. Children requiring mental health support

- All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff are made aware of how children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, attendance and progress in school. Staff will be given regular training in mental health issues and how to recognise when a child's mental health may be at risk.
- St Mary's Priory has appointed a lead for mental health, who is trained to have the knowledge and skills to promote and lead on wellbeing and mental health across the school, as well as a trained mental health first aider.
- Staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Staff are expected to be vigilant at all times and if they have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy. This includes early targeted support is provided and liaison with/referrals to specialist services when needed.
- As an Anchor Approach School, it is proactive in promoting and supporting the mental health and well-being of pupils. This includes links to the school's approach for preventing and tackling bullying and mental health strategy.
- The school has in place a range of ways to support children's mental health both within and beyond the school. This includes routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems. The school is an Anchor Approach school, and works closely with the Haringey Guided Emotional Mental Health Support (GEMHS) team. The pastoral team is made up of an art therapist and two ELSA trained staff.
- The school also makes use of a range of resources produced by the DfE and Public Health England to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. This includes its guidance Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing - GOV.UK.

28. Children in need of a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

St Mary's Priory recognises that pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs and that children may need help due to abuse and/or neglect and/or exploitation and/or complex family circumstances. 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 these and all vulnerable pupils.
- The DSL will always consider the support of the social worker to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the child's safety, well-being, welfare and educational outcomes.

29. Looked after children, previously looked after children and care leavers

- St Mary's Priory will ensure that our staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked-after and previously looked-after children safe.
- The DSL has details of a child's social worker and relevant Virtual School Heads. Appropriate staff are provided with relevant information about each looked after child's legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements.
- The school has appointed a designated teacher, the Inclusion Lead, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children in line with statutory guidance. The designated teacher will have the relevant qualifications and experience and receive appropriate training to perform the role. The designated teacher will:
    - Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to.

- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium funding can be best used to ensure each child's well-being and progress. This includes the statutory duties of the Virtual School Heads (extended in June 2012 Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and the non-statutory responsibility (Children's social care: virtual school head role extension - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) updated in March 2024) for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker.

- The DSL and designated lead for looked after children will work with the local authority to ensure suitable arrangements are in place for care leavers, including with the appoint Personal Adviser, and will liaise with them should any issues occur.

30. Young carers

- St Mary's Priory will be alert to the needs of any pupils who are young carers, recognising their caring responsibilities can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. We will work to identify our young carers as early as possible and ensure they receive support at the right time and by appropriate services.

31. Children who are absent from education

- All staff should be aware that children being absent from school, particularly unexplainable, prolonged, repeat and/or persistent absences from education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. These might include:
  - neglect
  - child sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation – particularly county lines
  - mental health problems
  - substance abuse
  - radicalisation
  - FGM or forced marriage.

  See also information in Appendix 3 of this policy or KCSIE Annex B.

- St Mary's Priory accepts the importance of its responsibility to pupils with unexplained and prolonged periods of absence keeping them safe and in reducing the risk of them becoming a child missing from education in the future. This includes pupils where problems are first emerging and also those already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), or where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

- The school has in place robust systems for recording and monitoring daily attendance and punctuality of pupils. This includes 'first day' calls, follow up calls, letters home and home visits. The school has robust procedures in place for monitoring the whereabouts, wellbeing and safety of pupils who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods. Any concerns will be acted on as safeguarding and following the school safeguarding procedures. This is set out in the school's attendance policy – here.

- The school recognises the importance of keeping in touch with parents and carers to promote and ensure the welfare, well-being and safety of pupils. The school will therefore hold more than one emergency number for each child to ensure that a parent/carer can be contacted urgently or for the DSL to check on the well-being of a pupil.

- The school is aware of its duty to report any missing children to the local authority. Full details of these systems for monitoring and supporting children with poor attendance and how the school follows statutory advice in removing pupils from the school roll can be found in the school's attendance policy.

32. Child-on-Child Abuse

- All members of staff at St Mary's Priory Schools recognise that children can abuse their peers. This can happen both in and out of school and online. We believe that no form of abuse can be tolerated, including any discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents. All victims will be taken seriously, offered reassurance and appropriate support, regardless of when and/or where the abuse has taken place and assured that they are not creating a problem. Staff must be mindful that their response could impact on another child coming forward in future.

- All staff should understand the following aspects of child-on-child abuse and be clear about the school's approach:

  - that even if there are no reports in their schools it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).
  - that racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other forms of discriminatory behaviour may have a significant impact on a child's welfare, wellbeing and sense of safety and should be considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.
  - the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
  - that some child-on-child abuse issues may be affected by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.
  - that children may not find it easy to tell staff and a reminder that children can show signs in ways they hope adults will notice and react.

- In line with KCSIE 2026 the school recognises that child-on-child abuse is likely to include, but may not be limited to:•
  - bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
  - discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents
  - abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (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)
  - physical assault and harm or the threat of harm with a weapon
  - harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment which may include misogyny/misandry
  - upskirting
  - consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes
  - 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).
- Paragraph 35 (KCSIE) fully details the types and forms of child-on-child abuse can take that staff should be aware of can be found the school's child-on-child abuse policy.
- When responding to concerns relating to child-on-child sexual violence or harassment, school will follow the procedures set out in the school's child-on-child abuse policy. This follows the guidance outlined in KCSIE 2026 Part 5. All staff maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here', and are aware of the signs of abuse and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside the home, and online.

Separation of pupils for safeguarding purposes

- At St Mary's School, we view child-on-child abuse behaviour incidents through a safeguarding lens. In some circumstances following a child-on-child abuse incident it may be necessary to separate pupils for safeguarding purposes. In such cases we follow the DfE statutory guidance on suspensions and permanent exclusions.
- The DSL must be actively involved in the management of any case that may lead to a pupil being sent home, this will include a consideration of any underlying vulnerabilities or Special Educational Needs.
- The DSL will coordinate with external agencies, such as Children's Social Care, during the separation period. The school will arrange appropriate alternative education for the pupil from the very first day of any safeguarding separation to ensure they do not fall behind in their learning. A formal reintegration meeting must take place before the pupil returns. Consideration will also be given to any other pupils involved in the incident prior to the pupil returning to school.

33. Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual

- At St Mary's School, we are aware a child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm; however, they can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. We are also aware that in some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.
- The school will identify and address vulnerabilities, including the risk of bullying, and take proactive steps to prevent bullying and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils. Where bullying occurs, the school will respond promptly and appropriately, in line with its behaviour and safeguarding procedures, including the use of proportionate sanctions where necessary

34. Gender questioning

- At St Mary's Schools, we do our best to fulfil our duty towards a child who is questioning their gender, as well as their peers, ensuring that any agreed course of action takes account of the impact on all of those affected.
- The school will respond sensitively and on an individual basis to pupils who are questioning their gender, with the pupil's safety, wellbeing and best interests at the centre of decision-making. Decisions relating to social transition, including requests concerning names, pronouns or uniform, will be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the pupil's age, maturity, individual circumstances and best interests. To support this a procedure is in place for staff to follow, whereby the DSL will work with parents/carers, our School pastoral team, and external agencies as required.
- The school will consider any safeguarding concerns or vulnerabilities associated with a pupil questioning their gender and take appropriate action where concerns arise.
- The school will consider relevant clinical or professional advice where available and appropriate, particularly where there are complex needs or safeguarding concerns.
- Parents/carers will be involved in decision-making wherever possible and appropriate, recognising that safeguarding responsibilities require that the DSL and other relevant staff consider the circumstances and needs of each individual pupil.
- The school will ensure that arrangements relating to single-sex facilities, changing rooms, sport and other school activities are consistent with safeguarding duties, the law and the requirements of KCSIE 2026, while ensuring that all pupils are treated with dignity and respect. See section 24 for details.

35. Gangs, County Lines, Serious violence, Crime and Exploitation

- St Mary's Priory Schools recognise the impact of gangs, county lines, serious violence, crime and sexual exploitation. It is recognised that the initial response to child victims is important and that staff will take any allegation seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.
- All staff have been trained and recognise the need to be vigilant for the signs that may include, but not exclusively (see further information in Appendix 3 of this policy or KCSIE Annex A):
    - unexplained gifts/new possessions – these can indicate children have been approached by/involved with individuals associated with criminal networks/gangs.
    - children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
    - children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education
    - change in friendships/relationships with others/groups
    - children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
    - children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
    - significant decline in performance
    - signs of self-harm/significant change in wellbeing
    - signs of assault/unexplained injuries.

36. Female genital mutilation (FGM)

- All staff are made aware of the issues around FGM, so-called 'honour'-based abuse and forced marriage, as well as the signs and symptoms, the actions they must take and the MANDATORY duty to reporting any concerns to the Police under Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers (and all other staff and adults associated with the school). If a teacher or any member of staff, in the course of their work,

discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out (or maybe carried out) on a girl under the age of18, the teacher/member of staff **must** report this to the police. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions.

- Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk.
- Since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.
- See KCSIE 2026 Appendix B (Appendix 3 of this policy or KCSIE Annex A) for further details of so-called 'honour'-based abuse and forced marriage.

37. Preventing radicalisation

- At St Mary's Priory, we have a duty to prevent pupils from being drawn into terrorism.
- At St Mary's Priory, we recognise that:
  - there is no single route to radicalisation. However, there are some behavioural traits that could indicate that a learner is susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism.
  - radicalisation is not a linear process. Learners may express a combination of behaviours at different times.
- The DSL (and any deputies) will:
  - take any concerns about the potential radicalisation of a pupil seriously, and take the same approach as any safeguarding concern.
  - consider an individual's behaviour in the context of wider influencing factors and vulnerabilities.
  - In most cases, speak with the learner and their parents or carers (if under 18).
  - consider contextual, vulnerability and protective factors to make a comprehensive assessment of risk and harm.
  - keep a written record of all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.
- The DSL or member of the safeguarding team will undertake additional Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff are also appropriately trained to equip them to identify and protect any pupils at risk of radicalisation.
- The DSL (and any deputies) are aware of local procedures for making a Prevent and Channel referral which is seen as part of the school's wider safeguarding obligations. Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided.
- The member of staff assigned as the school's Prevent Lead will ensure a detailed Prevent risk assessment is undertaken and reviewed at least annually, based on the DfE risk assessment template and advice Prevent duty: risk assessment templates - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). This includes the risks posed by pupils' access to the internet and social media and the school's mitigating actions, such as monitoring and filtering internet use.
- *Appendix 3* or KCSIE Annex A *sets more details for staff on preventing radicalisation.*

38. Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force

- There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use restrictive interventions, including the use of 'reasonable force' to safeguard children. The term 'restrictive intervention' is defined by the DfE as 'a means to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of the body or part of the body, of a pupil.' The term 'reasonable force' is used in legislation which includes physical restrictive intervention. The term 'reasonable' means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application will depend on the circumstances. The use of restrictive intervention may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom.

- Detailed records are kept of all restrictive intervention incidents, in addition they are also logged as a safeguarding issue on MyConcern, so the DSL is aware of the incident and can act to further safeguard the child.
- St Mary's Priory has in place a policy for restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force. This which enables and supports staff to make appropriate physical contact and use restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force to safeguard children. All staff are made aware of this policy and receive training appropriate to their role. Our Physical Intervention policy can be found here.
- The school's policy follows DfE guidance Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools, and includes:
  - Emphasis of the importance of minimising the use of restrictive interventions, through prevention and de-escalation
  - Whole school measures include:
    - consideration of how the school and classroom environment supports all pupils to achieve and thrive
    - school expectations for whole-class behaviour management, and for managing communal spaces
    - staff training in effective communication strategies, such as using appropriate tone of voice and empathy to aid de-escalation
    - development of working staff-pupil relationships and trust
    - recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform improvement planning
  - Individual approaches include:
    - working closely with parents to support individual pupils
    - strategies to support individual pupils based on their identified needs, including the development of behaviour support plans
    - giving pupils time, space and strategies to calm down before their behaviour escalates.
- The school recognises its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities. Also to provide support and opportunities so that vulnerable pupils, such as those with SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions, can benefit, particularly when responding to risks or incidents.

39. Curriculum – Opportunities to Teach Safeguarding

- We recognise that schools play an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate child and adult behaviour; what is 'safe'; to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned. This is a crucial part of preventative education.
- Has put in place a whole school approach to helping pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. This aims to prepare pupils and pupils for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment.
- The school's approach to teaching pupils about safeguarding, including online safety, is part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. The detail of this is set out in detail in the policies for RSHE, Computing, and Online safety. The school makes use of published guidance to develop and deliver this provision, including for RSHE, and teaching online safety.
- Our curriculum provides opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness and decision making so that learners have a range of age-appropriate contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others.
- The school recognises that one size does not fit all and takes a personalised and contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children, so they know how to assess risk and adopt safe practices.
- The school has implemented the mandatory DfE Relationships Education/Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum through its use of Ten Ten Life to the Full curriculum. The school is embedding this into all aspects of the curriculum to ensure equality, age-appropriate and full experiences for all pupils. Further details are given in our SMSC, RSHE curriculum policies.
- Our school systems support children to talk to about their concerns and worries with confidence in the knowledge they will be listened to and heard, and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate.

- Safeguarding is taught through a planned, age-appropriate curriculum from Nursery to Year 6 and is embedded across school life. Our PSHE and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum is delivered through the *Life to the Full Plus* programme and is supported by learning across a range of subjects, including Computing. Safeguarding themes are further reinforced through weekly assemblies, class discussions, themed event weeks, drop-down days, visitors, and work with external agencies and specialist organisations. The curriculum is responsive to the needs of our pupils and community, enabling the school to address emerging issues, local concerns and identified gaps in knowledge. Further information can be found in the school's PSHE and RSHE policies (here) and curriculum maps (here).

40. Alternative provision

- St Mary's Priory may need to place pupils in alternative provision either on a full or part-time basis.
- The school recognises the additional vulnerabilities of any pupil placed in an alternative provision and that the responsibility for that safeguarding of that pupil remains with the school.
- All placements are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the welfare and education needs to pupils are being met and that pupils are benefiting from the placement.
- St Mary's Priory checks with alternative providers at least termly that safer recruitment requirements are being met and that all the appropriate checks have been conducted on any adults working or volunteering in the provision that they are deemed suitable to work with children. St Mary's Priory expects the alternative providers to confirm in writing that all the appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers and also to notify the school if any changes to staffing.
- St Mary's Priory has put in place systems to ensure there is regular and ongoing communication between the school and the alternative provider in relation to pupils' safeguarding, welfare, well-being and progress. This includes
    - the alternative provider to notify the DSL of any welfare and safeguarding concerns or issues about any pupils placed with them
    - daily attendance notifications, so St Mary's Priory always knows the whereabouts of any pupils placed with an alternative provider.
- This also applies to children who cannot attend school for health reasons and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- The school will work towards meeting the non-statutory standards for alternative provision.

41. Elective home education

- If a parent/carer wishes to educate their child at home the school will provide advice and support to aid them in their decision making to help parents make the right decision in the best interests of their child. This will include discussion with parents (and other professionals), awareness of additional needs of child with SEND and/or social worker, transition support, and informing the LA *(requirement to notify LA on removal from roll)*. This is particularly important where a child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or has a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan local authorities will need to review the plan, working closely with parents and carers.
- In line with KCSE 2026 paragraph 220, St Mary's Priory recognises that elective home education may not be an overwhelmingly positive experience and can mean for some children that they are not in receipt of suitable education. Also, that a child is less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe.

42. Private fostering and host families

- Private fostering is defined as when someone who is not a parent or a 'close relative' (eg. great aunt, cousin, mum's friend or a neighbour) is looking after a child or young person under the age of 16 (under 18 if they are disabled) for 28 days or more in their own home. A relative is defined in the Children Act 1989 as a grandparent, uncle or aunt (whether by full-blood, half-blood or by marriage or civil partnership), sibling or step-parent. The school is aware of its duty to report to LA of any such arrangements the school learns about and will work with the Virtual School Head to promote the achievement and wellbeing of pupils in kinship care.
- If the school makes arrangements for pupils to have learning experiences where, for short periods, the children may be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to whom they are not related. for example, as part of a foreign exchange visit or sports tour. This is often described as 'homestay' arrangements. The school will follow the guidance set out in KCSIE 2026 paragraphs 408-410

43. Safer Recruitment

- St Mary's Priory is committed to ensure that we develop a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers, this includes agency staff, contractors and third party staff, are safe to work with our learners and staff. See section below for details of checks for volunteers.
- St Mary's Priory will follow the guidance in KCSIE 2026 (Part Three 'Safer Recruitment') and from The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure that all the required checks have been undertaken prior to commencement of working at the school.
- St Mary's Priory will obtain written notification from any agency, or third party organisation, that they have carried out the same checks as the school would otherwise perform on any individual who will be working at the school, including through online delivery. This includes an enhanced DBS check. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made by the agency, or third party organisation.
- The school maintains an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) of all the checks undertaken in line with statutory guidance.
- St Mary's Priory are committed to supporting the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and related obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 in schools.
- The governing body will ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.
- We expect all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, cautions, reprimands and warnings. Any staff member failing to make accurate declarations or misrepresenting themselves in any way will be subject to the school's disciplinary policy.
- We will ensure that all staff and volunteers have read the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and understand that their behaviour and practice must be in line with it.
- The governing body and leadership team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance.
- Please refer to the separate safer recruitment policy for details of the school's approach and systems. For full details of the school's approach to safer recruitment which can be located – here.

44. Volunteers

- St Mary's Priory recognises the valuable support volunteers can provide to the school community.
- Volunteers must sign in and out on arrival and departure and wear the appropriate visitor/volunteer identification while on the school site. Volunteers are expected to follow the school's policies, procedures and safeguarding arrangements while on site.
- Volunteers will be provided with appropriate information and guidance regarding site security, safeguarding, emergency procedures, confidentiality and the responsibilities of their role prior to commencing. This will be updated on a regular basis.

Regular or overnight volunteer

- The Crime and Policing Act 2026 made changes to regulated activity, meaning that any person volunteering in a school in a role that involves teaching, training, instructing or supervising children frequently or on more than 3 days in a 30-day period or overnight in any setting is now in regulated activity. This means the volunteer will require enhanced DBS check, which includes a children's barred list check.
- Volunteers, including those supporting children in the EYFS, will not be permitted to commence until the school (or maintained nursery) has received the volunteer's enhanced DBS certificate including barred list information.
- We will work with the other settings to establish who should carry out the enhanced DBS check. We will encourage volunteers to join the Update Service. All checks will be recorded on the SCR.

Existing volunteers in regulated activity

- An enhanced DBS check, which includes a children's barred list check, will be undertaken for all existing volunteers in regulated activity. All checks will be recorded on the SCR.

Volunteers not in regulated activity

- Under no circumstances should a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

- A written risk assessment and professional judgement will be used to assess if checks are required. The risk assessment should be recorded and consider:
  - the nature of any work with children,
  - what the establishment knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers,
  - whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability, and
  - where the role is not regulated activity, whether another level of DBS check might be appropriate.

45. Concerns and allegations against members of staff and adults in the school

- St Mary's Priory recognises that it is possible for any member of staff or adult working on behalf of the school, including volunteers, trainees, governors, contractors, agency and third party staff (including supply teachers), visitors and contractors, to behave in a way that:
  - indicates they have harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
  - means they have 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.
- At St Mary's Priory we have processes in place for continuous vigilance, so we can maintain an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour. To do this we aim to create the right culture and environment so that staff feel comfortable to discuss matters both within and, where it is appropriate, outside the workplace (including online) which may have implications for the safeguarding of children. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice (including online) and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime. The leadership team takes all concerns or allegations received seriously. If a member of staff, volunteer or other adult is concerned at the lack of response or feels their concerns will not be taken seriously then they should consider Whistle blowing - see section 47 below.
- Allegations should be referred immediately to the Headteacher, who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member.
- In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Headteacher, staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the chair of governors who will contact the LADO.
- The school's procedures are consistent with local safeguarding procedures and practice guidance. In line with KCSIE 2026, we have policy on the staff portal - here - and procedures in place that covers:
  - Allegations that may meet the harms threshold
  - Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

46. Duties of referral

Duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service

- St Mary's Priory has a legal requirement to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where they remove an individual from regulated activity (or would have removed an individual had they not left), and they believe the individual has:
  - engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults,
  - satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults; or
  - been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence.
- Referrals will be made as soon as possible, when an individual has been removed from regulated activity. This could include when an individual is suspended, redeployed into work in an activity that is not regulated, dismissed or resigned. The school will provide the DBS with full information.
- When an allegation is made, an investigation will be carried out to gather evidence to establish if it has foundation, and the school will ensure they have sufficient information to meet the referral duty criteria in the DBS referral guidance.
- The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our school, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or Schools Personnel Service.

Duty to consider referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency

- If the school or teacher's employer, including an agency, dismisses or ceases to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first, consideration will **be** given to referring the case to the Secretary of State, as required by sections 141D and 141E of the Education Act 2002.
- The Secretary of State may investigate the case, and if s/he finds there is a case to answer, must then decide whether to make a prohibition order in respect of the person.

47. Whistle blowing

- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice or other wrong-doing and be secure that such concerns will always be taken seriously by the leadership team. Wrong-doing covered by this 'public interest disclosure' includes:
  - someone's health and safety is in danger
  - damage to the environment
  - a criminal offence (eg fraud)
  - not obeying the law
  - covering up wrong-doing
  - misusing public funds
  - actions that negatively affect the welfare of children.
- All members of staff are made aware of the school Whistleblowing procedure, which can be found in the staff portal and on the school website. It is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk. Making allegations about a colleague that is later proven to be unsubstantiated, may be considered a disciplinary offence.
- The DfE provides advice to staff who feel they need to raise concerns: Whistleblowing procedure for maintained schools Whistleblowing procedure for maintained schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Whistleblowing Whistleblowing for employees - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).
- Staff should raise concerns with
  - Line Manger
  - Specified person (or governor) in school such as the headteacher or DSL
  - Local Authority
  - Union or Professional Association
- Staff can also access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

48. The use of premises by other organisations

- Where services or activities are provided under the direct supervision/management of staff the school arrangements for child protection will apply.
- Where services or activities are provided separately by another body using the school premises, the Headteacher and governing body/will:
  - seek written assurance that the organisation concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place with regard to safeguarding children and child protection, and that relevant safeguarding checks have been made in respect of staff and volunteers.
  - put in place arrangements for the organisation to liaise with the school on safeguarding matters
  - include safeguarding requirements in any transfer of control agreement (i.e. lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement. If this assurance is not achieved, an application to use premises will be refused.

  These arrangements apply regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll or attend the college.

  The school will follow its safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO, relating to any incident(s) that happen when an individual or organisation is using their school premises for the

purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities).

After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (updated February 2026)

49. Site security and arrangements for visitors

Site security

- St Mary's Priory recognises the importance of maintaining a safe and secure environment for all pupils, staff and visitors. The school has a site security policy and plan in place to support the prevention of, and response to, security incidents. Staff and pupils are made aware of the requirements set out in the policy and plan and are expected to follow the procedures relevant to their roles.
- All staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security to remain vigilant and to contribute to the security of the school buildings and grounds. Any concerns regarding site security, including the presence of an individual who is unknown or cannot be readily identified, should be reported in accordance with the school's established procedures.
- The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens school security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the school site.

Visitors

- Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the electronic sign in system, and to display a visitor's badge or lanyard whilst on site. Visitors will be provided with information outlining the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements. All visitors are expected to follow these school arrangements.
- The headteacher will use their professional judgement to decide on access arrangements and if a visitor should be supervised and/or escorted. At St Mary's Priory, all staff wear a blue lanyard, visitors who have had DBS checks wear green lanyards, all visitors with red lanyards must be escorted at all times.
- Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into school as outlined within in KCSIE 2026 paragraphs 375-380. For visiting professionals and contractors, including those provided by a third party, the school will request to see confirmation of identity and assurance from the individual or their organisation that the appropriate DBS checks have been undertaken, as detailed in KCSIE 2026 paragraphs 362-365. For visitors attending school events, no checks will be requested.
- The school will give careful consideration to the suitability of any external organisations who may provide information, resources & speakers to pupils. The arrangements for the individuals providing these services on the school's premises may include an assessment of their education value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and whether relevant checks will be required (eg for multiple sessions).

50. Complaints

- The school has a Complaints Procedure available to parents, learners and members of staff and visitors who wish to report concerns. This can be found on the school's website and in the staff portal.
- Anything that constitutes a safeguarding related cause for concern or an allegation or against a member of staff, trainee, contractor or volunteer will be dealt with under the specific Procedures for Managing Allegations against Staff policy, which can be found here.
- All reported concerns will be taken seriously and considered within the relevant and appropriate process.

51. Policy Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local child protection concerns and/or any changes to our procedures. Staff will be informed of any changes made.
- The DSL and safeguarding team meet weekly to review all safeguarding cases and check on the actions taken and what further actions are needed to check, and to review any emerging patterns which may suggest a safeguarding concern, issues may include attendance, behaviour, peer relationships and concerns raised by staff. This includes pupils with early help and child protection plan.
- The DSL and Headteacher will provide regular reporting on safeguarding activity and systems to the governing body and Trust board. The governing body and Trust board will not receive details of individual children's situations or identifying features of families as part of their oversight responsibility.

- The governing body and Trust board understands its responsibilities and duties as set out in KCSIE 2026 to ensure the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements, including those for online safety. In addition to the regular reports provided by the DSL, governors will take a proactive varied approach to checking the school's safeguarding arrangements. This will include: meetings with the DSL, visits to school, ascertaining the views of staff, pupils and parents through discussions and/r surveys, use of an audit tool, asking all governors to ask a safeguarding question during meetings with leaders/staff on other aspects of school life (such as subject meetings or SENCo meeting), termly checks of the SCR, review of school data and use of an external consultant.
- The DSL and Headteacher will complete and submit the Lux Mundi S157 as required.

Appendix 1: Categories & Indicators of Abuse, Neglect and exploitation

All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Recognition that patterns of concern, rather than single signs, are key to identifying abuse. No single indicator proves abuse. Staff should always listen, reassure the child, record concerns accurately using the child's own words where possible, and report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Four key indicators are listed in KCSIE 2026 paragraph 30:

- drug taking and/or alcohol misuse
- unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education
- serious violence, criminal exploitation (including that linked to county lines), radicalisation, and
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes

For each of the categories of the four categories of abuse listed below, a summary of signs and indicators (listed in alphabetical order) that can indicate abuse are given to help guide staff and aid professional curiosity.

Additional information can also be found in KCSIE Annex A and Appendix 2 of this policy.

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, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

Physical abuse:
A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs that MAY INDICATE physical abuse

- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts that is significantly out of character
- Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes
- Bite marks
- Bruises and abrasions around the face
- Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks
- Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries)
- Damage or injury around the mouth
- Deep contact burns caused by cigarettes, lighters or heated objects
- Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso
- Injuries for which inadequate, inconsistent or excessively plausible explanations are given or a delay in seeking treatment.
- Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
- Reluctance to go home or fear of particular individuals
- Wearing clothing that covers the arms and legs when it is inappropriate for the weather

Emotional abuse:
The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or

valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Signs that MAY INDICATE emotional abuse

- Aggressive, disruptive or challenging behaviour.
- Compulsive stealing
- Delayed emotional, social or language development.
- Developmentally inappropriate behaviour (for example, excessive clinginess, regression or infantile behaviour).
- Difficulties forming or maintaining relationships with peers or trusted adults.
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
- Eating disorders or significant changes in eating habits.
- Excessive attention-seeking behaviour, such as need for approval and affection or poor behaviour
- Excessive withdrawal, anxiety, fearfulness or low self-esteem.
- Frequent psychosomatic complaints, such as headaches or stomach aches, where no medical cause is identified.
- Inappropriate parental expectations or pressure that causes significant distress.
- Low aspirations, feelings of worthlessness or expressing that they are "no good".
- Over reaction to mistakes
- Overly compliant, passive or eager-to-please behaviour or over reaction to mistakes
- Persistent sadness, low mood or lack of confidence.
- Poor attendance or disengagement from education.
- Reluctance to speak, appearing frightened of making mistakes, or showing an excessive fear of punishment and/or fear of parents being contacted
- Running away or repeatedly going missing from home or care.
- Self-harm, suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts.
- Sudden or significant changes in behaviour or personality.
- Unwillingness or inability to play

Sexual abuse:

Involves forcing, causing or inciting a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, such as acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object (e.g. Rape or assault by penetration), and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching over clothing. Sexual abuse may also include noncontact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online as well as offline, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Children can be sexually abused within the family, an institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity and there are specific offences which make clear that sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence, regardless of whether they agreed to that activity.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Sexual Abuse

- Becoming unusually clingy or requiring constant reassurance.
- Concerns about online sexual abuse, including grooming, sexual coercion, or being pressured to create or share nudes or semi-nudes imagery or videos.
- Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or significant emotional distress.
- Fear of changing clothes for PE, swimming or other activities.
- Hints about, or disclosures of, secrets that cause the child distress or that they feel unable to share.
- Pain, bruising, bleeding, itching or discomfort in the genital or anal area.
- Recurrent urinary infections or unexplained genital complaints.

- Regression to earlier behaviours, such as thumb sucking, bedwetting or age-inappropriate dependence.
- Running away, repeatedly going missing from home or care, or unexplained absences from education.
- Self-harm, suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts.
- Sexualised behaviour, language or knowledge that is inappropriate for the child's age and stage of development.
- Sexually transmitted infections or pregnancy that is inconsistent with the child's age or circumstances.
- Sudden fear of, or reluctance to be alone with, a particular person or to visit a particular place.
- Sudden or significant changes in behaviour, mood, attendance or educational performance.
- Unexplained gifts, money, mobile phones or other possessions.

Neglect:
The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs that MAY INDICATE neglect.

- Compulsive stealing, scavenging or hoarding food.
- Developmental delay that is not otherwise explained.
- Failure to attend medical or other health appointments.
- Frequent lateness, poor attendance or repeated unexplained absences from education.
- Frequently arriving at school without essential equipment, appropriate clothing or basic care.
- Inadequate, dirty or inappropriate clothing for the weather or season.
- Low self-esteem, anxiety, withdrawal or emotional distress.
- Noticeable poor growth, weight loss, being consistently underweight or faltering growth where appropriate.
- Persistent hunger, food hoarding or seeking food from others.
- Persistent tiredness, lethargy or falling asleep in school.
- Poor personal hygiene or consistently being unwashed.
- Poor relationships with peers or difficulties forming secure attachments.
- Poor supervision, being left alone inappropriately, or regularly caring for younger siblings beyond what is age appropriate.
- Running away, repeatedly going missing from home or care, or remaining out late without explanation.
- Self-soothing behaviours such as rocking, hair twisting or persistent thumb sucking beyond the expected developmental stage.
- Unmet medical, dental or mental health needs.

Appendix 2: Job description of DSL & DDSLs (KCSIE Annex B)

The designated safeguarding lead will have ultimate lead responsibility for the role as set out below, with any deputies also adhering to these responsibilities both when working alongside the designated safeguarding lead and when deputising for them in their absence.

Manage referrals
The designated safeguarding lead is expected to 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,
- to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme,
- where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required, and
- where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NPCC - When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.

Working with others
The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff,
- act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners,
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019,
- as required, liaise with the "case manager" (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member,
- liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college and senior mental health leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically,
- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health,
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances, and
- work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college.159 This includes: o ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort, and
- supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

Information sharing and managing the child protection file
The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child. Safeguarding records should be clear, factual, and distinguish between observed concerns, professional opinion, and historic information.

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.

Raising awareness

The designated safeguarding lead should:

- ensure each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff,
- ensure the school or college's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this,
- ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school or college in this,
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements, and
- help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

Training, knowledge and skills

- The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should also undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated safeguarding leads (and any deputies) with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly local authority children's social care, so they:
  - understand the assessment process for providing family help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements160,
  - have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so,
  - understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children,
  - understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes,
  - are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers161,
  - understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners,
  - understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation,
  - are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college,
  - can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online,
  - obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses,
  - encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

Providing support to staff

Training should support the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes, and
- support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children
It is important that all children feel heard and understood. Therefore, designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them, and
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and sharing information
The critical importance of recording, holding, using and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts one, two and five of this document, and therefore the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should be equipped to:

- understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners,
- understand relevant data protection laws, and
- be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made.

Appendix 3: Specific safeguarding issues (KCSIE Annex A)

KCSIE 2026 Annex A: Further information

Annex A contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should read this Annex.

As per Part one of this guidance, if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. **They should follow sections 2 and 12 of this policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy).**

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate, the police) is made immediately.

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Child abduction and community safety incidents

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

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. All schools are required to teach about personal safety through the RSHE curriculum. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK's framework for identifying and supporting victims of exploitation and modern slavery. Whatever form it takes, exploitation and modern slavery is child abuse and

relevant child protection procedures must be followed if modern slavery or trafficking is suspected, as per the Modern Slavery: statutory guidance for England and Wales (under s49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015) and non-statutory guidance for Scotland and Northern Ireland (accessible version) - GOV.UK

Some children will also have access to an Independent Child Trafficking Guardian. Independent child trafficking guardians provide advocacy for children and help to promote and support their recovery.

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, having a physical or learning disability, or being neurodivergent, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions which could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal and sexual exploitation,
- associate with other children involved in exploitation,
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being,
- misuse alcohol and other drugs,
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help keep them in education.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.

Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in the DfE guidance: Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners.

County lines

As county lines is a form of criminal exploitation, a First Responder who identifies any potential victim of county lines exploitation should complete the relevant child protection and modern slavery referrals as detailed in the Modern Slavery statutory guidance.

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes.

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to

be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CCE and CSE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from their home,
- have been the victim, perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime),
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs,
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection,
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house' or 'cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity,
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters, and
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office Child exploitation disruption toolkit (accessible) - GOV.UK and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals | The Children's Society.

Children and the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds.

The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

Children who are absent from education

All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, honour or faith-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures.

Children with family members in prison

Approximately 193,000 children in England and Wales have a parent in prison each year. They are at risk of poor outcomes as a result of poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The Prisoners' Families Helpline offers free, confidential support and advice for families in England and Wales who are in contact with the criminal justice system.

School and college staff should be aware that children who have experienced parental imprisonment are more likely to be absent (or excluded) than their peers, to experience mental ill health and drug and alcohol misuse; they are also less likely to be in education, training or employment in later life. Staff should understand the need for tailored, trauma-informed and sensitive support that can help mitigate potential harm and help encourage stability.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

Cyber-dependent crime continues to represent one of the most significant and rapidly evolving threats within the United Kingdom's (UK) crime landscape. Offences under the Computer Misuse Act 1990 (CMA) have risen substantially.

Young people across the UK experiment with illegal online activity, often without understanding the legal or ethical implications. The impact of cybercrime extends well beyond immediate financial losses, with scope to cause disruption to national infrastructure.

Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded,
- 'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.

If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the **Cyber Choices** programme. This is a nationwide preventative police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

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

Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK.

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. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent or care giver abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government has issued statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.

Domestic abuse is one of the most prevalent forms of abuse, with Women's Aid estimating that 160,000 children are currently living in households where domestic abuse is taking place. This is likely to be an underestimate, however, with much abuse remaining hidden and not coming to the attention of services. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures as set out in paragraphs 55-61 should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is an information-sharing scheme between the police and relevant education settings operating in all police forces across England and Wales. In November 2025, a new statutory duty was placed on the police to notify a child's education setting, and where relevant, local authorities, if they have reasonable grounds to believe a child may be a victim of domestic abuse. This includes all children connected to a household where they have attended a domestic abuse incident; children who are physically present at the incident, children not physically present during the incident, and situations where a child might reside in another household temporarily or permanently. Operation Encompass reports that over 2,000 notifications are made to settings every day.

Educational settings are often the only consistent support available to some children, especially for those who live in isolated or rural communities. The aim of the duty is to support education settings to provide timely, informed support to children affected by domestic abuse, to ensure the school has up to date information about the child's circumstances and enable immediate support to be put in place according to the child's needs. This places no new responsibilities on education settings.

Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures or referrals and applies solely to domestic abuse incidents. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare.

Forces and educational settings should have an open communication process to determine where a safeguarding referral should be made in accordance with local thresholds. If an officer makes a referral alongside issuing an Operation Encompass notification, they should tell the child's education setting.

The duty applies to all children in education from reception (typically aged 4/5) up to the age of 17, and who are enrolled in registered primary and secondary schools, including independent schools, private schools, alternative provision settings (e.g., Pupil Referral Units), as well as further education colleges or 16 to 19 academies in England or Wales. Police forces must notify the local authority if the child is electively home educated or missing from education. Forces may also make notifications to other settings, for example early years settings or further education provision for young people with SEND, although these are not covered under the duty.

More information about the scheme can be found in the statutory guidance for police: Duty on police forces in England and Wales to notify education establishments of domestic abuse incidents: Operation Encompass. This guidance intends to recognise and respond to children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right. It does not replace existing statutory guidance, including Keeping children safe in education and Working Together to Safeguard Children in England.

Additional resources for education settings, including Online National Key Adult Training: Operation Encompass can be found on the charity's website Home: Operation Encompass.

Operation Encompass notifications

Operation Encompass involves the sharing of personal and sensitive information about children and families. It is vital that all participants comply with the data protection laws.

Police forces and educational settings are responsible for deciding how and where information about incidents and notifications are made. They must ensure it remains confidential, is held securely, and adheres to the requirements of the data protection laws.

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for leading on all safeguarding and child protection matters within an educational setting. They are likely to be the Key Adult for Operation Encompass notifications and are responsible for making safeguarding referrals to appropriate agencies, maintaining up-to-date safeguarding policies and training, overseeing record-keeping, and liaising with families where appropriate. DSLs may wish to use a central safeguarding inbox to ensure they have oversight over all Operation Encompass notifications.

The notification should include:

- the name, date of birth and protected characteristics (e.g., disability, race, religion etc.) of any child from that education setting who is related to any adult involved in the incident, whether the adult is the alleged perpetrator or non-abusive relative
- the relationship of the child to the victim and to the perpetrator,
- the police reference number,
- the location, time and date of the incident,
- if the child was present, and if so, where they were (notifications should be shared even if the child was not present at the particular incident),

- the voice of the child, such as what they are saying and how they are behaving, and
- the context and the circumstances of the incident, including whether an arrest was made, whether the incident was attended in person or via Rapid Video Response, and where possible, information on previous domestic abuse incidents.

The notification should not include:

- information or reference to sexual offences disclosed at the domestic abuse incident. This must not be disclosed in the notification. Under the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1992, anonymity for victims of sexual offences must be preserved.

The Operation Encompass charity provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from education settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available from 8:00 to 13:00, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

Footnote 152 Section 20 of the Victim and Prisoners Act 2024 introduced a new provision into Part 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 under Section 49A. [Victims and Prisoners Act 2024]

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 for a call can be booked.

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

- NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects
- Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
- Safe Young Lives: Young people and domestic abuse | Safelives
- Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse)
- Operation Encompass (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)
- The Home Office publish guidance on Controlling or coercive behaviour which provides clear information on what constitutes controlling or coercive behaviour and how to identify the offence.

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. 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. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift the focus to early intervention and encourages those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16- and 17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Local authority children's social care will be the lead agency for these children, and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16- and 17-year-olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation: here.

Temporary accommodation notification duty

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act places a new duty on local housing authorities in England to notify educational institutions, health visiting services and general medical practices, when a child is placed in temporary accommodation. This notification should be made when consent has been given from the parent, those with parental responsibility or care of the child, or the child themselves in cases of 16–17-year-olds living independently from their parents.

The notification will enable school and college staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of these children at the earliest opportunity and support them to improve their outcomes. Whilst any discussion with the local housing authority should be progressed as appropriate, this notification does not, and should not, replace existing safeguarding and welfare duties nor a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Specific statutory guidance for local authorities on the temporary accommodation duty will be provided in due course.

Modern slavery and the National Referral Mechanism

Modern slavery encompasses exploitation, including sexual exploitation, criminal financial exploitation, human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information and training for professionals on exploitation and modern slavery is available here - Modern slavery training: resource page - GOV.UK

The National Referral Mechanism is the system used within the UK to support potential victims of exploitation and modern slavery. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of exploitation and modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in statutory guidance Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK.

Children who are referred into the NRM in England and Wales may also have access to an Independent Child Trafficking Guardian (ICTG)1. ICTGs provide advocacy for children and help to promote and support their recovery.

Preventing radicalisation

Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

Footnote 153 As defined in the Government's Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales.

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 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.

Footnote 154 As defined in the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000)

Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern.

It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn into terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) Making a Prevent referral.

The Prevent duty

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter- Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

Footnote 155: Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (legislation.gov.uk)

Footnote 156 "Terrorism" for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in education settings should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 141-210, which are specifically concerned with education (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of three general themes: leadership and partnership, capabilities and reducing permissive environments.

The school or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are first assessed by police and may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. Whilst the referral is being assessed, should any further or new information come to light, this should also be passed to police. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse, incidents that may indicate concerns about serious violence or harmful behaviours and/or details of those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: Channel guidance and Channel training from the Home Office.

Additional support

The Department has published further advice for those working in education settings with safeguarding responsibilities on the Prevent duty. The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts to other sources of advice and support.

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- Prevent awareness e-learning offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.
- Prevent referrals e-learning supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.
- Channel awareness e-learning is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel.

Educate Against Hate is a government website designed to support school and college teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their pupils from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation. These resources are regularly updated to ensure they remain relevant and practical. Resources have been developed working closely with education professionals and civil society groups to identify and produce high-quality materials that assist teachers in building pupils' critical thinking skills and resilience to extremist ideologies.

For advice specific to further education, Educate Against Hate hosts a suite of teaching packs and accompanying guidance to meet the specific needs of pupils and practitioners in further education and training settings. The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the Prevent for FE and Training. This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings to comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals. The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, to support staff and governors/Board members in outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

London Grid for Learning has also produced useful resources on Prevent (Online Safety Resource Centre - London Grid for Learning (lgfl.net).

Serious violence

There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved in committing serious violence. These may include:

- increased absence from school or college,

- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups,
- a significant decline in educational performance,
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries, and
- unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:

- being male,
- having been suspended, spent time in Alternative Provision or permanently excluded from school,
- having experienced child maltreatment,
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery,
- having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence, and
- having previously been a victim or previously perpetrated violence

A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy.

Professionals should also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school and can concentrate in particular places. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence. It is important that schools and colleges try to understand where these places are, with a view to working with partners to promote safety for children. Listening to children and consulting with staff can help establish when and where they feel unsafe. Working with wider partners can also help build understanding of the local context beyond the school or college and help co-ordinate a collective safeguarding response around the school day.

Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance. The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) (the "what works" centre for preventing violence) has produced practical guidance for schools and colleges and an accompanying self-assessment tool to help introduce evidenced practice for preventing children becoming involved in violence.

Home Office funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) operate in the 20 police force areas across England and Wales that have the highest volumes of serious violence, as measured by hospital admissions for injury with a sharp object. A list of these locations can be found here. As the strategic co-ordinators for local violence prevention, each VRU is mandated to include at least one local education representative within their Core Membership group, which is responsible for setting the direction for VRU activity. Schools and educational partners within these areas are encouraged to reach out to their local VRU, either directly or via their education Core Member, to better ingrain partnership working to tackle serious violence across local areas and ensure a joined-up approach to young people across the risk spectrum.

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced a new Serious Violence Duty (Statutory Guidance) on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Educational authorities and prisons/youth custody authorities are under a separate duty to co-operate with core duty holders when asked, and there is a requirement for the partnership to consult with all such institutions in their area.

The Duty **does not** replace or duplicate existing safeguarding duties.

Honour or faith-based abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage)

Honour or faith-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving honour often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). As appropriate, the designated safeguarding

lead (or a deputy) will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with the police and local authority children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on **teachers** th*at requires a different approach (see below).*

Footnote 157 Under Section 5B(11)(a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, "teacher" means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

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

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

Footnote 158 Section 5B(6) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 states teachers need not report a case to the police if they have reason to believe that another teacher has already reported the case.

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

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (chapter 8 provides guidance on the role of schools and colleges) and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage -GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk.

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

Additional advice and support

There is a wealth of information available to support schools and colleges. KCSIE pages 172 to 180 provide a long list of sites that provide useful starting points.

Appendix 4: Safer recruitment

Section i Recruitment and selection processes

Commitment to recruit suitable people Para 286-289
Details of training for staff involved in recruitment, including at least one person on an interview panel has completed safer recruitment training Para 290-291

Advert Para 290-291
Define role including job description and person specification covering
- the skills, abilities, experience, attitude, and behaviours required for the post; and
- the safeguarding requirements
- whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020.

Application forms Para 292-295
Policy should include:
- statement advising applicants that it is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children
- how copy of child protection policy and practices and policy on employment of ex-offenders are provided to applicants
- the information applicants are required to provide: personal details, current and former names, current address and national insurance number; details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving; full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment; qualifications, the awarding body and date of award; details of referees/references; and a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification.
- Note that CVs will not be accepted without an accompanying completed application form.

Note: Schools and colleges should not accept copies of curriculum vitae in place of an application form.

Shortlisting Para 296-301
Policy should cover the school's approach to shortlisting:
- that shortlisted candidates (not others para 296-297) should be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children.
- that applicants should be asked to sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true and that approach where the signature is electronic Para 298
- the purpose and implications of the self-declaration Para 299
- how candidates are shortlisted – by at least two people who will consider/look for any inconsistencies, gaps in employment and reasons given for them and all potential concerns Para 300
- consider conducting online searches (of shortlisted candidates) as part of due diligence - to help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, the school may explore any issues or concerns with the applicant at interview. Para 301

Employment history and references Para 302-304
Policy should state:
- The importance of references in the recruitment process and that information from references will be used to confirm whether they are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children
- account is taken of the advice on gaining, checking, verifying and using points listed in
- that references will be asked of current or last employer, and where possible from the employer where the applicant last worked with children
- the source of the reference will be verified, and that the person completing the reference is in a senior role
- information on the application form will be compared with that in the reference and any discrepancies taken up with the candidate
- establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post
- make clear that appointments will not be confirmed until all references are in place/issues resolved.

Selection Para 305-310
Policy should include
- how school uses a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post Para 305

- questions will cover candidates suitability and motivation for post and working with children, exploring experiences of working with children, probing any gaps in employment or frequent changes in employment Para 306
- exploration with candidates to determine their suitability to work with children Para 307-308
- pupils/student involvement in the recruitment process in a meaningful way Para 309
- observation of-short-listed candidates (under appropriate supervision) Para 309
- that information considered in decision making will be clearly recorded along with decisions made. Para 310

Advice: Include a policy statement that interviews and other observations will be recorded and any declarations checked. Details of how records of the application process will be kept and for how long. Para 355-357 of KCSIE Sept 2026 and Data Protection covers retention of DBS certificates: A toolkit for schools and the Annual review of school records and safe data destruction checklist section 2 human resources and guidance.

How school manages any disclosures of cautions and convictions on DBS, including data protection related to criminal information as a result of DBS filtering changes November 2020. *Also actions if applicant has not declared these, school decision making concerning any disclosures and risk assessment).* Para 299

Questions that must now be asked and noted in application pack for applicants and recruitment policy

- Do you have any unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974?
- Do you have any adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Risk assessments

- Any used?
- Purpose eg: further checks for those who have lived and worked abroad, issue on DBS, disability, use of volunteers etc
- Quality
- Evidence of any follow up/usage

Advised but not covered in KCSIE except for volunteers – see below. Risk assessment could be undertaken for staff whose DBS has not come through, have lived or worked overseas, disabled and so on.

Section ii Pre-appointment vetting checks, regulated activity and recording information

Checks that must be undertaken when appointing individuals to work in regulated activity. Para 311-355

Policy must list the following checks Para 311

- verify a candidate's identity
  Guidance: How to prove and verify someone's identity - GOV.UK and for DBS DBS ID checking guidelines - GOV.UK
- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children)
  Guidance: DBS checks: guidance for employers - GOV.UK
- obtain a separate children's barred list check *(if an individual will start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available)*
  Guidance: Check the children's barred list - GOV.UK
- verify mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- verify the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals.
- if a person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate (see also para 359-361=3
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate to job.

In addition check that:

- a person taking up a management position is not subject to a section 128 direction made by the Secretary of State (independent schools, including academies and free schools only) see also para 335-339
- an applicant employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State imposed by the GTCE, before its abolition in March 2012 see also para 340-341
- reasonable steps are taken to establish whether an applicant employed to carry out teaching work in relation to children, that person is subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State (see also para 263-267)

- appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals employed to work in reception classes, or in wraparound care for children up to the age of 8, are not disqualified from working in these settings under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations (see also para 342-346)

Include a definition of regulated activity Para 317 and table on page 83
– if a person
  - will be responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training instructing, caring for or supervising children;
  - will be working on a regular basis in a specified establishment, such as a school, for or in connection with the purposes of the establishment, where the work gives opportunity for contact with children; or
  - engage in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

DBS checks (continuous service – moving from a previous post)
Statement on school policy on obtaining DBS for applicants who have worked in a school in England, whose last post ended not more than 3 months before appointment, where the person had regular contact with children, were appointed after 12 May 2006t into post which did not include regular contact with children, or they worked in a further education provision that bought into regular contact with children. Para 342-316
Para 321 states a barred list check must be obtained in these circumstances

DBS checks (Types of checks)
Statements:
- making clear which type of DBS check will be undertaken – basic, standard, enhanced or enhanced with barred list check and for whom, and that DBS will be contained as soon as practical after appointment Para 318-322
- a barred list check must only be undertaken for a person who will engage in regulated activity. Para 317-318
- if a person commences work ahead of completion of DBS check: the person will be appropriately supervised; all other checks completed and a barred list undertaken Para 321- 326
- making clear that the DBS check certificate will be sent to the applicant and that this must be shown to the employer Para 322
  Advice: statement that failure to do so will be considered a disciplinary matter.
- that school will assess cases fairly and in line with their policy on recruitment of ex-offenders policy Para 323 and 325

DBS update service Para 326-329
Policy statement that:
- Individuals can join the DBS Update Service at the point that an application for a new DBS check is made. Para 328
  Advice in Para 329 indicates it is good practice, many schools and colleges require new staff to join the Update Service as part of their employment contract.
- For applicants who subscribe to the Update Service, the school will:
  - obtain consent from the individual to carry out an online check to view the status of an existing standard or enhanced DBS check
  - confirm the DBS certificate matches the individual's identity
  - examine the original certificate to ensure that it is valid for the children's workforce
  - ensure that the level of the check is appropriate to the job they are applying for, e.g. enhanced DBS check/enhanced DBS check including with barred list information. Para 326

Recording information - the SCR Para 347-354
Policy statement of school approach to recording on the SCR:
- must be maintained for all employed staff, agency staff and supply staff (even if work one day) and (independent schools) the proprietor body and (academies & free schools) members of the trustees of the academy trust Para 345-347
- this will be kept on paper or electronically Para 353
- what is recorded on SCR and that date on which each check was completed to certificate obtained. Para 350
  - barred list check
  - an enhanced DBS check requested/certificate provided
  - a prohibition from teaching check

- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK
- a check of professional qualifications, where required; and
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

In addition:

- colleges **must** record whether the person's position involves 'relevant activity', i.e. regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of persons aged under 18; and
- independent schools (including academies & free schools) **must** record details of the section 128 checks undertaken for those in management positions.

- details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work in the school Para 351
- the written confirmation from the business supplying the member of supply staff that the business has undertaken the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates. Para 349 (see also para 364-367)
- details of any non-statutory information held on the SCR, such as staff training, references, checks on volunteers, checks on governors Para 352

Multi-academy trusts
Statement on MAT approach to maintaining SCR for trust and individual schools within trust Para 354

Retention of documents Para 355-357
Statement on school policy for recruitment document retention:

- copy of DBS certificates and records of criminal information disclosed by the candidate are covered by UK GDPR/DPA 2018 Article 10 – should not be kept for longer than six months after check
- copy of the other documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications should be kept on their personnel file.

Section iii Other checks that may be necessary for staff, volunteers and others, including the responsibilities on schools and colleges for children in other settings

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK Para 359-363
This covers all countries including those in the EU/EEA.

- Statement that details school approach to obtaining this information through overseas records checks and/or obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked Para 359
- If the information is not available school will undertake a risk assessment that supports decision making based on available information Para 360-362
- Statement about applying for QTS Para 363

Advice: always make a record of the decision in the staff file – the should be done all candidates so there is clear rationale of the decision made, even if checks are not made.

Agency and third party staff (supply staff) Para 364-367
Statement school will:

- obtain written notification from any agency, or third party organisation, that they have carried out the checks on an individual who will be working at the school that the school would otherwise perform Para 364
- obtain written confirmation of the enhanced DBS check Para 364-366
- check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made. Para 366

Contractors Para 368-373
Statement school will:

- agree safeguarding requirements in the contract between the organisation Para 368
- any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school or college, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check Para 368
- contractors engaging in regulated activity relating to children will require an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information) Para 370-
- schools and colleges are responsible for determining the appropriate level of supervision Para 371
- contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity relating to children, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check (not including children's barred list information) will be required Para 370-371

- individuals who are self-employed, the school will consider obtaining the DBS check (as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account) Para 372
- always check the identity of contractors on arrival at the school or college. Para 373

Trainee/student teachers Para 374-376

- for initial teacher trainees who are salaried by the school all necessary checks are carried out if trainees are engaging in regulated activity Para 374
- for fee-funded trainee teachers the initial teacher training provider has the responsibility to carry out the necessary checks and provider written confirmation to the school that all pre-appointment checks have been carried out and the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children. Para 375
- statement about recording fee-funded trainees on SCR Para 376

Visitors Para 377-382

Can be covered in main policy or recruitment policy. Maybe a separate policy in place.

Policy should;

- set out types of visitors to school premises Para 377
- state headteacher will use their professional judgment about the need to escort or supervise such visitors Para 378
- will not request DBS checks for visitors such as children's relatives or other visitors attending a sports day Para 379
- visitors who are there in a professional capacity school will check ID and be assured that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check Para 380
- set out the arrangements for individuals from external organisations that provide information, resources and speakers include an assessment of the education value, the age appropriateness of what is going to be delivered and whether relevant checks will be required Para 381-382

Volunteers Para 383-390

Policy should make clear that:

- Any role that involves teaching, training, instructing, or supervising children frequently or on more that 3 days in a 30 day period or overnight are now in regulated activity (see para 315). This includes across multiple settings Para 383-384
- Volunteers may apply to join the update service, which is free for volunteers Para 382
- children Para 315
- **existing volunteers** will now be in regulated activity now require a enhanced DBS-checked. For these with an existing DBS, a children's barred list check must be obtained. Para 385
- **volunteers not in regulated activity** will under no circumstances be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity Para 386-390 plus risk assessments should be made and consider
    - nature of any work
    - what the setting knows about the volunteer
    - whether the volunteer has other employment or volunteers elsewhere Para 384-386
    -

Maintained school governors Para 391-394

State that:

- all governors are required to have an enhanced DBS check Para 388
- governors do not need a children's barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity Para 391
- a section 128 check is required because a person prevented from participating in the management of an independent school by a section 128 direction, is also disqualified from being a governor of a maintained school Para 392
- whether the school chooses to record this information on SCR Para 393
- there is no requirement for associate members to undergo an enhanced DBS checks unless they also engage in regulated activity at their school. Para 394

Sixth form college governors Para 394-396

State that governing bodies in sixth form colleges can request an enhanced DBS check without a children's barred list check on an individual as part of the appointment process for governors.

Proprietors of independent schools, including academies and free schools and proprietors of alternative provision academies Para 397-404

- the chair or proprietor is checked by the Secretary of State Para 397-399
- the chair ensures that for the other members of the body the following checks are completed before, or as soon as practicable after, any individual takes up their position:
  - an enhanced DBS check undertaken, and that where such a check was undertaken and certificate is obtained Para 400
  - identity check Para 400
  - check individual is not subject to a section 128 direction that would prevent them from taking part in the management of an independent school (including academies and free schools) Para 401
  - any further checks, as the chair considers appropriate, should be undertaken where, by reason of the individual's living or having lived overseas Para 399
- For academy trusts, including those established to operate a free school:
  - the trust requires enhanced DBS checks on all members of the academy trust, individual charity trustees, and the chair of the board of charity trustees Para 400
  - if an academy trust delegates responsibilities to any delegate or committee (including a local governing body), the trust **must** require DBS checks on all delegates and all members of such committees and check that members are not disqualified from taking part in the management of the school as a result of a section 128 direction Para 404

Alternative provision Para 405

- the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of any pupil placed in an alternative provider and be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil
- obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment.
- Provider will notify the school of any staff changes so that the school can assure itself that safeguarding checks have been carried out

Adults who supervise children on work experience Para 406-410

School policy states that:

- the placement provider is expected to have policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm Para 403
- children's barred list checks via the DBS might be required on some people who supervise a child under the age of 16 on a work experience placement. The school will consider:
  - the specific circumstances of the work experience
  - the nature of supervision
  - the frequency of the activity being supervised, to determine what, if any, checks are necessary – will it count as regulated activity Para 404
  - whether the person providing the teaching/training/instruction/supervision to the child on work experience will be unsupervised themselves; and providing the teaching/training/instruction frequently (more than three days in a 30 day period, or overnight). Para 405
- is not able to request that an employer obtains an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information for staff supervising children aged 16 to 17 on work experience Para 406
- if a child is doing work experience in a school or college, the school should check wither a DBS enhanced check is requested for the child in question, provided the child is aged 16 or over. Para 407

Children staying with host families (homestay) Para 411-416

Statement that

- the school may make arrangements for children receiving education at their institution to have learning experiences where, for short periods, the children may be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to whom they are not related.
  For example, as part of a foreign exchange visit or sports tour, often described as 'homestay' arrangements (see Annex D).
- in some circumstances the arrangement where children stay with UK families could amount to "private fostering" under the Children Act 1989.

Private fostering - LA notification when identified Para 417-420

- Define that private fostering occurs when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 for children with a disability) is provided with care and accommodation by a person who is not a parent, person with parental responsibility for them or a relative in their own home. That this arrangement is continue for more than 28 days.

- Brief policy statement that where private fostering arrangements come to the attention of the school (and the school is not involved in the arrangements), the local authority will be informed so it can check the arrangement is suitable and safe for the child.

Appendix 5: Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, trainee teachers, volunteers, and contractors

Part 1 for staff

- paragraphs 77-79

Part 4 school procedures

Section one: Allegations that may meet the harms threshold (Paras 437-505)
This guidance should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has: Para 437

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

Note: The last bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk. Para 438

- An appropriate assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person works will be undertaken and advice sought from the local authority designated officer (LADO). Para 439-440 and 445-447
- Statement about who to report allegations to. EG: the headteacher, if it concerns a member of staff or if the allegation concerns the headteacher, the report should be made to the Chair of Governors. Para 78

A “case manager” will lead any investigation. This will be either the headteacher or principal, or, where the headteacher is the subject of an allegation, the chair of governors or chair of the management committee and in an independent school it will be the proprietor. Para 440

- The policy should cover the following aspects:
  - The initial response to an allegation Para 441-449
    - No further action Para 450
    - Further enquiries Para 451-454
    - Supply teachers, trainee teachers and all contracted staff Para 455-459
    - Individuals and organisations that use the school premises Para 460
    - Governors Para 461
  - Suspension Para 462-469
  - Supporting those involved - Duty of care Para 470-472
  - Confidentiality and Information sharing Para 473-481
  - Allegation outcomes
    [Substantiated Malicious False Unsubstantiated or Unfounded]. This includes duty to refer to TRA and, where required, to the DBS Para 482-483
  - Following a substantial allegation Para 484-486
  - Following a criminal investigation or a prosecution Para 487-488
  - Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations. This must cover an allegation that is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, and how the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per their own behaviour policy (often known as Code of Conduct) Para 489-490
  - Returning to work Para 491
  - Managing the situation and exit arrangements - Resignations and ‘settlement agreements’ Para 492-497

- Record keeping Para 498-501
- References Para 502 *[note only substantiated allegations that cross the threshold of harm should be referred to a reference]*
- Learning lessons Para 503-504
- Non recent allegations Para 505

Section Two: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (Paras 506-528)

- Policy statement:
  - this covers process to manage and record any such concerns and take appropriate action to safeguard children for dealing with concerns (including allegations) which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1
  - concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken. Para 511
- The policy should cover the following aspects:
  - Low level concerns, including note on creating a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibility and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately Para 507-508
  - Define what is a low-level concern - include some examples in the policy & likely sources, eg a child, parent or other adult within the school Para 509-512
  - Staff code of conduct and safeguarding policies Para 513-515
  - Sharing low-level concerns, should note that headteacher is ultimate decision maker, may consult with DSL. Must also include a note that low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Referral to LADO if concerns or pattern of concerns cross threshold of harm. Para 516-519
  - Recording low-level concerns Para 520-523
  - Looking for patterns & trends and how the school will respond, including changes to policy and staff training to ensure a culture of transparency & appropriate conduct. Para 522
  - Retaining information para 523
  - References Para 524 [As above, only substantiated references should be included]
  - Responding to low-level concerns Para 525-528

Appendix 6: Online safety

Online safety policy (Para 169) should cover:

- use of mobile and smart technologies; described through the school's approach which takes account of the revised definitions of the 4Cs (conduct, content, communication and commerce) Para 163.
- Role of the governing body in ensuring online safety is a running and interrelated theme that is implemented through a whole school approach to safeguarding and other related policies Para 164
- The use of generative AI, setting out usage, considerations, legal responsibilities and how risks are identified and mitigated, covering safeguarding, ethics, data protection and intellectual property. Para 165-166
- all areas of online abuse including:
  - online child-on-child abuse (cyberbullying) including harassment and violence Para 190
  - specific reference to non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes imagery and/or videos, making clear this covers images (and videos) that are self-generated, created by another individual, digitally altered, entirely created by AI and described as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes' and how these can put children at risk Para 29-35 and para 190
  - social media use Para 43, Part 5 Para 540, 554, 567 and 644 and Annex A (county lines)
  - cybercrime Annex A
  - preventing radicalisation Annex A
- Mobile phone policy Para 170
- Remote education and safeguarding Para 171-172
- Filtering and monitoring Para 131-177
  - detailing the school approach/systems across all networks and devices and how it is applied to us of generative AI,
  - how filtering is reviewed including frequency and record keeping,
  - procedures for monitoring alerts, and how these are dealt with
  - role of the governing body,
  - how the digital standard met
- Staff awareness that abuse can take place online Para 20, 23, 24, 26, 28, 30, 31 and 37
- Training for staff in online safety, including filtering and monitoring systems and the safe use of generative AI, this includes an understanding of the expectations for online safety, familiarisation with school policies and procedures and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. Training should be given at induction and annually updated Para 12, 16, 153-158 and 173-177
- Opportunities to teach children about online safety this includes duties of GB, RSE, use of DfE advice 'Teaching online safety in schools' and increased risk for some SEND children Para 158-163
- Remote learning and safe approaches Para 171-172
- Information security, detailing school approach, how the digital standard is met and training for staff Para 178-180
- Reviewing online safety (annual requirement - use of review tools) Para 181-183

Appendix 7: Child-on-child abuse

KCSIE references across guidance		
Para/Page reference	**Part**	**Notes**
31-37	1	Information to staff on child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)
48	1	serious violence
122	2	School policies – behaviour policy which covers measures prevent bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
158-163	2	Opportunities to teach safeguarding with considerable reference *to bullying, including online harms such as sharing nudes and semi-nudes*
192	2	School policy on child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence (note an updated list)
529	5	Intro to Part 5 – reminder to staff 'it could happen here'
Page 163	Annex A	Section on domestic abuse, with reminder that can be child-on-child
Page 181	Annex A	Farrer&Co link to support addressing-child-on-child-abuse.pdf This resource provides practical guidance for schools and colleges on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to child-on-child abuse.

Types of child-on-child abuse listed in KCSIE (para 36):•

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying),
- discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (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),
- serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon,
- 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 harassment9 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 making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes10,
- upskirting 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, and
- 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).

Schools should also have in place a policy for searching, screening and confiscation and a clear protocol on what to do if staff find out there may be inappropriate images on a child's phone. This includes reporting to the police. *Not covered in KCSIE but in DfE guidance.*

Revised list in Para 193 states the p**olicy should include**:

- procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse,
- the systems in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously,
- how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with,
- clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported,
- a recognition that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported,
- a statement which makes clear there should be a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny and an unsafe environment for children,
- recognition that for some (but not all) forms of child-on-child abuse it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously, and
- the different forms of child-on-child abuse can take, such as: • bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying),
  - abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse),
  - discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents
  - abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse'),
  - physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm,
  - physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon,
  - harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment – which may include misogyny/misandry. Part five of this guidance sets out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of this nature,
  - consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, policy should include the school or college's approach to it. The department provides Searching Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools. The UKCIS Education Group has published Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people which outlines how to respond to an incident,
  - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including those generated using AI. The department provides Searching Screening and Confiscation Advice and The UKCIS Education Group has published UKCIS Education Group Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings advice for education settings working with children and young people which outlines how to respond to an incident.
  - causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party,
  - upskirting (which is a criminal offence44), 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, and
  - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Section One – aims of policy

- reminder to staff that 'it can happen here' Para 59, 529
- reminder it can happen inside and outside school and online Para 31, 529
- List of the types of bullying Para 37 and 192 and 540
- importance of acknowledging and understanding scale of harassment and abuse, reference to term harmful sexual behaviours and the impact on a child Para 529-544
- definitions of HSB, sexual violence and sexual harassment Para 534-543

- awareness that children may not find it easy to tell staff and a reminder that children can show signs in ways they hope adults will notice and react Para 16-17 and 555-55
- zero tolerance approach – never acceptable or tolerated Para 530
- girls being more likely to be victim of sexual violence or sexual harassment Para 532, also recognition of increased risk for SEND pupils Para 158. 159 & 249
- details of how all incidents of bullying will be recorded, analysed and reported to governors and senior leaders. This includes looking for patterns and trends and links to safeguarding.

Section Two – Non-sexual child-on-child abuse

- The school's current procedures for dealing with bullying that is non-sexualised. In the main this covers:
  - bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
  - abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
  - physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;

Section Three – child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

- the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and should be involved in the decision making on the initial response by the school. Important considerations will include: (Para 3 and 571)
  - the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with the school's or college's duty and responsibilities to protect other children
  - the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether HSB has been displayed
  - the ages of the children involved
  - the developmental stages of the children involved
  - any power imbalance between the children. For example, is/are the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature, confident and well known social standing? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
  - if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature)
  - that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate
  - personal relationships between children
  - importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
  - are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult pupils or school or college staff, and
  - other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

Responding to reports and concerns of child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment Part 5. Details should cover:

- reminder it can happen inside and outside school and online Para 529, 539, 542
- importance of acknowledging and understanding scale of harassment and abuse Para 529
- awareness that children may not find it easy to tell staff and a reminder that children can show signs in ways they hope adults will notice and react Para 16-17 and 555-558
- zero tolerance approach – never acceptable or tolerated Para 530

- definitions of sexual harassment, sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviours (HSB) Para 533-543
- school approach to preventing abuse Para 544
- **Response to a report of sexual violence and sexual harassment steps school will take** in response to a report Para 555-558
- **reassurance** for victims that they are taken seriously, regardless of time taken to come forward and that abuse can have occurred online or outside school, not creating a problem, reassured not the feel ashamed or that they will be criminalised Para 557
- **record keeping -** recording all discussions and decisions in writing Para 558 (listed in bulleted approach)
- the **management of reports**, two staff present, if online – not viewing images, not promising confidentiality, trauma/impact of reporting, listening, additional barriers of reporting for some pupils, fact recording only, informing DSL as soon as possible Para 573-577
- **confidentiality** management Para 559-564
- **anonymity** while the case is progressing Para 565-567
- **risk assessment** process, including involving social care Para 568-570
- **follow up actions** - what to consider, such as age of child, seriousness of incident, power imbalance. Para 571-572
- **four management options** 1) manage internally, 2) early help, 3) referral to children's social care and 4) reporting to the police and managing the criminal process paras 573-618
- **unsubstantiated, unfounded, false and malicious reports -** review of records for patterns of concerning and problematic or inappropriate behaviour and if found false, consideration that the child and/or person who made allegation is in need of support and any disciplinary action Para 619-621
- **Safeguarding & supporting the victim** Para 622-631
- **safeguarding & supporting the alleged perpetrator(**s) and children/YP who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour (also siblings and peers) Para 632-634
- **sanctions** and the alleged perpetrators Para 635-638
- **working with parents and carers** Para 639-644
- **safeguarding other children** Consideration of **ongoing education** for victim and perpetrator and if they may be **sharing same classroom** Para 645-650

Section Four – school approach to the prevention of child-on-child abuse (anti-bullying strategy)

- school ethos/ambition for approach to preventing child-on-child abuse
- details of the school's work to prevent child-on-child abuse
  - overview of opportunities for teaching safeguarding as set out in KCSIE para158-163
  - how prevention of child-on-child abuse (including online abuse) is promoted – round school, school website, newsletters and so on
  - information about the curriculum teaching, assemblies, special events etc
  - responding to events/issues with staff and pupils as well as policy/procedure review from lessons learned
  - analysis of records and incidents for patterns and trends
  - quality assurance/impact of the school's work to prevent child-on-child abuse monitoring and review of school's strategy to prevent child-on-child abuse