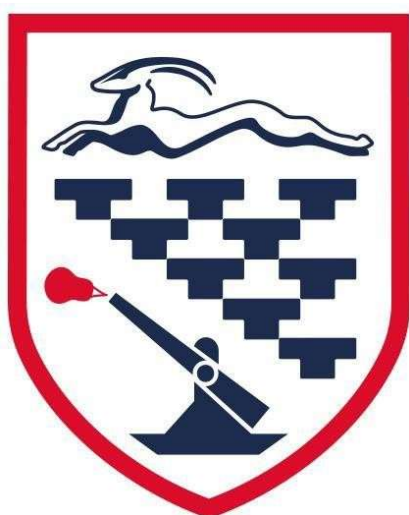




DEYES HIGH
SCHOOL

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



DEYES
HIGH
SCHOOL

LYDIATE
LEARNING TRUST

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This policy provides guidance to all adults working within the school whether paid or voluntary or directly employed by the school or by a third party.

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Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Headteacher	Vicky Beaney	v.beaney@deyeshigh.co.uk
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Anna Norton	a.norton@deyeshigh.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Helen Fowler Matthew Taylor	safeguarding.team@deyeshigh.com
Additional Safeguarding Team Members	Nathan Patten Michelle Ariss Molly Downey Brier Ferguson Ann Illingworth	safeguarding.team@deyeshigh.com
Senior Mental Health lead	Jess Griffith-Evans	jgevans@deyeshigh.co.uk
Prevent Lead	Anna Norton Colin Pascoe	a.norton@deyeshigh.co.uk c.pascoe@deyeshigh.co.uk
Early Help Lead	Anna Norton	a.norton@deyeshigh.co.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Tracey Holyhead 0151 934 3783	Tel. 0151 934 3783 Mobile: 07814 059604 SafeguardingUnitAdmin@sefton.gcsx.gov.uk
Chair of Governors	Hooshang Rahmani	
Link Governor for Safeguarding	Chris Anderson	
Channel helpline	https://educateagainsthate.com/	020 7340 7264
Sefton Integrated Front Door		0345 140 0845

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1.Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.
- All responsibilities and procedures are fully understood and that everyone can recognise signs and indications of abuse or neglect and respond to them appropriately.
- The school's practice meets local and national guidance and all statutory requirements are in place.

2. Key Principles

The child's needs and welfare are paramount. All children have a right to be protected from abuse and neglect and have their welfare safeguarded.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2024) reminds us that all staff should maintain an attitude of *"it could happen here"* where safeguarding is concerned.

Children should be listened to, and their views and wishes should inform any assessment and provision for them. Staff should always act in the interests of the child, in order to protect them.

The school recognises that scrutiny, challenge and supervision are key to safeguarding children.

The school is committed to working with other agencies to provide early help for children before they become at risk of harm or require a 'child in need' statutory assessment. *'Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.'* (DfE 2024)

All staff should be aware of the early help process and understand their role in it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

'All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.' (DfE 2024)

All staff have responsibility to report their concerns about a child **without delay** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence the deputy designated safeguarding lead(s) or other senior member of staff. This should be done both verbally and in writing, using the agreed format. Whilst the Designated Safeguarding Lead will normally make referrals to Children's Services, **anyone** can refer their concerns to children's social care directly in emergencies or if they feel they need to do so.

Everyone has responsibility to escalate their concerns and 'press for reconsideration' if they believe a child's needs remain unmet or if the child is failing to thrive and in need or if the child is at risk of harm. Concerns about a child should always lead to help for a child at some point and the child's situation should improve.

The school will work in partnership with other agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, including the need to share information about a child in order to safeguard them. *'Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.'* Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2024)

The school will work with other agencies to ensure any actions that are part of a multi-agency coordinated plan are completed in a timely way.

The school will follow the Local Authority and the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and provide them with information as required.

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Staff, children and families will need support following child protection processes being followed.

Children have a right to learn ways to keep themselves safe from harm and exploitation.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). **This policy should be read alongside this statutory guidance and all staff must read and understand part 1 and Annex B of this guidance.**

We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (DfE 2023) provides additional guidance which makes it clear that protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare depends upon a shared responsibility and effective joint working between different agencies:

In addition, Working Together to Safeguard Children also reinforces the need to take action to provide early help before statutory services are required:

'Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.' DfE 2024

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by Female Genital Mutilation
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty \(March 2024\)](#), which explains schools' duties under the **Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015** with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their students with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting students (where we can show it is proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled students. For example, it could include taking positive

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action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment.

- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve student outcomes. Some students may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination.

The Teachers' Standards (DFE 2013, updated 2021) requires all teachers to uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside of school, including.

- treating students with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's profession position.
- Having regard for the need to safeguard students' wellbeing, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Showing tolerance and respect for the rights of others.
- Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

In addition, the Sexual Offenders Act 2003 makes it clear that all members of staff are in a position of trust and would therefore be committing a criminal offence to have a sexual relationship with a young person below the age of 18, even if that student is over the age of consent. In addition, it would be a breach of trust to have a relationship with any school student over the age of 18.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The school and this policy also takes account of additional guidance including:

- [CSE Definition and guidance for practitioners](#) DFE 2017
- [Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines Guidance](#) DFE 2017
- [Disqualification under the Childcare Act](#) DFE 2006
- [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#) HMG 2018
- [The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers](#) DFE 2015
- [How social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq](#) DFE 2015 (Briefing note for schools)
- The [Ofsted School Inspection Handbook](#) and Ofsted guidance: [Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners](#) DFE 2015
- [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) DDCMS / UKCIS 2020
- [Serious Violence Duty: statutory guidance](#) Home Office 2022
- [Domestic Abuse: statutory guidance](#) Home Office 2022
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#) DFE 2022
- [Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools](#) 2022 DFE 2022
- Other DFE statutory guidance including: online safety and children who go missing from home or care is found here: <https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/safeguarding-children>
- Sefton Level of Need Guidance (assists schools to respond appropriately and make timely decisions about how to respond to the needs of the child/children and families they are working with. **Appendix 4 - Summary of the level of need.**

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Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) Policies and Procedures Online Manual can be found at: <https://seftonlscb.safeguardingpolicies.org.uk/lscb/procedures-manual/1-introductionlevel-of-need>

4. Definitions

Child includes everyone under the age of 18. The fact that a child reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Safeguarding means action should be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or at immediate risk.

'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge; protecting children from maltreatment, whether the risk of harm comes from within the child's family and/or outside (from the wider community), including online; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes set out in the [Children's Social Care National Framework](#).' (DfE 2023)

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or 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 extra-familial contexts. 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 another child or children.

Appendix 1 provides the definitions and indicators of the different types of abuse.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. **Appendix 1** defines neglect in more detail.

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

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

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

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

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

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5. Equality

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions.
- Are young carers.
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality.
- Have English as an additional language.
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence.
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation.
- Are asylum seekers.
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs.
- Are looked after or previously looked after.
- Are missing from education.
- Whose parent/carers has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated.

6. Roles and responsibilities

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

The school plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-school approach to preparing students for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour and Learning policy.
- Pastoral support system
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
 - Healthy and respectful relationships.
 - Boundaries and consent.
 - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
 - Body confidence and self-esteem.
 - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)
 - The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) and how to access support.
 - What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they are always unacceptable.

The Headteacher is Vickie Beaney

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The Chair of Governors is Hooshang Rahmani

The Designated Safeguarding lead for Child Protection is Anna Norton

Those trained to provide cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding lead: Helen Fowler DDSL

The nominated Link Safeguarding/Child Protection Governor: Chris Anderson

The Senior Mental Health Lead: Jess Griffith-Evans

The Young Carers Champion: Matthew Taylor

Early Help Lead: Anna Norton

PREVENT Lead: Anna Norton, Colin Pascoe

6.1 All staff

All staff (and volunteers) should:

Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2024\)](#), and engage in training which enables them to identify children who may need additional help or be suffering or likely to suffer harm and take appropriate action.

Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance and engaged in training.

Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they will be interacting with online)

Contribute to ensuring students learn in a safe environment.

Provide a safe space for students who are LGBT to speak out and share their concerns.

Maintain the belief that '*it could happen here*'.

All staff (and volunteers) should be aware of:

Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), deputy and the safeguarding team, the behaviour policy, the E-safety policy, mobile phone policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.

Recognise that any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education, health and care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol or other drugs themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect

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- is a privately fostered child
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day

Be aware of the early help assessment process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.

The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.

Report any concerns about a child's welfare without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding Officers or in their absence a senior member of staff.

Ensure that they record their concerns using the school's agreed reporting procedure via CPOMS in a contemporaneous fashion. Records will note the difference between fact and opinion. The child's voice will be made clearly evident.

Report any concerns (including those which might be considered to be low level concerns) without delay about the behaviour of an adult towards a child to the Head Teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Chair of Governors or if required the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations against Staff.

Have access to the school's managing allegations against adults procedures and whistle blowing policy. In addition, the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Have access to [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015: Advice for practitioners](#) DFE 2015

Ensure that concerns relating to children remain confidential and are only shared with the appropriate safeguarding staff.

Understand that any member of staff can make a referral to children's services should that be required, informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any action taken.

Understand their responsibility to escalate their concerns and 'press for reconsideration' if a child remains at risk or their needs are not met or if the school is not taking effective action in line with expected procedures. This includes the understanding that any member of staff can make a referral to Children's Services if required to do.

Understand the circumstances where it may be necessary to 'self-report' incidents where they could have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or may appear compromising to others, or if they have behaved in a manner which, on reflection, they consider to fall below the standards set out within the code of conduct for staff.

What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals

The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)

Teachers and those providing teaching **must** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

Be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse.

Understand that any indication of failure to follow any of the procedures set out within this policy will be led to a formal investigation by the school.

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The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

Understand the circumstances where it may be necessary to 'self-report' incidents where they could have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or may appear compromising to others, or if they have behaved in a manner which, on reflection, they consider to fall below the standards set out within the code of conduct for staff.

Be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they have a relationship or association, or others in their personal lives (in or out of school or online), may impact on their work with children.

Be aware that they should inform their head teacher of any cautions, convictions or relevant order accrued during their employment, and/or if they are charged with a criminal offence.

The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online.

The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by other children.

Understand that any indication of failure to follow any of the procedures set out within this policy will lead to a formal investigation by the school.

Section 15 and appendix 2 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

6.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior member of staff from the school's leadership team.

The DSL at Deyes is Anna Norton- Associate Deputy Headteacher. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school.

The school also appoints a deputy designated safeguarding lead(s), Helen Fowler and Matthew Taylor who are trained to the same level as the DSL and the role will be explicit in their job description, however the lead responsibility remains with the designated safeguarding lead. The DSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the monitoring and filtering systems and processes in place).

If the DSL and deputy are not available, there are a team trained to the same level as the DSL and they are:

- Helen Fowler – Deputy DSL
- Nathan Patten
- Michelle Ariss
- Ann Illingworth
- Kirsty Ainsworth - SENDCO

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Our DSL can also be contacted out of school hours if necessary, by emailing safeguarding@deyeshigh.co.uk

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

- Receive appropriate [DSL] training, including 'Working together', updated every two years, and other training associated with the role including 'Prevent' awareness, domestic abuse, online safety and record keeping.
- liaise with the headteacher to inform 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 when in contact with Police Officers who suspect them of an offence. The DSL (or deputy) will communicate any vulnerabilities known to the school to a police

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officer who wishes to speak to a student about an offence and this communication will be recorded on CPOMS. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - [PACE Code C 2019](#);

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- Act as point of contact with the safeguarding partners.
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Attend the DSL network, and link with Sefton Safeguarding Children's Partnership arrangements to ensure staff are aware of training opportunities and the most recently published local policies on safeguarding arrangements.
- Contribute to the assessment of children.
- Ensure that child protection files are kept up to date. Information is kept confidential and stored securely. Records 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. Files are only accessed by those who need to see it and any sharing of information happens in line with information sharing advice set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Refer all cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) immediately, if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to the child school need to contact the police.
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed processes such as the FAST team (Family advice support team).
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour.

The DSL will also:

- Keep the headteacher informed of any issues.
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies.
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment and be confident as to how to access this support.
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search.
- School has an appropriately trained member of staff to in order to fulfil its obligations under Operation Encompass, and that the school's commitment to Operation Encompass is known throughout the school community via the means of staff training, parental letters, posters and the school website.
- 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.

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This includes:

- ensure 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,
- support 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.

In addition to the role outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, the designated Safeguarding Lead is also expected to ensure that:

- The school has a specific safeguarding email account which is accessible by all members of the safeguarding team, and ensures that all communication of a safeguarding nature is seen and responded to by the school: safeguardingteam@deyeshigh.com
- The social worker is notified if a child subject to a child protection plan is absent without explanation.
- The social worker is informed when a child subject to a child protection plan or a child in need plan moves to a new setting.
- A training log is kept of all child protection training including the names of those attending. All staff must have regular training and updates. Staff or volunteers who are unable to attend training will be offered the chance to receive missed training at the earliest opportunity.
- Child protection records are kept securely and separately from the child's normal file. Records will be transferred and/or retained in keeping with the Local Authority and NSPCC guidance.
- The school attends and contributes to child protection case conferences and child in need meetings, ensuring actions are completed in a timely manner. The school will complete the LSCP agency report ahead of each child protection conference.
- The school escalates its concerns with other agencies when a child's needs are not being met following the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Escalation and Resolution Policy.
- All members of the safeguarding team have received appropriate training; that all referrals made are quality assured and that regular safeguarding supervision is provided to the safeguarding team to monitor all decisions and actions taken alongside the well-being of each team member.
- All staff read and understand part 1 and Annex B of the DfE (2024) guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education and make available to them other key documents and guidance.
- Encourage a culture of listening and taking account of children's wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school 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 trusting relationships which facilitate communication.
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents know referrals may be made about suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation and the role of the school or college in this.

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

6.3 The Governing Body

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The Governing Body will:

Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development.

Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

Ensure that the school meets the statutory responsibilities set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2024) and working together (DFE 2023)

Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Appoint a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL.

Make sure:

- The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support.
- The child protection policy is reviewed at least annually and by the full governing body and available on the school's website.
- The school has procedures in keeping with the Local safeguarding partners for dealing with any allegations made against any adult working within or on behalf of the school
- There is effective analysis of safeguarding data including bullying, attendance, exclusions, behaviour logs, incidents of sexual violence or harassment, students taken off roll, the views and progress and participation of vulnerable students.
- There are clear systems and processes in place for identifying mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.
- The leadership team and relevant staff are aware of and understand the IT filters and monitoring systems in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns.
- Confirm a review takes place to ensure the standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers these standards and whether more needs to be done to support our school in meeting and maintaining this standard and communicating these to staff, our students, parents, carers and visitors to the school who provide teaching to children as part of the learning and educational opportunities we provide.
- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). [Appendix 3](#) of this policy covers this procedure.
- That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised.
- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed.
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate.
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services or activities are children on roll.

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- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate ([see appendix 3](#)).

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 in its entirety.

Section 15 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

6.4 The Headteacher

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

Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:

- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction.
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.

Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website.

Ensure there is a listening culture within the school where both staff and children are able to raise concerns about poor and unsafe practices.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a job description in keeping with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2024) and that sufficient time, funding, training and resources, are allocated to this role. Including the appointment of colleagues able to deputise for the Designated Safeguarding Lead who have undertaken the same training and who also have the role explicitly referenced within their job description.

Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, and updating the content of the training regularly.

Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate.

Referrals are made to the Disclosure and Barring Service and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency as appropriate.

Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.

They liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer where an allegation is made against a member of staff.

The curriculum provides opportunities to help students stay safe including when online. Children should be aware of the support available to them.

The RSE / PSHE / safeguarding curriculum is appropriately sequenced to ensure children are taught about key issues in a planned and age/stage appropriate way, building on previously knowledge as they move through the school.

They quality assure the school's child protection practices including the auditing of safeguarding records and the supervision of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and other members of the safeguarding team to ensure that actions and decisions are reviewed appropriately, and that staff's emotional needs are met.

The school meets its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty including ensuring there are reasonable checks are made on visiting speakers and monitoring and filtering is in place across the school's IT systems. All staff have had opportunity for Prevent training either through face-to-face training or access to online resources:

<https://www.support-people-vulnerable-to-radicalisation.service.gov.uk>

6.5 Virtual School Headteachers

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Virtual school heads have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of students with a social worker.

They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, SENCOs, social workers, mental health leads and others.

7. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their education outcomes. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

The school's approach to confidentiality and information-sharing is detailed in the code of conduct policy. The school recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The Head teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a 'need to know basis only.

The school will transfer records securely to the next setting and discuss the child's needs before the child starts at the next setting. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to their counterpart in the school to which the child is transferring in order to ensure that they are aware that the file is to be transferred. Upon confirmation of the child starting on roll the file should be transferred as soon as possible (within 5 days), but separately to the main school file. The file should be signed upon receipt and delivered by hand wherever possible. School should follow the transfer of records protocol.

The school understands the need to keep child protection and safeguarding records securely through CPOMS.

Guidance about sharing information can be found in the 2018 document [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018](#) and the [Data protection: toolkit for schools](#).

You should note that:

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.

Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. (DFE 2024)

The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR **do not** prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. (DFE 2024)

If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
- The DSL should consider that:
 - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk).

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- The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care.
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved.
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy).

Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect **to record-keeping below**, and **allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3**.

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing via CPOMS. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Record Keeping

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.
- Instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme, etc

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely on CPOMS and only available to those who have the right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse will be retained for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible securely, and separately from the main student file.

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To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- **5 days** for an in-year transfer, or within
- **The first 5 days** of the start of a new term

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

Records at Deyes are all stored electronically on **CPOMS**.

In addition:

The safer recruitment policy sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-appointment checks.

The disciplinary and managing allegations policy sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff.

8. Procedures for reporting child protection or child welfare concerns

All members of the school community have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Staff and governors should not investigate possible abuse or neglect themselves.

- All concerns should be reported **without delay** directly through CPOMS which is allocated to the Safeguarding team.
Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean “the DSL (or deputy DSL)”.

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

- Consideration will need to be given to immediately protecting the child and contacting the police and/or ringing for an ambulance if the child is injured.
- Make a referral to children’s social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.**

If staff are ever concerned that a child is in immediate danger, they will contact the Police by dialling 999.

Children’s Services contact details are as follows:

Sefton Integrated Front Door 0345 140 0845 (Out of hours 0151 934 3555)
Lancashire Care Connect 0300 123 6720 or 0300 123 6722
Liverpool Careline Hub 0151 233 3700
Knowsley MASH 0151 443 2600
St Helens Contact Centre 01744 676 600

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

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will take immediate action without delay and make a referral using Sefton **INTEGRATED FRONT DOOR** using FAST or CHAT telephone line. If a child is a Knowsley or Liverpool residence the school will make a referral to the appropriate LA.

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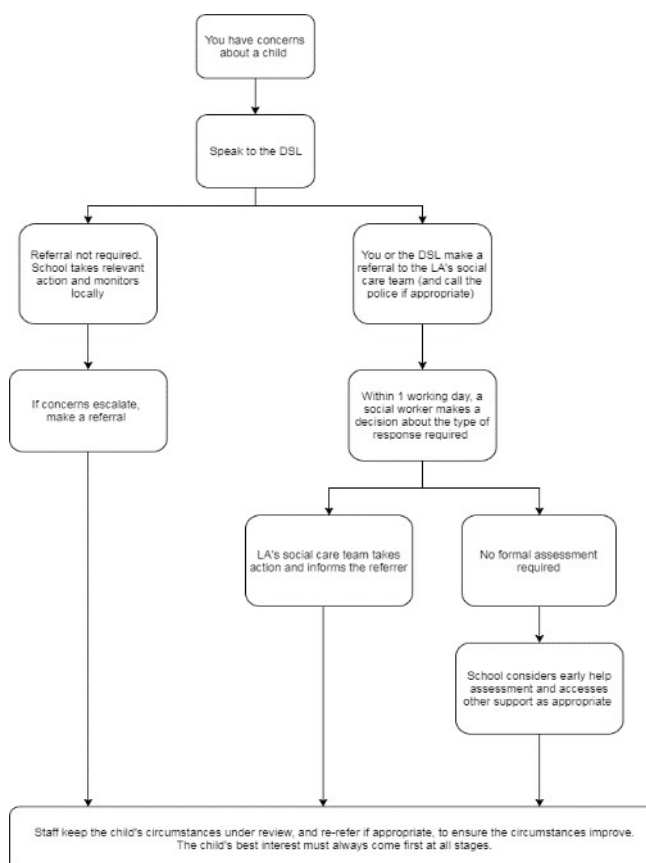
- Concerns about a child should always lead to help for a child. The school may need to escalate its concerns with Children's Services to ensure a referral is accepted or work with other agencies to ensure an Early Help Assessment is completed.
- The school will always seek to follow the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures which can be found on their website.
- If school does not receive feedback within one working day regarding the outcome of a referral made to Children's Services, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact Children's Services immediately to determine the outcome of the referral.

If school disagrees with the outcome of a referral, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ask to speak to the social worker and/or manager who made the decision. Following this conversation, if they remain dissatisfied they will follow the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Escalation and Resolution Procedures.

<https://seftonscp.org.uk/p/sefton-scp-escalation-procedure#:~:text=This%20procedure%20has%20been%20developed,welfare%20of%20that%20young%20person.>

8.2 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm)



Concerns about a child should always lead to help for a child. The school may need to escalate its concerns with Children's Services to ensure a referral is accepted or work with other agencies to ensure an Early Help Assessment is completed.

Early help assessment

If an early help assessment is appropriate, a key member of the Safeguarding team will lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support

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other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.

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

Any child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the need for early help for a child who:

- ✓ Is disabled and has specific additional needs.
- ✓ Has special educational needs (whether they have a statutory education, health and care plan.
- ✓ Is a young carer.
- ✓ Bereaved
- ✓ Is missing education (not on a school roll) persistently absent from school or not in receipt of full time education
- ✓ Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit.
- ✓ Is not in education, training, or employment after the age of 16 (NEET).
- ✓ is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- ✓ is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- ✓ Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- ✓ Children who run away or goes missing from home or care.
- ✓ Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- ✓ Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation.
- ✓ Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.
- ✓ Has returned home to their family from care.
- ✓ Is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect/exploitation
- ✓ Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- ✓ Is a privately fostered child.

Knowing what to look out for is vital to the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL (or deputy). If in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or deputy/member of safeguarding team) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT). In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible.

Students on Early Help will be supported by an allocated member of the safeguarding team and will be monitored closely. The allocated member of the team will be the key contact for the family and external agencies involved.

Information on the Sefton Early Help Assessment process is available at – <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/earlyhelp>

8.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a student is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2024) explains that FGM comprises “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs”.

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as

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‘female genital cutting’, ‘circumcision’ or ‘initiation’.

Possible indicators that a student has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a student may be at risk, are set out in **appendix 4** of this policy.

Any teacher who either:

- Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl’s physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth.

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

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

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

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

Any member of staff who suspects a student is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out or discovers that a student **aged 18 or over** appears to have been a victim of FGM should record their concern on CPOMS and inform the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

The DSL will support the staff member contacting the police on 999 and relevant Careline above.

8.4 If you have concerns about extremism

Concerns that a child is being radicalised should follow the normal safeguarding referral mechanism with an additional Channel or Prevent referral being made to the Local Authority’s Prevent and Channel team.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. [Channel](#), the government’s programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children’s social care team.

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

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

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

8.5 Children with a mental health concern

We recognise that we have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students. We also recognise that in some cases, mental health problems can be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

The DSL will regularly liaise with the Senior Mental Health lead where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health to ensure that there is an effective and appropriate response by school.

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

We adopt a school approach to mental health and wellbeing, which includes promoting positive mental health, wellbeing and resilience across the whole school community.

The school trained Senior Mental Health Lead is – Jess Griffith-Evans.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in **section 8.2**.

If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, refer to the DSL via CPOMS and an initial triage meeting will be initiated. Students have an agreed support package, and intervention is put in place based on their need. Students are supported by members of the Student Services team. Should the child pose significant risk in school, a risk assessment will be put in place to ensure the child is safe. These will be sent to staff on a termly basis following a review or as required.

Through partnership working with Young Peoples Advisory Service, CAMHS Sefton and Sefton School Nurse Service, mental health needs are supported in school or assessed and supported with onward referral to appropriate services if needed.

Kooth in Sefton

Kooth is an online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people, accessible through mobile, tablet and desktop and is free at the point of use. Kooth is an early intervention resource which targets improvements in young people's emotional and mental wellbeing.

Online support will address a wide range of health and wellbeing issues such as relationships, bullying, self-harm, suicide, loneliness, self-confidence, self-esteem, pregnancy, abuse, bereavement, anger, and risk-taking behaviours, although this list is not exhaustive.

Young people aged 11 to 19 will self-refer into the service 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, although only dedicated counsellor hours will be provided. Outside counselling hours, young people will be able to access such features as online articles, forums, and message boards. The online facility must be compatible with mobile devices. journey.xenzone.com

8.6 Process to follow if a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse, staff should:

- Listen and keep calm. Do not interrupt.
- Not promise the child that they will keep the matter confidential. Explain to the child who they will need to tell and why.
- Observe visible bruises and marks, but should not ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to view them.
- Keep questions to a minimum as their role is not to investigate. If staff need to ask questions in order to ascertain whether this is a safeguarding concern, they should ensure they are open questions.
- Use the 'TED' model for asking open ended questions: "Tell me about that", "Explain that to me", "Describe that".
- Make a record of what has been said immediately afterwards in words used by the child and the member of staff to the best of their memory. Use capital letters for the child's words to help distinguish the two.
- Note anything about the child which is connected i.e. any visible injuries including the position and

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- description, the demeanor of the child i.e. crying, withdrawn etc.
- Clearly indicate whether fact, opinion or third-party information.
- Report the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if in doubt.

Aside from the DSL and Deputy DSL, safeguarding team do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

Staff should not:

- Ask leading questions, put words into the child's mouth or press for details.
- Rush the child.
- Examine the child.
- Investigate.
- Promise confidentiality.
- Summarise or use your own words to describe events.
- Delay sharing the information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Bear in mind that some children may:

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

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly, you **must** tell the DSL as soon as possible.

The person making the referral should provide the following information if available - note - absence of information must not delay a referral:

- Full name, any aliases, date of birth and gender of child/children
- Full family address and any known previous addresses
- Identity of those with Parental Responsibility
- Names, date of birth and information about all household members, including any other children in the family, and significant people who live outside the child's household
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents/carers
- Any need for an interpreter, signer, or other communication aid
- Any special needs of the child/ren
- Is the child/ren registered at a school or regularly attending a school? If so, identify the school
- Any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents in the child's or family's life
- Has the child recently spent time abroad or recently arrived in the area?
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location
- The identity and current whereabouts of the suspected/alleged perpetrator
- The child's current location and emotional and physical condition

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- Whether the child is currently safe or needs immediate protection because of any approaching deadlines (e.g. about to be collected by alleged abuser)
- The child's account and the parents' response to the concerns if known
- The referrer's relationship and knowledge of the and parents/carers
- Known current or previous involvement of other agencies/professionals
- Information regarding parental knowledge of, and agreement to the referral

The INTEGRATED FRONT DOOR should decide within **one** working day of a referral being made about what course of action they are taking, and they should let the referrer know the outcome. The DSL will follow up on a referral should that information not be forthcoming. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the DSL will press for re-consideration using Sefton Escalation Policy and Procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

The escalation policy can be found at: -

<https://seftonscp.org.uk/p/sefton-scp-escalation-procedure#:~:text=This%20procedure%20has%20been%20developed,welfare%20of%20that%20young%20person>

8.7 Attendance Concerns

A child missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, including exploitation. Local Authority guidance and procedures will be followed for dealing with a child who is missing from education, particularly on repeated occasions or if a child suddenly stops attending. The school will follow the pan-Merseyside missing children protocol.

For those children and families who have chronic poor attendance or severe or persistent absenteeism, school will consider whether educational neglect is present and whether a referral to children's services is required, or whether the school should seek consent to begin an Early Help Assessment in order to coordinate a multi-agency plan of support for the child and family. School will ensure that our response is in line Working together to improve attendance (DFE 2024)

It is important that the school's attendance team, including school nurse and Safer Schools Officer, are aware of any safeguarding concerns. It is critical that when a child is not attending school their welfare is confirmed and expected practice would be for an appropriate professional to visit the home and speak to the child alone, particularly if there are any safeguarding concerns.

The timing for this home visit will be determined on a case by case basis. The school will seek to ensure it has at least **three** emergency contacts for each family and consider what urgent action it may need to take when a vulnerable child and family are not contactable and the child has not attended school. Where necessary, this may include reporting the child missing to the police. The school will ensure it is aware, in advance, of any difficulties in accessing the premises of a child's family home.

Any child currently on a child protection plan who is absent from school without explanation is referred to Sefton Council School Attendance First Day Response Scheme, and contact is made with the social worker, in their absence, a Team Manager.

Due to the clear link between attendance and safeguarding, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Attendance Lead will meet regularly in order to analyse and discuss data and agree future action in respect of vulnerable children.

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

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Where children are experiencing social, emotional or mental health issues and this is impacting on their attendance, school will refer to DFE guidance [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#).

Children Missing Education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. All staff should be aware that children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life. Children going missing can also be an indicator of mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Maintained schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils. When a child is deemed to be missing from education, school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. Once these enquiries have been undertaken, our school will follow the local protocol for Children Missing Education and make a CME referral to the Local Authority Officer for CME.

Some parents will decide to remove their child from the school role in order to educate them at home. For the majority of children, this choice will be with the child's best education at the heart of their decision and it will be a positive learning experience. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean that some children become less visible to services who are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their individual needs. Where a parent or carer has expressed their intention to remove their child from the school roll with a view to educating at home, the school will work together with other key professionals and will, where possible, attempt to facilitate a meeting with the family to ensure that all parties have considered what is in the best interests of the child. This is particularly important for those children who have SEND, are vulnerable, and/or who have a social worker. The school will also link with the named officer for Elective Home Education within the Local Authority.

Concerns about missing children or any transfer concerns will be referred to Sefton Children Missing Education: cme@sefton.gov.uk;

Children who are on a managed move supported by the in- year fair access/transfer protocol

Our school will work with the receiving school to monitor attendance. We will attend all the reviews and if the decision is taken for the child to return, we will ensure they are fully supported.

9.Managing allegations against adults (including all staff, supply teachers, volunteers and/or contractors) working at or on behalf of the school

All school staff and other adults working at or on behalf of the school will be aware of and work within the school's code of conduct and other relevant policies and procedures.

All staff and volunteers must report any concerns about a member of staff's behaviour towards children (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) to the Headteacher who will act as the case manager. Concerns can also be discussed with the DSL.

If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, these should be raised to the Chair of Governors or nominated governor.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, agency worker, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO) via Children's Services.

Local Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency procedures will be followed in all cases where it is alleged a member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;

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- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they 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.

The school's managing allegations against staff and volunteers policy and procedures will support everyone to take appropriate action. This includes a flowchart to guide colleagues.

In some circumstances, the school will have to consider an allegation against an individual who is not directly employed by the organisation and where our disciplinary procedures do not fully apply (for example supply teachers). Whilst the school is not the employer of the individual, we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with properly and will liaise where appropriate with relevant parties. The school will not cease to use the services of a supply teacher as a result of safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

Part 4 of the DFE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2024) provides further guidance.

There are occasions when a person who works with children behaves in a way that is concerning and raises questions about their ability to recognise and take steps to safeguard children in their care that may not always meet the threshold of LADO. As an employer the school has a duty to consider whether the issue indicates that they are unsuitable to continue in their role for the immediate future or indefinitely. These are known as issues of suitability and if they do not meet the harm threshold for allegations they, would be dealt with via the school's disciplinary and low level concerns procedures. Issues of suitability can include:

- Where an employee is being investigated for an offence against an adult, or
- Their behaviour in their personal lives brings into question their suitability to work with children

However, if an adult who works with children has involvement from Children's Services in respect of their own child, or a child that they live with or have contact with, it is the responsibility of Children's Services to assess the immediate concern and inform the LADO of whether the adult poses a risk to children. Examples of this may include:

- Allegations of assault, physical or emotional, on their own child or on a child they live with or have contact with
- Domestic abuse
- Substance misuse
- Lives with or is in a relationship with a person who is identified as a risk to children

The situation would meet the threshold of LADO should the child in question be made subject to a Child Protection plan. This is because Children's Services has determined that the adult presents a risk to the associated child either directly or due to a failure to protect.

If school are made aware of any of the circumstances detailed above, they will have a consultation with the LADO in order to determine whether the threshold is met for a referral under the managing allegations process.

If the school receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purpose of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities), the school will follow its own policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.

9. Allegations of abuse against another student (child on child abuse) including issues of sexual violence and harassment

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Staff must act on the assumption that children

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may be experiencing sexual violence or harassment, even if there are no specific reports of such behaviour. Staff must ensure that they challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language and behaviour. Behaviours by children should never be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up', as this can lead to a unsafe culture which normalises abuse and inappropriate behaviours and can lead to children accepting it as normal and therefore not reporting such issues.

The DFE states 'The initial response by a school or college to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the school or college responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward'

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

All concerns must be reported and discussed with the DSL, Deputy DSL or senior member of staff. Behaviours can happen in school, online, or in the community and are most likely to include, but not limited to:

Abuse within intimate personal relationships between peers.

Bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)

Serious violence

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

causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent

online sexual harassment including consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nudes images and/or videos, sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages including on social media, sexual exploitation, coercion and threats and coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they are not comfortable with online;

consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images or videos;

upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission (this is a criminal offence);

physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;

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 many also include an online element).

When responding to reports of child on child abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will respond to each report on a case-by-case basis. If an allegation is potentially criminal in nature, a report will be made to the Police. This will generally be in parallel to a referral to children's services. School can refer to the NPCC guidance [When to call the Police](#) for additional support.

The school will also handle reports which include an online element carefully. This includes being aware of [Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools](#) and [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

See appendix 2 for more information about child-on-child abuse.

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

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

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

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

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The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)

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

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

Staff follow the school's procedures on reporting concerns to the safeguarding team.

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

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

To achieve this, we will:

Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images.

Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female students, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys.

Ensure our curriculum helps to educate students about appropriate behaviour and consent.

Ensure students are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 7.10 below)

Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously.

Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners.

Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed.

Consider intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.

Ensure staff are trained to understand:

- How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports.
- That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.
- That if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report.

For example:

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

A friend may make a report

A member of staff may overhear a conversation

A child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong

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

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

The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

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

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (‘sexting’)

This approach is based on [guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety](#) for [all staff](#) and for [DSLs and senior leaders](#).

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as ‘sexting’ or ‘youth produced sexual imagery’), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **NOT**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a student to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the student to delete it.
- Ask the student(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL’s responsibility).
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the student(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.

You should explain that you need to report the incident and reassure the student(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment f

Initial review meeting

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

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

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

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

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

Further review by the DSL

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

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

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

Informing parents/carers

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

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be actioned by calling 101.

Recording incidents

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

Curriculum

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The curriculum will support students TO become more resilient to inappropriate behaviours towards them, risk taking behaviours and behaviours that children may be coerced into including 'sexting' or 'initiation/hazing' behaviours.

Students are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our Personal Social, Health and Economic education and IT curriculums. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is.
- How it is most likely to be encountered.
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment.
- Issues of legality.
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation.
- Students also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:
- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images.
- The receipt of such images.

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with students so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident through Collective meetings and PEAK sessions.

10. Reporting systems for students

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

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

To achieve this, we have:

- The school safeguarding poster is displayed around the school with information on how students report a concern.
- Students are made aware of the reporting systems and processes through discussions in form times, assemblies, PEAK programme and as part of the relationships/sex education curriculum.
- Systems in place for students to confidently report abuse
- Make it clear to students that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.
- Students are encouraged to report concerns via the school SHARP system. The SHARP system can be accessed via the school website.

11. Domestic Abuse and Operation Encompass

All staff and volunteers are aware that domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home

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and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

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

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

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

The [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) recognises children as victims of Domestic Abuse in their own right and sets out statutory multi-agency responsibilities, including specific responsibilities on education providers. Amongst other things, these include how school deliver an effective PSHE / RSHE curriculum which supports children to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe, and covers the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, 'honour'-based abuse and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.

Deyes High School is part of [Operation Encompass](#). Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Violence and Abuse. Operation Encompass enables every child to receive support, regardless of whether the incident has been recorded as a crime and regardless of whether there is involvement with children's services. Operation Encompass means that the police will share information with our school about all police attended Domestic Abuse incidents which involve any of our children prior to the start of the next school day.

In order to support the school's response, key members of staff have undertaken specific training related to Operation Encompass.

Key information about the principles of Operation Encompass is cascaded to all other school staff and Governors as part of the annual training and induction for new staff. This includes discussing with staff how we can support children who are experiencing Domestic Abuse on a day-to-day basis, and particularly following an Operation Encompass notification. No actions taken by school will put the child/ren or adult victim at risk.

Deyes ensures that parents are fully aware of Operation Encompass and when a new child joins our school we ensure that the parents/carers are informed about Operation Encompass. There are posters in and around school.

Operation Encompass notifications are stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information on CPOMS.

Operation Encompass data will form part of the termly safeguarding report to Governors. All information is anonymised for these reports.

The school will use the Operation Encompass Key Adult Responsibilities checklist to ensure that all appropriate actions have been taken.

From March 2024 using Operation Encompass, Merseyside Police will share information with our school about all children who are or who have been missing from home or care (MfH). The Key Adult (DSL) and their deputy/s (DDSLs) have completed the online Operation Encompass Key Adult training which contains a module about MfH. Information about MfH notifications have been shared with all other school staff and Governors. Our parents are fully aware that this information is being shared with our school.

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The Operation Encompass MfH information is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information.

Our school has discussed how we can support our children who have gone missing and how we will act following an Operation Encompass MfH notification. Our curriculum includes work in this area. We have used the Operation Encompass Handbook on MfH to inform our thinking. We are aware that we must do nothing that puts the child/ren at risk.

Should the Head Teacher, DSL or DDSs leave the school and other staff are appointed, Deyes will ensure that all key information shared with the new Head Teacher/Key Adults and that the new member of staff will undertake the Operation Encompass online training.

There is further information regarding Domestic abuse and local support available in [Appendix 2](#).

12. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Our school implements a whole school approach to online safety that sets out to protect and educate both children and staff in their use of technologies.

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as ‘mobile phones’)
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate, using Securus

The 4 key categories of risk

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

Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism.

Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.

Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and

Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

To meet our aims and address the risks above we will:

Educate students about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:

- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring students are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim

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Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation. All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year

Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety

Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, including:

- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of students on their personal phones or cameras.
- Make all students, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a student is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones.
- Make sure all staff, students and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search students' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety using the LGFL online safety audit, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community.

The Governing Body will ensure that our school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and will regularly review their effectiveness. (KCSIE paragraph 141 2024). The school will adhere to the DfE Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges which sets out that schools should:

- Identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring standards.
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without reasonably impacting on teaching and learning.
- Have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet safeguarding needs.

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For comprehensive details about our school's policy on online safety and the use of mobile phones, please refer to our E safety policy and mobile phone policy, which you can find on our website.

12. OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH SAFEGUARDING

Our school plays an essential role in helping children to understand and identify the parameters of what is appropriate and adult behaviour; what is 'safe' both online and offline to recognise when they and others close to them are not safe; and how to seek advice and support when they are concerned.

The governing body ensures our children are taught about safeguarding (including online safety), and through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Our curriculum will provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, social and emotional understanding, assertiveness, and decision making, so that children have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others. Systems have been established to support the empowerment of children to talk to a range of staff when they are in difficulty and to raise comments, complaints and feedback about their school experience and any other external issues which affect their wellbeing. Children will be listened to and heard, and their concerns will be taken seriously and

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acted upon as appropriate. Records will be kept of reported incidents in line with guidance.

We encourage the safe use of external agencies or speakers to enrich the experiences of our children. We will, however, positively vet those external agencies, individuals or speakers who are invited by the school staff or by the children themselves to ensure that we do not unwittingly use agencies that contradict each other with their messages, or that are inconsistent with, or are in complete opposition to the school's values and ethos.

Our school will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that:

- ✓ Any messages communicated to children are consistent with the ethos of the school and do not marginalise any communities, groups, or individuals.
- ✓ Any messages communicated to children do not seek to glorify criminal activity or violent extremism or seek to radicalise children through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion, culture, or other ideologies.
- ✓ Activities are properly embedded in the curriculum and clearly mapped to schemes of work to avoid contradictory messages or duplication.
- ✓ Activities are matched to the needs of children.

We recognise, however, that the ethos of our school is to encourage children to understand opposing views and ideologies, appropriate to their age, understanding and abilities, and to be able to actively engage with them in informed debate.

13. Communicating with Parents

The school is committed to the principles of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2024) which states that *'A child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. All practitioners should follow the principles of the Children Acts 1989 and 2004. These Acts make clear that the welfare of children is paramount and that they are best looked after within their families, with their parents playing a full part in their lives, unless compulsory intervention in family life is necessary.'*

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

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL. If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

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

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

Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what is being put in place to safeguard them and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed.

Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what is being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s).

14. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies

14.1 Complaints against staff

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Staff should report any concerns (including those which might be considered to be low level concerns) without delay about the behaviour of an adult towards a child to the Head Teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Chair of Governors or if required the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations against Staff.

Concerns or complaints about the Headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors. Local Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency procedures will be followed in all cases where it is alleged that a member of staff has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they 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

The school's managing allegations against staff and volunteers policy and procedures will support everyone to take appropriate action.

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for managing allegations of abuse made against staff policy.

In some circumstances, the school will have to consider an allegation against an individual who is not directly employed by the organisation and where our disciplinary procedures do not fully apply (for example supply teachers). Whilst the school is not the employer of the individual, we still have responsibility to ensure allegations are dealt with properly and will liaise where appropriate with relevant parties. The school will not cease to use the services of a supply teacher as a result of safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

Concerns can also be taken directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (L.A.D.O.), if needed, via Children's Services.

There are occasions when a person who works with children behaves in a way that is concerning and raises questions about their ability to recognise and take steps to safeguard children in their care that may not always meet the threshold of LADO. As an employer the school has a duty to consider whether the issue indicates that they are unsuitable to continue in their role for the immediate future or indefinitely. These are known as issues of suitability and if not being dealt with under the managing allegations procedures, would be dealt with via the school's disciplinary procedures. Issues of suitability can include:

- Where an employee is being investigated for an offence against an adult, or
- Their behaviour in their personal lives brings into question their suitability to work with children

However, if an adult who works with children has involvement from Children's Services in respect of their own child, or a child that they live with or have contact with, it is the responsibility of Children's Services to assess the immediate concern and inform the LADO of whether the adult poses a risk to children. Examples of this may include:

- Allegations of assault, physical or emotional, on their own child or on a child they live with or have contact with.
- Domestic abuse.
- Substance misuse.
- Lives with or is in a relationship with a person who is identified as a risk to children.

The situation would meet the threshold of LADO should the child in question be made subject to a Child Protection plan. This is because Children's Services has determined that the adult presents a risk to the associated child either directly or due to a failure to protect.

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If school are made aware of any of the circumstances detailed above, they will have a consultation with the LADO in order to determine whether the threshold is met for a referral under the managing allegations process.

All staff should ensure that they disclose information about themselves relating to the above to the Head teacher as soon as possible. School will create an environment and culture where staff are supported and empowered to be able to do this.

14.2 Other complaints

Complaints relating to students can be raised with the following pastoral staff;

- KS3 Pastoral Lead: Rachel Bradshaw
- KS4 Pastoral Lead: Colin Pascoe
- KS5: Jessica Griffith-Evans

Complaints relating to premises should be forwarded to LLT Head of Estates - Andrew Parsons – a.parson@lydiatelearning.org

14.3 Whistleblowing

Teachers have access to the school's managing allegations against adults procedures and whistle blowing policy. In addition, the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Have access to [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015: Advice for practitioners](#) DFE 2015

14.4 Use of Reasonable Force

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a child needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

At our school there may be circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force 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.

When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), mental health or with medical conditions, our school will consider the risks and carefully recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups. We will also consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and their Public Sector Equality Duty.

At our school we are committed to planning positive and proactive behaviour management and support, for instance through drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children and agreeing them with parents and carers.

15. Training

15.1 All staff

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All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including whistle-blowing procedures, and online safety, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect.

This training will be regularly updated and will:

Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning.

Be in line with advice from the safeguarding partners.

Have regard to the Teachers' Standards to support the expectation that all teachers:

- Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe environment.
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of all students.

All staff and volunteers working in the school must be given a copy of the Child Protection policy immediately upon starting work at the school as part of their induction. All staff and volunteers working in the school must complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role as part of their induction and at a minimum of annually thereafter.

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

As part of the requirement for all staff to undergo regular updated safeguarding training (including online safety), safeguarding training will be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including on online safety, as required including weekly briefings, emails, e-bulletins, For example, Sefton 7 minute briefings which can be found at: <https://www.seftonscp.org.uk/p/7-minute-briefings> and termly safeguarding training.

Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

The school will keep a safeguarding training log evidencing the training attended by the different groups of staff/governors and will seek to evidence the ongoing impact of this training.

15.2 The DSL and deputy

The DSL and deputy will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually for example, through e-bulletins, trust safeguarding meetings with other DSLs, local authority briefings and taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments.

15.3 Governors

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

Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge.

Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding.

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

The Link Governor for Safeguarding should attend appropriate training to enable them to fulfil the expectations of the role.

15.4 Recruitment – interview panels

At least 2 people conducting any interview for any post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education, (2023) and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures.

See the Recruitment and selection policy for further information about our safer recruitment procedures.

16. Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

- All visitors must report to reception first via the main entrance. No visitor is permitted to enter the school via any other entrance under any circumstances.
- All visitors to the school will be asked to bring confirmation of a current enhanced DBS along with photo ID with them at the time of their visit (unless they are named on the approved visitors list as set out in section 8 of the school’s visitor policy).
- All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.
- Visitors are expected to sign in using the electronic signing system and wear a visitor’s badge.
- Visitors will be collected by their point of contact. The contact will then be responsible for them while they are on site. The visitor must not be allowed to move about the site unaccompanied unless they are registered on the Approved Visitor List.
- We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise students or staff.

17. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The aim of monitoring and evaluating the child protection policy is to learn from practical experience, which will contribute to inform policy reviews and future changes to the policy and procedures. The process of monitoring and quality assurance will help the school and governors to identify the policy strengths and weaknesses, and will help to provide an understanding of the reasons for these, so that decisions can be made to resolve any limitations with immediate effect.

Monitoring and evaluation will be done by checking whether the standards from the child protection policy are implemented and whether safeguards are working and will be undertaken throughout the year by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors and the Lydiate Learning Trust Safeguarding Lead.

Activities which will form part of the ongoing monitoring of effectiveness including:

- Scrutiny of the Single Central Record and personnel files to ensure pre-employment checks are robust and up-to-date, and that job descriptions for new positions include reference to child protection, etc.
- Scrutiny of the school’s annual 175 safeguarding audit by the Chair of Governors and Link Governor for Safeguarding, alongside the full governing body having oversight of any actions arising from the audit.

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- Confirmation that training has been undertaken according to planned schedule and that all relevant staff and volunteers have participated.
- There is effective analysis of safeguarding data including bullying, attendance, exclusions, behaviour logs, pupils taken off roll, the views and progress and participation of vulnerable students. In particular, the school will monitor the link between attendance and safeguarding and those persistently absent, frequently late, missing school (including part of the school day) or those who suddenly stop attending.
- Methods such as 'safeguarding training assessments' used to evidence the effectiveness of staff training.
- Regular meetings with staff, volunteers and children which include the opportunity to discuss safeguarding and child protection, or use of questionnaires to evidence this.
- Safeguarding learning walks designed to evidence and test out key safeguarding standards.
- Adapting and amending the policy and procedures outside of their annual review date to reflect current issues which may have recently arisen in order to ensure that all children are protected at all times.

Our school will also draw upon additional quality assurance activities completed by the Trust.

17. Useful contacts

NAME	TELEPHONE NUMBER
Sefton CHAT Team	0151 934 4013
Sefton FAST Team	0151 934 4545
Out of Hours Service	0151 934 3555
PREVENT (Single point of contact) Chris White	0151 934 3370
Merseyside Police	101 / Emergency 999
Local Authority Designated Officer Tracey Holyhead	0151 934 3783
Education Safeguarding Tracy McKeating	0151 934 3359
Children Missing Education Co-ordinator Clare Johanson	0151 934 3181
CAMHS (single point of access)	0151 282 4527
Bully Busters	0800 169 6928
Sefton Women & Children's Aid (SWACA)	0151 922 8606
OPERATION ENCOMPASS - Pippa Wilcox	Phillippa.Wilcox@merseyside.police.uk
Independent domestic abuse advisors (IDVA)	0151 934 5142
VENUS	0151 474 4744
Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre [RASA] Sefton	0151 558 1801
Parenting 2000	01704 380047 / 0151 932 1163
Housing Options	0151 934 3541
Change Grow Live drug and alcohol service Bootle/Southport	0151 203 9755 Sefton.Services@cgl.org.uk
LSCB Business Manager – Tracy Overs	0151 934 4706
LSCB Administrator Donna Atkinson	0151 934 4706
SENDIASS Barnardo's	Telephone on 0333 323 8003. Email sefton.sendiass@barnardos.org.uk

Contacts for children who go to school in Sefton but live in neighbouring local authorities.

Local Authority	Telephone number	Out of hours
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Liverpool Care line	0151 233 3700	0151 233 3700 (same as Care line)
Knowsley MASH	0151 443 2600	0151 443 2600 (same as MASH)
Lancashire Care Connect	0300 123 6720	0300 123 6722

18. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- DHS Anti-bullying Policy
- DHS Attendance Policy
- DHS Behaviour Policy
- DHS Online Safety Policy
- LLT Employee Code of Conduct
- LLT Complaints Policy
- LLT Health and Safety Policy
- LLT Intimate Care Policy
- LLT Recruitment and Selection Policy
- LLT SEND Policy
- LLT Social Media Policy
- LLT Volunteers and visitors
- LLT Whistleblowing
- DHS Looked-after Children Policy
- LLT Social Media Policy
- DHS Relationships and Sex Education
- DHS School Visitors Policy
- Workforce Privacy Notice

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- These appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024**.

Appendix 1: Types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by 1 definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

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

Emotional abuse may involve:

Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person

Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate

Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction

Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another

Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

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

Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing

Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

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

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

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

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

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Appendix 2: Specific Safeguarding Issues

This appendix is mostly based on the advice in Keeping Children Safe in Education, in particular annex B

Children missing from Education

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

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

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

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

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

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

The school will liaise with Clare Johanson the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator who can be contacted on 0151 934 3181, email Clare.Johanson@sefton.gov.uk

For our children who receive an education at another establishment but remain on our roll we will keep in touch on a regular basis with the alternative provision and will continue to monitor the attendance.

Child Criminal Exploitation

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

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

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis

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factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

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

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

Child Sexual Exploitation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Child-on-child Abuse

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

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

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

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (this is sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')

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- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video).
- 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.
- 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)
- Where children abuse their peers online, this can take the form of, for example, abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages; the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups; and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.

If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 7 of this policy, as appropriate. In particular, section 7.8 and 7.9 set out more detail about our school's approach to this type of abuse.

When considering instances of harmful sexual behaviour between children, we will consider their ages and stages of development. We recognise that children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma and will offer them appropriate support.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse as defined under the DA Act 2021 is:

Behaviour of a person (A) towards another person (B) is "domestic abuse" if:

A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive. The Act says behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional, or other abuse

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

In Sefton, we have many agencies who support people who are experiencing domestic abuse:

- **Sefton Independent Domestic Violence Advisors [IDVA]**- they offer free crisis intervention support to high-risk victims of domestic abuse, provide practical help including safety planning for the whole family, support through the Criminal Justice System, and home security checks. They work with male and

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female victims aged 16+ and work with victims even if they choose to remain in their relationship. They can be contacted by phone on 0151 934 5142 between Monday and Friday 9.00am until 5.00pm or at IDVA.Team@sefton.gov.uk

- **Sefton Women & Children's Aid [SWACA]** – they help women, young people and children survive the impact of domestic violence and abuse by giving free practical and emotional support. SWACA will see people in the community, including the family and well-being centres. They also work with young people who are experiencing relationship abuse. They can be contacted on 0151 922 8606 or help@swaca.com
- **Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (RASA)**- they provide **essential** crisis and therapeutic support to individuals of all ages who have been affected by sexual violence at any time in their lives. This includes specialised counselling, support, and an Independent Sexual Violence Advocacy (ISVA) service, which includes support through the Criminal Justice process. They also provide an opportunity to give anonymous intelligence in relation to sexual violence if an individual does not want to make a formal complaint. They operate a help line on Tuesdays and Thursdays 6pm until 8pm, Friday 12noon until 2pm, Sunday 10am until 3pm. They can be contacted on 0151 558 1801 or sefton@rasamerseyside.org

Teenage Relationship Abuse is when there is actual or threatened abuse within a romantic relationship or a former relationship. One partner will try to maintain power and control over the other. This abuse can take many forms: physical, sexual, financial, emotional, or social. This includes coercive and controlling behaviour.

Private Fostering

Our school has a mandatory duty to notify the local authority if they believe a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement.

Private fostering is an arrangement that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) by someone other than their parent or a 'close relative' in their own home, with the intention that it should be for 28 days or more. (Close family relative is defined as a 'grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts it includes half-siblings and step parents. (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity). It does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.)

Our school will fulfil the mandatory duty to inform Sefton **INTEGRATED FRONT DOOR** Team of a private fostering arrangement.

People become involved in private fostering for all kinds of reasons. Examples of private fostering include:

- ✓ Children who need alternative care because of parental illness.
- ✓ Children whose parents cannot care for them because their work or study involves long or antisocial hours.
- ✓ Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their educational opportunities.
- ✓ Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children.
- ✓ Teenagers who stay with friends (or other non-relatives) because they have fallen out with their parents.
- ✓ Children staying with families while attending a school away from their home area.

Our school will fulfil the mandatory duty to inform **the CHAT** Team of a private fostering arrangement. . A Social Worker will undertake:

- ✓ An assessment of the needs of the child and consider whether there is any help that should be provided.
- ✓ Check that private fostering carers are suitable people to care for children, and that the accommodation where children will be cared for is adequate.
- ✓ Decide whether the private fostering arrangements are satisfactory and can go ahead.

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- ✓ Visit children who are privately fostered to ensure their needs are met, and they are being properly looked after.

Homelessness

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

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

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

Our school will work closely with the Housing Options Team and other services if children in our school are homeless or are at risk from becoming homeless. **The Housing Options Team can be contacted on 0151 934 3541.**

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

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

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

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

FGM

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

Section 8.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a student is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

A student confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place

A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out

A family/student already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

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

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

The girl's family having a history of practicing FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)

FGM being known to be practiced in the girl's community or country of origin

A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out

A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues

A girl:

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

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

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of 1 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.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the '1 chance' rule, i.e., we may only have 1 chance to speak to the potential victim and only 1 chance to save them.

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

The DSL will:

Speak to the student about the concerns in a secure and private place

Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer

Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fm@fco.gov.uk

Refer the student to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

Preventing radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups

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Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces

Terrorism is an action that:

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

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

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

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

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

Staff will be alert to changes in students' behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a student is being radicalised can include:

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

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

If staff are concerned about a student, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

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

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Colin Pascoe is the 'Prevent Single Point of Contact' (SPOC)

Students with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that students with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- Students being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other students.
- The potential for students with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- We offer extra pastoral support for these students.

Any abuse involving students with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputy) and the SENCO.

HARM OUTSIDE THE HOME – (EXTRA FAMILIAL HARM)

We recognise safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school including online. All staff, especially the DSL (or deputy), should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. Assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. It is important that staff provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process.

Students with a Social Worker

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

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

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

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

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

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

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads
- We have appointed a designated teacher, Anna Norton, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with [statutory guidance](#).
- The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

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As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

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

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur:

- Between 2 children of any age and sex
- Through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children
- Online and face to face (both physically and verbally)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.

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

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

When supporting victims, staff will:

Reassure victims that the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them.

Regularly review decisions and actions, and update policies with lessons learnt.

Look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, and decide on a course of action where we identify any patterns.

Consider if there are wider cultural issues within the school that enabled inappropriate behaviour to occur and whether revising policies and/or providing extra staff training could minimise the risk of it happening again.

Remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting signs that a child has experienced sexual violence and show sensitivity to their needs.

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

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

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

If staff have any concerns about sexual violence or sexual harassment, or a child makes a report to them, they will follow the procedures set out in section 9 of this policy, as appropriate.

Serious violence

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

Increased absence from school

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

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

- Being male.
- Having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school.
- Having experienced child maltreatment.
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Staff will be aware of these indicators and risk factors. If a member of staff has a concern about a student being involved in, or at risk of, serious violence, they will report this to the DSL.

Students missing from school.

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible.

- Once a student is identified as missing by any member of school staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed.
- Staff will use professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the students' whereabouts before notifying the Police. Timeliness should be on a case-by-case basis.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead should, together with the class teacher, assess the child's vulnerability.
- School staff will try to locate the student and try to establish the whereabouts of them.
- School staff will contact home and try to contact the student via their mobile telephone if known.

Notifying the Police

The information required by the Police to assist in locating and returning the student to a safe environment is as follows: ·

- The student's name/s; date of birth; status (for example looked after child); responsible authority.
- Where and when they went missing.
- Previous missing episodes and where they went.
- Who, if anyone, they went missing with?
- What the child was wearing plus any belongings they had with them such as bags, phone etc.; include mobile number.
- Description and recent photo.
- Medical history, if relevant.

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- Time and location last seen.
- Circumstances or events around going missing with relevant safeguarding information.
- Details of family, friends and associates:
- Contact details of safeguarding lead if it was after school hours.

Whilst the search is ongoing, the school will continue to liaise with the police and act in accordance with police instructions.

Option 1 – if the child returns before the police have arrived then the Police must be informed, and own school procedures need to be followed.

Option 2 - if the child returns to school of their own volition, then the Police must be informed, and own school procedures need to be followed.

Option 3 - if the police locate the child and bring them back to the school the Police will conduct the safe and well interview, and the school will follow School procedure.

Where a student has a known risk of being missing, a risk assessment for the student will be written and put into place.

Safeguarding children who attend off-site alternative provision

When identifying that a child would benefit from attending off site provision, our school will undertake an assessment to determine that this placement is in the best interests of the child.

We will ensure that the provision identified is suitable to meet the needs of that child. The school will retain responsibility for the safeguarding of any students we place in off-site provision.

The school will undertake appropriate quality assurance checks to ensure that it is a safe place for the child to attend and will draw upon the specific guidance in the Schools' Safeguarding Handbook relating to this. The school will obtain written confirmation from the provider that the appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out in respect of individuals working at the establishment.

The school will have a formal agreement with the alternative provision and parent/carer regarding when the student should attend and what procedures will be followed should the child not attend the placement. The school will ensure it seeks the views of the young people at off-site provision to ensure they feel happy and safe.

When commissioning places at alternative provision, the school will pay due regard to [Alternative provision – DfE Statutory Guidance](#) and [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school – DfE Statutory Guidance](#).

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Appendix 3: Allegations made against staff

Section 1: allegations that may meet the harms threshold.

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or

Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or

Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they 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 – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school.

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO).

We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity. The case manager (Headteacher) may delegate aspects of the investigation to DSL or a senior member of staff.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved.

Suspension of the accused will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned.
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children.
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children.
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment, and parents/carers have been consulted
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the Trust.

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the Trust HR Team and the Local Authority Designated Officer, as well as the police and children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

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Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation

False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)

Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations.

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps: Ensure all basic enquiries are conducted in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below.

- Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies.
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate.
- Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to children's social care.

If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details.

If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.

If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate.

Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is

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appropriate. Individuals will be provided with the contact details of our Trust employee assistant programme where they can access 24/7 helpline and counselling.

Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice.

Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member).

Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the school will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply teachers and all contracted staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

The case manager will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation.

We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required.

We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- Any cases where it is immediately clear that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious, should be resolved within 1 week.
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days.
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days.

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavor to take the required action as

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soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If a report is:

- Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.
- Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it.

Confidentiality and information sharing

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

The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared.
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality.
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation.
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises.

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file). For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation.

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- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved.
- Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with children's social care or the police as appropriate.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

- Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious.
- Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the members of staff.
- The duration of the suspension.
- Whether or not the suspension was justified.
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Section 2: Low Level Concerns

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

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Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school.
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**

Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating students

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others.
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section 9 of this policy.
- Empowering staff to self-refer.
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage.
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system.

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

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

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The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's code of conduct. The headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or, where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold as described in section 1 of this appendix, we will refer it to the designated officer at the local authority.
- Retained at least until the individual leaves employment at the school.

Where a low-level concern relates to a supply teacher or contractor, we will notify the individual's employer, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

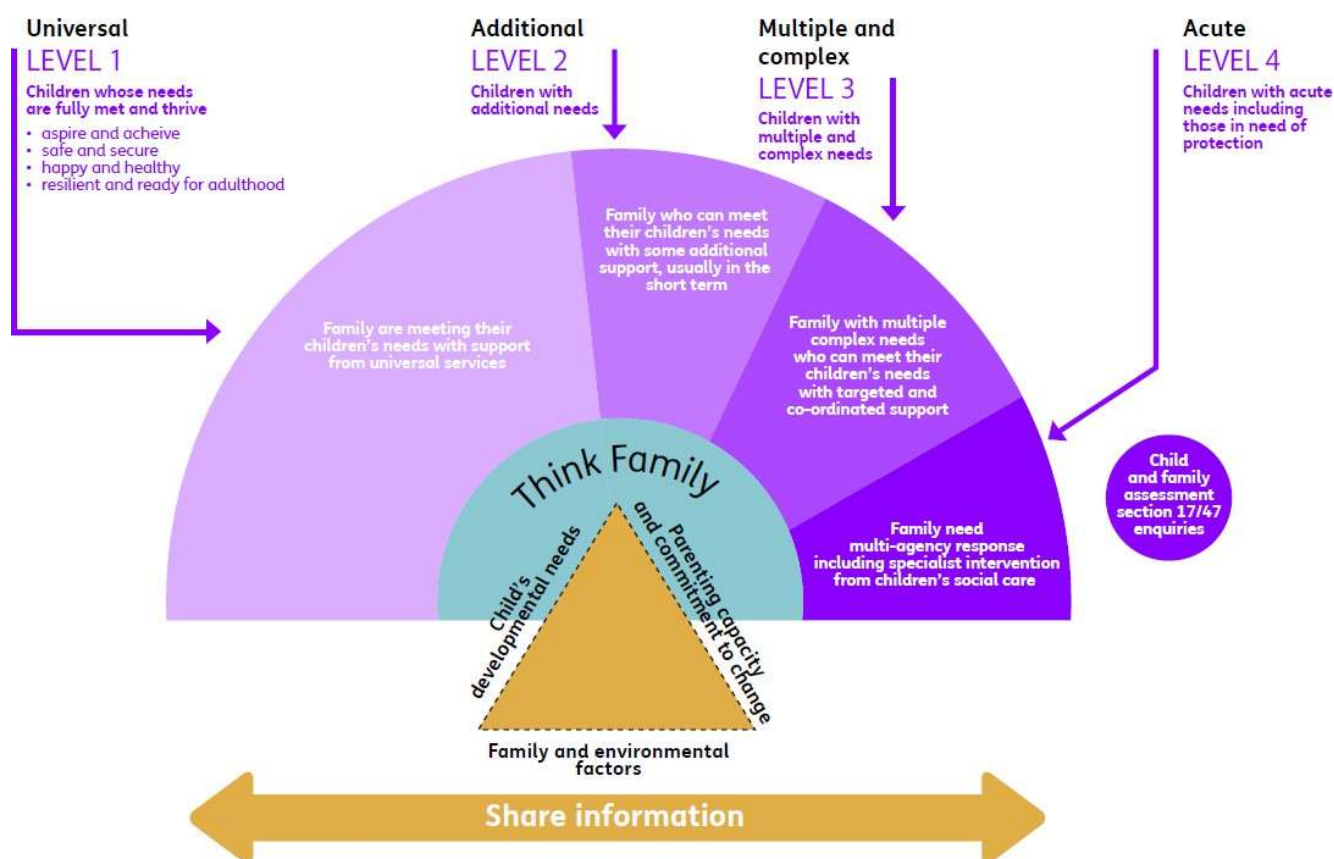
References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the designated officer at the local authority and is found to be substantiated.
and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance.

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Appendix 4: SUMMARY OF SEFTON LEVEL OF NEED



(REMEMBER: Levels of Need descriptors are to be used as a guidance only)

Where need is identified an appropriate response must be taken. As every child and family is unique, descriptors of need provided are not prescriptive or exhaustive. All needs must be considered on a case-by-case basis and decisions should be made using professional judgement:

Level 1 – Children whose needs are fully met and thrive: Needs met through universal services Voice of the Child; “Mum knows where to get help if she needs it and so I stay safe and warm in her womb”.

Level 2 – Children with additional needs: Consider Early Help Assessment Voice of the Child: “Most of the time I feel happy but sometimes my family need help from other people to keep me safe”.


Level 3 – Children with multiple and complex needs: Initiate Early Help Assessment Voice of the Child: “I’m struggling, I need help with many things, I need more help than my family can provide”.

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Level 4 – Children with acute needs includes those in need of protection - Social worker led specialist intervention required Voice of the Child: *“I am frightened when I go home, but if I don’t go back something will happen to mum or my brother. Someone make it stop.”*

Where a professional is unsure of the most appropriate response to identified needs, discussion with a manager, or a designated safeguarding lead, for support must take place to ensure and oversee those appropriate actions are taken.

Appendix 5: CHILD EXPLOITATION (CE) CHECKLIST

			
Team: Tel: Email:			
Multi-Agency Exploitation Screening Tool			
Details of Child:			
Family Name		Given Names	
Actual DOB		Gender	
Ethnicity		Primary Language	
Primary Address		Telephone	
Secondary Address		Case Number	
<p>Multi-Agency Exploitation Screening Tool</p> <p>The purpose of the tool is to enable professionals to identify indicators which suggest a child is, or is at risk, of Exploitation, in a consistent way which facilitates sound judgement. The screening tool can be used for all children (male and female) at any point in the child’s journey and with young people up to 21yrs. It can be used by any practitioner working with and supporting children or young people where there is a concern a child may be exploited</p>			

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Important points to remember when considering Exploitation:

- ✓ Both girls and boys can be victims of exploitation and are equally vulnerable. The coercer(s) and perpetrator(s) are usually adult(s), but children and young people can also act in an exploitative, abusive way towards other young people or exert power e.g., group/gang members of either gender.
- ✓ Children and young people may exchange or sell sex because of constrained choices such as poverty, isolation, and historic abuse.
- ✓ Although it is rare, parents/carers may be involved in the exploitation of their children.
- ✓ Groups of children and multiple perpetrators may be involved (organised abuse).
- ✓ No child under 13 years should be assessed as Low Risk if behaviours indicate a risk of Exploitation.
- ✓ Children with additional needs require special consideration up to the age of 21 years.
- ✓ No child with a learning disability or additional learning needs should be assessed as Low Risk if behaviours indicate involvement in or risk of exploitation.
- ✓ Be aware: disclosure of information by the child may take time and evident risks may only emerge during ongoing assessment, support, and interventions with the child and/or family.

Guidance on the use of the screening tool

- ✓ Completion of the Screening Tool should always involve liaison with other agencies to ensure multi-agency Information sharing and support.
- ✓ The screening tool is intended to assist professional judgment by considering a range of features and indications of exploitation and associated behaviours. Professionals are encouraged to go beyond the child's presenting behaviour e.g., missing or challenging behavioural to explore what else might be going on for this child/young person. This often requires a prediction of harm.
- ✓ If a child presents with one indicator, action is required. Early intervention improves the chances of positive outcomes. One indicator is unlikely to require Children's Social Work Services or specialist services intervention unless it is a Significant Risk category. Early help and prevention services within the community should always be considered.
- ✓ Assessing or screening for child exploitation should not be seen as a one-off event. Young people can move very quickly between risk categories, therefore regular assessments should be undertaken using the Screening Tool. Any escalation of risk should be referred to the named Children's Services worker or Children's First Response Hub, if unknown.
- ✓ Using the Screening tool will determine which the level of intervention is required dependent on the assessed level of risk. If in doubt, please contact the [CHAT team](#) on 0151 934 4013.
- ✓ Disruption and prosecution of the perpetrator/s is also of significant importance therefore, any information which comes to light about the victim/s or perpetrator/s (however insignificant this may seem) should be passed on to the Police.

IMMEDIATE SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS:

If you are concerned that a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, then you should dial '999' and tell the Police. If you have information which might help protect a child, you should dial 101.

To report any 'intelligence' that does not require immediate action, you can use the Merseyside Police Reporting form via this [link](#).

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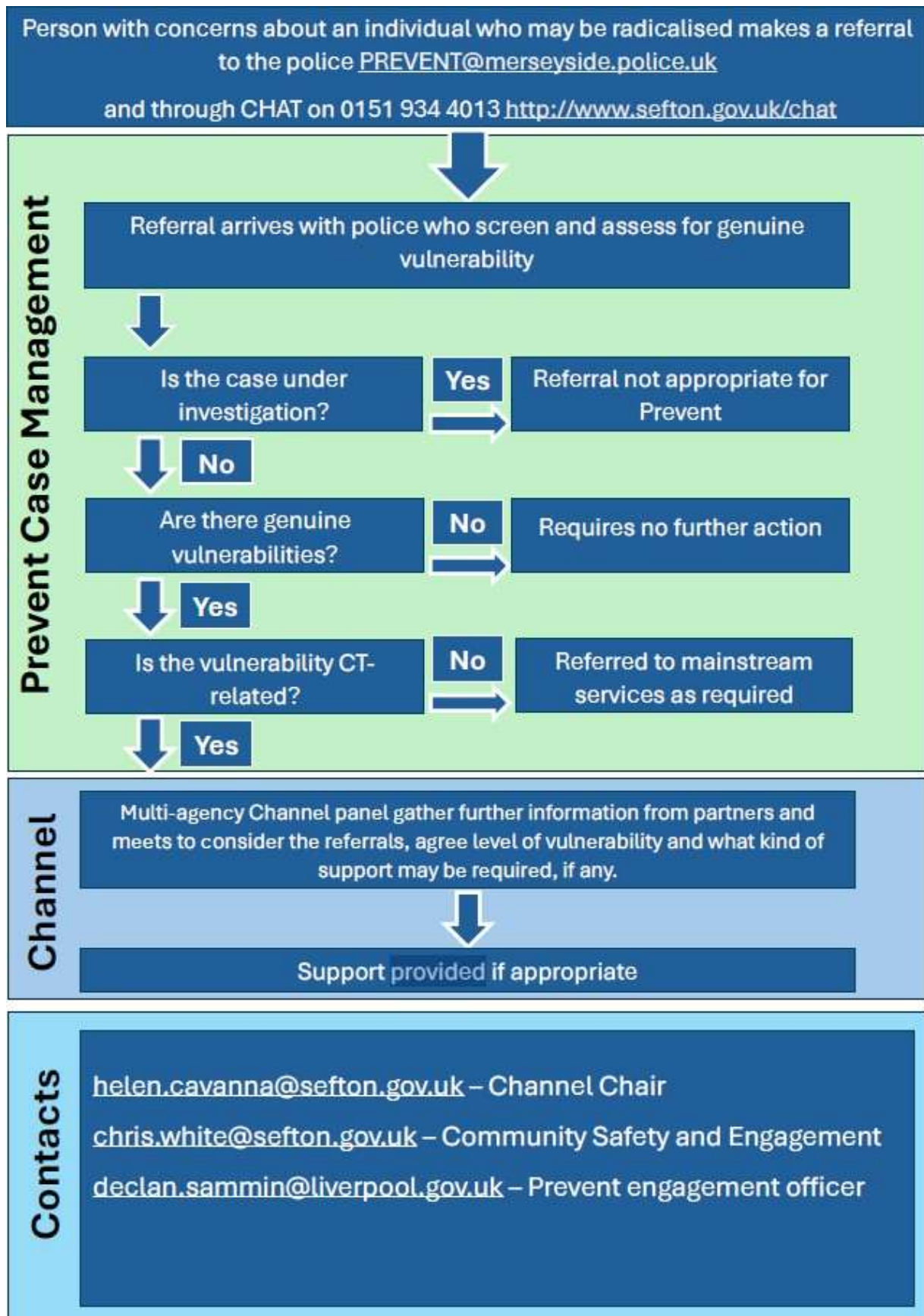
Personal Details:							
Date form completed:							
Details of Person completing the Screening Tool:							
Name:							
Organisation/role:							
Telephone No:							
Email address:							
Young Person's Information:							
Full name							
Gender							
DoB							
LL ID Number							
Address:							
School/Education Setting							
EHCP?		Yes/No/Unknown*					
*If unknown, when is it going to be obtained?							
Social Care Case Level		CP/Cared For/CIN/Not open at time of referral/YOT/Early Help					
Ethnicity							
Age at time of assessment							
Alleged Perpetrators' Details (if known)							
Family Name	First Name(s)	Middle Name(s)	Alternative Name:	Date of Birth:	Gender:	Ethnicity:	Age:
Risk Assessment							
Did the Child/Young Person participate in this assessment?		Yes/No*					
*If yes, what are their views?							
*If no, why not?							
Significant Risk Select all appropriate options							
<input type="radio"/> Previous victim of CE <input type="radio"/> Meeting known or unknown adults inappropriately <input type="radio"/> Associating with known CE perpetrators/ drug dealers or other victims of exploitation <input type="radio"/> Other							
<input type="radio"/> Unexplained gifts or additional mobile phone/Simcard <input type="radio"/> Being groomed to meet via the internet <input type="radio"/> Presence at hotspot CE areas such as taxi ranks, bus stations, off licences and take-aways <input type="radio"/> No factors identified							
<input type="radio"/> Visiting hotels with adults/ or other young people <input type="radio"/> Transported from town to town for sexual /or criminal activity with adults (including purchase of train tickets and taxi fares) <input type="radio"/> Information of direct involvement in exploitation							
<input type="radio"/> Visiting nightclubs with adults <input type="radio"/> New Clothes / phones / money / jewellery / drugs / cigarettes <input type="radio"/> Engaging in sexual activity with adults or with peers at young age							
<input type="radio"/> Recruiting others into exploitative situations <input type="radio"/> Over sexualised appearance <input type="radio"/> Presence or frequenting red light areas							
Please provide further information:							
Strong Indicators of exploitation Select all appropriate options							
<input type="radio"/> Considerable change in school performance / attendance / behaviour <input type="radio"/> Regular STI's or Emergency Contraception <input type="radio"/> Involved in gang type activity. <input type="radio"/> Exclusion from school due to behaviour - may not have been excluded - reduced timetable/alternative provision							
<input type="radio"/> Multiple callers to address <input type="radio"/> Forming relationships via internet <input type="radio"/> Possessing large amount of unexplained cash. Suspicious bank account activity <input type="radio"/> Change in physical appearance - weight loss/ weight gain / external signs such as extreme fatigue or sudden increase in make-up, tattoos, piercings etc							
<input type="radio"/> Receiving calls/text from unknown person / additional unexplained mobile phone or other mobile device <input type="radio"/> Missing or Absent from home episodes <input type="radio"/> Pregnancy and/or termination <input type="radio"/> Other							
<input type="radio"/> Self-harming and/or suicide tendencies / Substance misuse <input type="radio"/> Entering or leaving unknown vehicles <input type="radio"/> Unexplained relationships with adults <input type="radio"/> No factors identified							
<input type="radio"/> Association with other victims of exploitation <input type="radio"/> Found in areas with no known connection <input type="radio"/> Evidence of self-harming							
<input type="radio"/> Multiple Perceived boyfriends/girlfriends <input type="radio"/> Overly sexualised behaviour for age <input type="radio"/> Older boyfriend/girlfriend or friendship groups							
<input type="radio"/> Involvement in crime or anti-social behaviour <input type="radio"/> Victim of exploitative relationships <input type="radio"/> Unexplained physical injuries							
Please provide further information:							
Early Indicators of CSE Select all appropriate options							
<input type="radio"/> Absent/truanting from school <input type="radio"/> Frequent poor behaviour <input type="radio"/> Becoming estranged from family <input type="radio"/> Change in appearance - including sudden increase in make-up or tattoos or piercings etc							
<input type="radio"/> Detached from age related activities <input type="radio"/> Secretive relationships <input type="radio"/> Mood swings <input type="radio"/> Change in sporting or leisure activities/ interests (e.g. no longer interested in football / dancing when they used to be)							
<input type="radio"/> Lack of interest in education <input type="radio"/> Returning home late <input type="radio"/> Hostility towards other family members <input type="radio"/> Other							
<input type="radio"/> Physically aggressive to other							

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family members	<input type="radio"/> Secretive behaviour	<input type="radio"/> Secretive about internet use	<input type="radio"/> No factors identified
Please provide further information:			
Vulnerability Factors Select all appropriate options			
<input type="radio"/> Live in a chaotic or dysfunctional family	<input type="radio"/> Mental health problems	<input type="radio"/> Recent bereavement or loss	<input type="radio"/> Previous victim of CE
<input type="radio"/> Low self-esteem or confidence	<input type="radio"/> Sexually active	<input type="radio"/> Homeless	<input type="radio"/> Lack of protective factors within family unit
<input type="radio"/> Parents/carers with mental health problems	<input type="radio"/> Subject of bullying	<input type="radio"/> Parents/carers with drugs or alcohol abuse	<input type="radio"/> History of domestic abuse within the family
<input type="radio"/> Live in residential or foster care or unstable adoptive placement	<input type="radio"/> History of sexual abuse within the family	<input type="radio"/> Migrant, refugee or asylum seeker	<input type="radio"/> Other
<input type="radio"/> Drugs or alcohol abuse	<input type="radio"/> Social or learning difficulties	<input type="radio"/> Unsure of their sexual orientation/difficulties with identity	<input type="radio"/> No factors identified
Please provide further information:			
Additional Comments:			
Name(s) and Signature(s) of Professional(s) making this assessment			
Name:			
Organisation/role:			
Add professional? (yes/no)			
Choose the manager to authorise this form:			
Management oversight:			
Please provide your oversight:			
Child Exploitation Team Decision:			
Progress to Child Exploitation?	Yes/No		
Is the Child/Young Person:	Suffering significant harm through exploitation? * At risk of suffering significant harm through exploitation?** *Start Exploitation process managed by Child Exploitation. **Start Exploitation process and re-assign to Social Work Team Manager.		
Please provide comments:			

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Appendix 6: PREVENT CHANNEL FLOW CHART



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