



**St. Alban & St. Stephen
Catholic Primary School & Nursery**

Child Protection Policy

Learning and Growing with God by our Side

Approved by:	Chair of Governors on behalf of the FGB	Date: September 2023
Last reviewed on:	September 2023	
Next review due by:	September 2026	

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

St. Alban & St. Stephen Catholic Primary School & Nursery

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body no less than annually.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body on September 2023.

It is due for review on September 2024 (up to 12 months from the above date).

CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction Statement**
- 2. Important Safeguarding Contacts**
- 3. Legislation and Guidance**
- 4. Definitions: Safeguarding and Child Protection**
- 5. Equality Statement, Children with Protected Characteristics**
- 6. Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff and Leadership/ Management**
- 7. Confidentiality and Sharing Information**
- 8. Recognise and Respond to Abuse and Neglect**
- 9. Online Safety and Filtering**
- 10. Working with Parents and Carers**
- 11. Managing Allegations About Staff, School's Safeguarding Policies & Practice**

Appendix 1: Declaration for whole school staff

Appendix 2: Changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

Appendix 3: Safeguarding Issues and Specific Forms of Abuse

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Child Protection Policy

- To inform staff, parents, volunteers and governors about the school's responsibilities for safeguarding children.
- To enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

This policy outlines the commitment to our legal duties to safeguard children, the responsibilities for all of our staff and the specific roles and responsibilities for our key Designated Safeguarding Leads and Governance. All school staff, including supply staff, volunteers and contract workers have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and grow.

Mission Statement: 'Learning and growing with God by our side'

At St Alban & St Stephen Catholic Primary School and Nursery, we strive to create a culture which enables children to express their wishes, feelings, and talk about anything that is of importance to them. We believe that every child deserves to receive an education within an environment that feels safe to learn and develop. We want our pupils, staff, parents and carers to have confidence and trust in our goals and know that collaborative working is fundamental to create and maintain a child-centred approach to safeguarding.

- We establish and maintain an ethos and culture where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened and responded to when they have a worry or concern.
- We establish and maintain an ethos and culture where school staff and volunteers feel safe, are encouraged to talk and are listened and responded to when they have concerns about the safety and well-being of a child.
- We ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried
- We ensure that children, who have additional/unmet needs are supported appropriately. This could include referrals to Early Help Services or Child Protection Contact Referrals to specialist services if they are a child in need or have been / are at risk of being abused and neglected.
- We consider how children may be taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. (KCSiE (DfE 2023), pg.33-34)
- We provide a safe space for children who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, we work to ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- We have safeguarding policies and procedures which are transparent, clear, and easy to understand for staff, pupils, students, parents, and carers. Systems are in place, and they are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report, any form of abuse or neglect, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback. Children have regular teaching on keeping themselves safe at an age-appropriate level using our school Jigsaw PSHE scheme and the Diocese-approved Ten Ten:Life to the Full Relationships and Health Education programme. In addition to this, we hold regular assemblies and events like Online Safety Week and Wellbeing Week to raise awareness. Pupil voice on safeguarding takes place termly with senior leaders and the Link Governor. Our school also works with agencies like the NSPCC to deliver safeguarding workshops.

School staff and volunteers are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they have daily contact with children.

All school staff receive appropriate annual comprehensive safeguarding children training, including online safety, so that they are knowledgeable and aware of their role in the early recognition of the indicators of abuse and neglect and of the appropriate procedures to follow.

As part of their initial induction and annual training, all staff are required to read and be familiar with the suite of documents and policies which relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of the whole school staff and volunteers. These include Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 (DfE 2023) and also the school's:

- Child Protection Policy,
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Online Safety Acceptable Use Agreement Form
- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy

In addition, all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and weekly staff meetings), as required, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Supply staff, contractors and volunteers are made aware of the safeguarding policies and procedures by the DSL, including the Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

Multi Agency Working- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures

The school is committed to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children. The school is fully engaged, involved, and included in local safeguarding arrangements. We understand our vital role as one of the relevant agencies and fully cooperate with our local safeguarding partners.

Safeguarding partners in the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) are the 3 organisations responsible for the partnership arrangements for keeping children safe. They are:

- › **Hertfordshire County Council:** represented by the Director of Children's Services.
- › **Hertfordshire Constabulary:** represented by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing.
- › **Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board:** represented by the Director of Nursing & Quality Hertfordshire & West Essex Integrated Care Board.

These three organisations will make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies, including the school, to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs. The three local safeguarding partners jointly leading the Partnership are:

The school follows the procedures established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP), a guide to procedures and practice for all agencies in Hertfordshire working with children and their families. <https://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

We understand the local criteria for action and the local protocol for assessment and ensure these are reflected in our own policies and procedures. We are also prepared to supply information as requested by the safeguarding partners.

We work with local authority children's social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. We allow access for local authority children's social care from the host local authority and, where appropriate, from a placing local authority, for that authority to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 17 or a section 47 assessment.

2. Safeguarding Contacts

School's In-House Contacts	
Organisation / Role	Name
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Tess Hackett (Head of School) admin@ssas.herts.sch.uk (01727) 866668
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL)	Charlene Smith (Assistant Head / SENDCo) Joanne Bates (LKS2 Phase Lead) Najiyah Ramdani (After School Club Manager)
Designated Teacher for Children Looked After (DT for CLA)	Charlene Smith (Assistant Head / SENDCo)
Chair of Governors	Gerry Dolan admin@ssas.herts.sch.uk (01727) 866668
Link Safeguarding Governor	Richard Mills

Non School Contacts		
Organisation / Role	Name	Contact details
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Duty LADO	LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk lado_referral_form.docx (live.com) <i>Strictly for professionals' use only</i>
Hertfordshire County Council Children's Social Care	Customer Service Centre	Children's Services includes SOOHS (Out of Hours Service-Children's Services) – 0300 123 4043
Hertfordshire County Council's Prevent Programme Manager	S. Lawrence	
NSPCC Helpline	N/A	Call: 0808 800 5000 Email help@NSPCC.org.uk .
Police	N/A	Emergency 999, non-emergency 101
Channel Helpline	N/A	020 7340 7264

3. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK- Legislation & Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the school will also act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- › [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- › [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- › Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- › [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- › [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- › Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- › [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- › [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- › [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- › [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- › The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- › This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

- › **What to do if you're worried a child is being abused** is guidance from the Department for Education and is designed for anyone who works with children and families. This is additional guidance that details signs of abuse and neglect to look out for and what action to take if professionals are concerned. The first point of reference for those working and volunteering in education settings should still be Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) and the setting's own Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures.
- › **The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership HSCP** sets out for all agencies our Child Safeguarding Arrangements for Hertfordshire to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children, young people and families see **HSCP Procedures Manual** and also **Continuum of Need for children and young people 2023 (hertfordshire.gov.uk)** They have a strategic function rather than operational direct work with children. Their vision and values are committed to delivering multi-agency child safeguarding arrangements of the highest quality and advocate how all partners practice should continuously evolve to reflect the changing needs and circumstances of our community. This is in line with statutory guidance, **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018**

Escalation of Concerns and Professional Disagreements about Decisions, including Convening an ICPC **4.5.3 Escalation of Concerns and Professional Disagreements about Decisions, including Convening an ICPC (proceduresonline.com)**

4. DEFINITIONS: SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

Safeguarding as defined by The Children Act 1989, means

- to prevent harm to a child's health and/or development
- to protect children from abuse and maltreatment
- to ensure children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- to take action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child/ren: The legal definition of a child in the UK includes everyone under the age of 18.

Early Help: Families First is the term used in Hertfordshire for services that work together to support families who need extra help. These are also known as early help services. Early Help is part of all agencies' 'preventative' safeguarding responsibilities, taking action as soon as possible to tackle difficulties for children and families before they escalate into something that is more difficult to overcome. Hertfordshire's Early Help offer comprises:

- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership's threshold document known as the **Continuum of Need** that supports those working with Hertfordshire's children, young people and families. It is a tool to help identify a 'Level of Need' and the service responses that can be expected. A tool to enable all partners to work together transparently as colleagues. It places the child, young person and family at the centre to find solutions early to prevent difficulties escalating.
- The Continuum of Need model represents a spectrum of needs, visualised through a windscreen. This illustrates how we respond to the needs of children and their families across the four levels of need: Universal, Additional, Intensive and Specialist (Child Protection or Child in Need)

- The purpose is that services work collaboratively and openly with families for interventions and referrals in most instances.
- Early Help is Hertfordshire's local offer and relies on children and families sharing concerns identified and the willingness to engage; this means that full consent from children and families is required.

Families First Assessment (FFA) is Hertfordshire's Early Help assessment tool and is used to identify needs and organise the right services to support a family. With consent, DSLs, along with other professionals, are able to initiate and lead on these. Further information can be found on the [Families First Portal](#).

Child in Need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Children in Need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 by a social worker. Agencies have a duty to cooperate with Children's Services, and parental consent is required.

Child Protection under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, places a duty on the Local Authority to make enquiries and decide whether to take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Such enquiries, supported by other organisations and agencies, as appropriate, should be initiated where there are concerns about all forms of abuse and neglect. This includes female genital mutilation (FGM) and other honour-based violence, and extra-familial threats including radicalisation and sexual or criminal exploitation. There may be a need for immediate protection whilst an assessment or enquiries are carried out. Parental consent is not required if this would place the child at further risk of harm.

Significant Harm is the threshold for a Child Protection response. If Children's Services suspect a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, then they must by law carry out child protection enquiries. Harm is defined in the Children Act 1989 as the ill-treatment of a child or the impairment of their health or development. This can include harm caused by seeing someone else being mistreated, for example by witnessing domestic abuse. The phrase 'significant harm' was introduced by the Children Act 1989. The Act does not define 'significant'. The question of whether or not harm is 'significant' relates to its impact on a child's health or development.

Children Looked After: A child is 'looked after' (in care) if they are in the care of the Local Authority for more than 24 hours. Children can be in care by agreement with parents or by order of a court. The placement providing the care can be a connected person to child or LA approved foster carer.

Abuse is all forms of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children maybe abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

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

The three **safeguarding partners** locally known as Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (**HSCP**) comprises of:

- **Hertfordshire County Council:** represented by the Director of Children's Services.
- **Hertfordshire Constabulary:** represented by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing.

- **Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board:** represented by the Director of Nursing & Quality Hertfordshire & West Essex Integrated Care Board.

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). These three partners have the strategic responsibility for setting out safeguarding procedures and arrangements for all organisations and agencies who have functions relating to children, and who are required to work together to safeguard and promote their welfare. These organisations and agencies are named in statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

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 is appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

The Gateway receives contacts from partner agencies and members of the public for support from Early Help and Children's Social Care. Contacts are received via the Customer Service Centre. It provides a single response to all new contacts that require an initial multi-agency approach. Where there are current safeguarding concerns that require an immediate response, contacts bypass the Gateway and are transferred directly to the relevant social care team within Children's Services.

5. EQUALITY STATEMENT, CHILDREN WITH PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Some children are at greater risk of harm, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. At St Alban & St Stephen Catholic Primary School & Nursery, we believe that we were all created as children of God and we strive to live out our School value of respect, both for ourselves and for everyone around us. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and ensuring that all children are provided with the same protection regardless of any additional needs, barriers or protected characteristics they may have. As stated in the Equality Act, 2010, we recognise the protected characteristics that may be applicable to our pupils:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

All staff and volunteers understand the importance of recognising that a child may benefit from Early Help intervention, and it is integral to our whole school approach to look and listen out particularly for children:

- Who have a special educational need and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions
- Are a young carer
- Who could 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 (see Section 11)
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions
- Whose parent/ carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be provided with elective home education (EHE).

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We know who our pupils are with special educational needs, disabilities, or additional health needs and recognise that they may face additional barriers, that can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, relate to the child's impairment without further exploration
- Assumptions that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties
- Reluctance to challenge carers (professionals may over empathise with carers because of the perceived stress of caring for a disabled child)
- Disabled children often rely on a wide network of carers to meet their basic needs and therefore the potential risk of exposure to abusive behaviour can be increased
- A disabled child's understanding of abuse
- Lack of choice/ participation
- Isolation.

Children Looked After (CLA)

The most common reason for a child to become looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We therefore ensure that the appropriate arrangements are in place to support these children and keep them safe from further harm. This includes:

- Appointment of a Designated Teacher (DT) for CLA (see Important Contacts in Part 2)

- Appropriate staff made aware of a child's looked after status
- Ensure that necessary staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding of the child's needs
- Ensure the child's record contains a clear understanding of their legal status and care arrangements, including the levels of authority delegated to their carer and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility
- Keep contact details of the child's social worker, carer(s) and name and contact details of the virtual school head for DT to liaise with.

Children with a Social Worker (CWASW)

Since 2021 the role of virtual school heads has included a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker. In offering advice and information to workforces that have relationships with children with social workers, virtual school heads identify and engage with all key professionals in Hertfordshire and beyond, helping them to understand the role they have in improving outcomes for CWASW e.g. DSL and deputies, social workers, headteachers, governors, special educational needs co-ordinators, mental health leads, other Local Authority partners, including Designated Social Care Officers for SEND.

6. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility.

All school staff will:

- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have read and understood the most up-to-date versions of the documents relevant to safeguarding (refer to Section 1 of this policy).
- Play a role in preventative education in line with the above documents, playing their part in creating a whole school culture of zero tolerance of sexism, misogyny/ misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/ harassment.
- Follow all school safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers.
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and 'it could be happening to this child', where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.
- Take part in regular training to ensure that their safeguarding knowledge is up-to-date.
- Act on any concerns, no matter how small, recording these using the school CPOMS recording system. All concerns must be recorded using factual language and giving information including date, time, what was observed and any follow-up action taken or required.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs)

The DSL is an appropriate senior member of staff, from the school senior leadership team.

At least two other members of staff are nominated as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs).

During term time the DSL or a DDSL will always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The DSL takes lead responsibility for our school's child protection and wider safeguarding arrangements. This includes online safety and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

Responsibilities of the DSL (DDSL):

- Manage Child Protection Contact Referrals and cases
- Complete Child Protection Contact Referrals for all cases of suspected abuse or neglect where there is a risk of significant harm to the child/young person, Police where a crime may have been committed and to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern
- Liaise with the Head Teacher to inform him/her of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a Child Protection Contact Referral by liaising with relevant agencies
- Support staff who make Child Protection Contact Referrals and other service referrals
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.
- Share information with appropriate staff in relation to a child's looked after (CLA) legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an Interim Care Order or Care Order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Ensure they have details of the CLA's social worker and the name of the virtual school Head Teacher in the authority that looks after the child or those currently working with a social worker.
- Review and monitor all records of concerns using the school CPOMS system.
- Provide a termly safeguarding report to Governors and liaise regularly with the Link Safeguarding Governor.

Training KCSiE (DfE, 2023)

The DSL should undergo formal training specific to their safeguarding role and duties at least every two years. They should also undertake Prevent Awareness training every 3 years.

In-between formal training a DSL/DDSL's knowledge and skills should be refreshed (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments). This training should provide the DSL with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly local authority children's social care, so they:

- 1) Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements
- 2) Have a working knowledge of how Hertfordshire conducts a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so

- 3) Understand the importance of the role the DSL has in providing information and support to local authority children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- 4) Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes
- 5) Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers
- 6) Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
(Full details in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children)
- 7) Understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- 8) Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college
- 9) Can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online
- 10) Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses and
- 11) Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

Raising Awareness: The DSL (DDSL) should:

- Ensure all staff including part time, contractors, volunteers and supply staff have access to, and understand the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff.
- Work with the governing bodies or proprietors to ensure that the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure the safeguarding and child protection policy is available publicly and that parents know that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school/college in this.
- Link with Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP) to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding arrangements.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff. The DSL/DDSL should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school's head in the authority that looks after the child.

Responsibilities of the Governing Board

Our Governing Board has a strategic role within our leadership and management team and must ensure that all staff comply with legislation and local guidance at all times. Our Governors give regard to KCSiE (DfE 2023) to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are always effective and comply with the law. Although safeguarding is the responsibility of all of our

Governors, the appointed Link Safeguarding Governor takes leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements.

All governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training equips them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in the school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training is regularly updated.

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure that they facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the school or college, and ensuring that safeguarding, and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the **best interests** of the child at their heart.
- Ensure that child protection files are maintained as set out in Annex C of KCSiE.
- Ensure that appropriate safer recruitment policies in accordance with Part three of KCSiE are in place, embedded and effective and,
- Ensure that, where reasonably possible, schools and colleges hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil or student. This goes beyond the legal minimum.
- Ensure the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school or college to carry out the duties of the post. The role carries a significant level of responsibility and the postholder should be given the additional time, funding, training, resources, and support needed to carry out the role effectively.
- Ensure that children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. It should be recognised that effective education will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities.
- Ensure that relevant topics are included within Relationships Education and Health Education in line with the statutory guidance.

The Governors will also ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and review their effectiveness. This includes:

- Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training
- Reviewing the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards, and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards.
- Ensuring that online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies.

The Chair of Governors will also act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the head teacher, where appropriate.

Responsibilities of the Head Teacher

- Ensuring that the policies and procedures, adopted by their governing body and (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood and followed by all staff and volunteers.

- Communicating this policy to parents/ carers when their child joins the school and via the school website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always a DDSL available if the DSL is absent.
- Acting as the ‘case manager’ in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate.
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY and SHARING INFORMATION

Information sharing

As part of meeting a child’s needs, it is important to recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. Arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within the school or college and with local authority children’s social care, the safeguarding partners and other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

School staff are proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children’s social care.

Our Governing Board is aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. They ensure relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.

This includes:

- being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as ‘special category personal data’
- understanding that ‘safeguarding of children and individuals at risk’ is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner. It would be legitimate to share information without consent where: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; and, if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- not providing pupils’ personal data where the serious harm test under the legislation is met. For example, in a situation where a child is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation, and the serious harm test is met, they must withhold providing the data in compliance with schools’ obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. Where in doubt schools should seek independent legal advice. 119. The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping

children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

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:

- Even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there is another legal basis under the Data Protection Act 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 the following points:

- Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk).
- 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 where the child resides.
- 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.

Where children leave the school or college, the designated safeguarding lead ensures their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term to allow the new school or college to have support in place for when the child arrives. The designated safeguarding lead should ensure secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. For schools, this should be transferred separately from the main pupil file. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO's) or the named persons with oversight for special educational needs and disability (SEND) in a college, are aware as required.

In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead also considers if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse, or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and can have that support in place for when the child arrives.

8. RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING TO ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect (see below), understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Staff must record all concerns, no matter how small, using the CPOMS school recording system. These records will then be overseen by the DSL / DDSL.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology maybe used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical abuse	
A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.	
Indicators in a child/ young person	
Bruises – shape, grouping, site, repeat or multiple	Withdrawal from physical contact
Bite-marks – site and size Burns and Scalds – shape, definition, size, depth, scars	Aggression towards others, emotional and behaviour problems
Improbable, conflicting explanations for injuries or unexplained injuries	Frequently absent from school
Untreated injuries	Admission of punishment which appears excessive
Injuries on parts of body where accidental injury is unlikely	Fractures
Repeated or multiple injuries	Fabricated or induced illness

Emotional abuse	
The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.	
Indicators in a child/ young person	
Self-harm	Over-reaction to mistakes / Inappropriate emotional responses
Chronic running away	Abnormal or indiscriminate attachment
Drug/solvent abuse	Low self-esteem
Compulsive stealing	Extremes of passivity or aggression
Makes a disclosure	Social isolation – withdrawn, a 'loner' Frozen watchfulness particularly pre school

Developmental delay	Depression
Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)	Desperate attention-seeking behaviour

Neglect

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

Indicators in a child/ young person

Failure to thrive - underweight, small stature	Low self-esteem
Dirty and unkempt condition	Inadequate social skills and poor socialisation
Inadequately clothed	Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
Dry sparse hair	Abnormal voracious appetite at school or nursery
Untreated medical problems	Self-harming behaviour
Red/purple mottled skin, particularly on the hands and feet, seen in the winter due to cold	Constant tiredness
Swollen limbs with sores that are slow to heal, usually associated with cold injury	Disturbed peer relationships

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include 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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer abuse) in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or colleges policy and procedures for dealing with it.

Indicators in a child/ young person

Self-harm - eating disorders, self-mutilation and suicide attempts	Poor self-image, self-harm, self-hatred
Running away from home	Inappropriate sexualised conduct
Reluctant to undress for PE	Withdrawal, isolation or excessive worrying
Pregnancy	Sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
Inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn	Poor attention / concentration (world of their own)

Pain, bleeding, bruising or itching in genital and /or anal area	Sudden changes in schoolwork habits, become truant
Sexually exploited or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners	

What to do if there are concerns about a child (not considered to be suffering harm, at risk of suffering harm or in immediate danger)

If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, no matter how seemingly insignificant, they should act on them immediately. If staff have a concern, they should follow this policy and complete a CPOMS online record of the concern, with any action taken. Annual training is provided to all staff to ensure that online records of concern are factual, contain statements and observations, not interpretations or assumptions, do not use emotive language and contain important information: time, date, the child's words or actions, any follow-up action taken or required. The body map on the CPOMS record may be used to indicate the position of any injuries. The staff member should also speak to the DSL/DDSL. The DSL/DDSL are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to a safeguarding concern.

What to do if a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff or volunteer

All staff are aware that children can make disclosures at any time, and we must always be aware and ready to listen. We consider the term 'the child's voice' to represent the many ways that children communicate with us, including both verbal and non-verbal communication. The child's lived experience means seeing and understanding their experiences from their point of view, so our staff understand that it is very important to always record exactly what a child has said rather than interpret this from an adult/ their own perspective. Children who do not have English as their first language, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. These children may be more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children.

Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. Our staff give careful consideration to knowing 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.
- Be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs and
- Have communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- Lack cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or college or the consequences of doing so.

All staff ensure that no child is ever made to feel that they are 'any trouble' if they need time and space to share their worries with staff. Staff are trained in the event of a disclosure to:

Listen

- Be patient – a child may be finding it hard to find the words to express themselves. Let them tell their story in their own words
- Do not interrogate – you may 'taint' evidence by asking leading questions or suggesting what may have happened. Maintain your professional curiosity, ask open-ended prompts.

Reassure

- Reassure the child they are not in trouble and that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Do not tell the child they should have told you sooner
- Reassure the child that it is not their fault – victims can often be blamed by their abusers.
- Do not promise confidentiality – if the child asks you to keep it a secret, explain who you need to tell to keep them safe, if appropriate
- Explain to the child that you will have to share the information and explain what may happen next.

Stay Calm

- Try not to panic, be aware of your own reactions and feelings, avoid showing shock, anger, or disgust
- Do not insult the alleged abuser, however frustrated you may privately feel, children can be very protective of people they care about, even if that person is abusing them.

Report

- Record your conversation on CPOMS as soon as possible in the child's own words using the guidance above. Include any observations of noticeable non-verbal behavior.
- Pass the information to the DSL without delay (if a DSL or DDSL is not available, staff must inform a senior member of staff or complete a child protection contact referral if this disclosure indicates that the child may be at risk of immediate harm and/or have been suffered significant harm to ensure reporting to Police and/or Children's Services where necessary is not delayed)
- Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the Police directly (see section 8). Prioritise this above all other work.
- Do not disclose any information to anyone aside from those within your DSL team, unless you are told to do so by a relevant agency involved in the safeguarding process.

Third Party Disclosures

It is everyone's responsibility to report concerns related to children and make referrals to Children Services and the Police if suspected that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse. Therefore, when safeguarding concerns are shared to the DSL in a school by a parent or member of the public, it is important to note that there is equal responsibility by the complainant to report the matter also directly rather than assume the responsibility is that of the school. If unsure of how to do this speak to the DSL / head teacher and they will advise accordingly.

Support

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and safeguarding issues can be stressful. The member of staff/volunteer should, therefore, consider seeking support for him/herself and discuss this with the DSL.

If a school staff member receives a disclosure about potential harm caused by another staff member, they should refer to section 11 of this policy– Managing Allegations about staff /volunteers.

What to do if there are escalating concerns about a child (not considered to be in immediate danger)

Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. All staff

should be aware of the early help process, and understand their role in identifying emerging problems, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment of a child's needs. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. This also includes staff monitoring the situation, recording concerns on CPOMS and feeding back to the DSL any ongoing/escalation of concerns so that consideration can be given to a Child Protection Contact Referral to Children's Services if the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving.

Options will then include:

- 1) Managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own pastoral support processes.
- 2) Completing a Families First Assessment or making a request for early help support. If early help is appropriate, the DSL or a DDSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up a Families First Assessment as appropriate. For early help intervention (non-CP) see the [**continuum of need**](#) and the [**Families First Portal**](#).
- 3) A Child Protection Contact Referral for statutory services, as the child suffering / likely to suffer significant harm from abuse or neglect. **Any staff member should be able to make a Child Protection Contact Referral to Children's Services if necessary (see below).**

Extra Familial Harm/Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside the school. All staff, but especially the DSLs and their Deputies should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means 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.

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 issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and 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 a privately fostered child, and
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

What to do if a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

DSLs will make referrals in the following way:

- 1) If the child is at immediate risk of significant harm or likelihood of significant harm they will call Children's Services 0300 123 4043 and / or police 999 and then complete the **request for support form** specifying their child protection concerns
- 2) Alternatively, if not an immediate risk but the child is considered to be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm they will complete the **request for support form**, specifying their child protection concerns.. **Anyone can make a referral to Police and/or Children's Services** therefore, we expect all staff and volunteers in our school community to act immediately and not delay if they consider a child to be in immediate danger using the pathways below.

For non-DSLs to make a referral to Children's Social Care:

Call 0300 123 4043 followed by a **request for support form**. The staff member must inform the DSL as soon as possible.

To contact the Police:

Call Police on 999 if urgent, if not urgent call 101.

If a child resides in a neighbouring Local Authority (out of Hertfordshire County) the GOV.UK webpage for reporting child abuse to your local council: **Report child abuse to a local council - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) is accessible to assist staff.**

What to do if there are concerns that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has taken place or a child is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) explains that FGM includes '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 is considered as a form of child abuse that has significantly harmful and long-lasting consequences. It can also be referred to as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

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

must immediately report this to the Police, personally on 999. This is a mandatory, statutory duty and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. In addition, staff should also discuss the concerns with the DSL to report to Children's Services, as appropriate.

The duty for teachers above does not apply in cases where a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. In these circumstances, the teacher must report to the DSL and follow local safeguarding procedures to be taken.

Any other member of staff who discovers that FGM has been carried out on a child under 18 must report this to the DSL immediately to ensure local safeguarding procedures are followed.

If a member of staff who is not a teacher, suspects a child is at risk or suspects that FGM has been carried out, they should report to the DSL and follow local safeguarding procedures.

What to do if there are concerns about extremism

The Prevent duty is concerned with all forms of terrorism and extremism. It also includes some forms of nonviolent extremism (far right and extreme far right groups, religious extremist groups, environmental and animal rights extremism, unclear ideology).

Unless your concerns indicate that the child is at immediate risk of harm or danger, report your concerns to the DSL. In rare circumstances where the DSL may not be available, staff should speak with a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from Children's Services, if appropriate. Staff must inform the DSL of their actions as soon as possible.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This can include seeking advice from Hertfordshire County Council's Prevent Programme Manager, a referral to Children's Services 0300 123 4043 or **Channel**, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which all staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism for a pupil. In non-emergency situations DSLs can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

What to do if there are concerns about mental health

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Poor or deteriorating mental health can also be a safeguarding concern in its own right. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Our staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If a staff member has a concern about a child's mental health which they consider to also be a safeguarding concern, they must consider if the child is at risk of immediate harm; and if so, should follow steps in section 8.

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

The Single Point of Access (SPA) Mental Health phoneline is available 24/7 on 0800 6444 101 and can be used when there is an urgent or 'crisis' concern as well as for moderate and non-urgent concerns.

What to do if there are concerns about child-on-child abuse

All staff recognise that children are capable of abusing other children (including online). All staff know that children can abuse other children and that it may be happening even if it is not being reported. All staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Staff will never downplay certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys". We are committed to upholding a culture that prevents unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).

- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm. (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- 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 stand-alone 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 videos¹¹ (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

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

- Staff must record the allegation and report to the DSL. Staff should not investigate the matter
- The DSL will assess and if consider the relevant next steps which may include, making a referral to Children’s Services as well as the Police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence or the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), if appropriate
- The DSL will consider whether a risk assessment or a safety and support plan would be beneficial 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 should include consideration of all aspects and areas of the school environment and beyond for example off-site activities and school transport.

In most circumstances, incidences of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our School’s Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy, but this Child Protection Policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the school at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes).

Further guidance is available in Appendix 3 of this policy, **Part Five of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023** and section 5.1.7 of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual, ‘Children Who Abuse Others’:

http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_chil_abuse.html

What to do if there are concerns about child-on-child sexual violence or sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable.

- All victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment, or ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school/college will not be dismissed or downplayed and will be treated equally seriously and in line with relevant policies/procedures.
- School recognises that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this will be explained in such a way to pupils/students that avoids alarming or distressing them.
- The DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment which will be considered on a case-by-case basis which explores how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator, and any other children involved/impacted, in line with part five of KCSIE 2022 and HSCP procedures. The school will in most instances engage with both the victim's and alleged perpetrator's parents/carers when there has been a report of sexual violence; this might not be necessary or proportionate in the case of sexual harassment and will depend on a case-by-case basis. The exception to this is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent/carer will put a child at additional risk. Any information shared with parents/carers will be in line with information sharing expectations, our confidentiality policy, and any data protection requirements, and where they are involved, will be subject to discussion with other agencies (for example Children's Services and/or the police) to ensure a consistent approach is taken.
- The risk and needs assessment will be recorded and kept under review and will consider the victim (especially their protection and support), the alleged perpetrator, and all other children, and staff and any actions that are required to protect them.
- Reports will initially be managed internally by the school/college and where necessary will be referred to Children's Services and/or the police.

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.

Important considerations which may influence any decisions made may include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed.
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether Harmful Sexual Behavior has been displayed.
- the ages of the children involved.
- the developmental stages of the children involved.
- any power imbalance between the children.
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse - sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature.
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children.
- understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.

- whether there are any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students, or school/college staff
- any other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

See Appendix 3 of this policy and **Part Five of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023**.

What to do if there are concerns about Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Refer to **Schools Toolkit** the characteristics of young peoples' vulnerability to CSE and CCE on the HGFL; <https://thegrid.org.uk/safeguarding-and-child-protection/child-protection/specific-safeguarding-issues/child-sexual-and-criminal-exploitation>

What to do if there are concerns about Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic 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 and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships. All of these have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members.

Staff who suspect or know that a child is a victim of domestic abuse will follow policy to report and their concerns.

Our school is part of Operation Encompass. This is a police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children and young people who experience Domestic Abuse. Operation Encompass means that the police will share information about Domestic Abuse incidents with our school PRIOR to the start of the next school day when they have been called to a domestic incident. The DSL / DDSL will inform staff who work directly with the child and will liaise with them to create a support plan and put supportive and protective strategies in place if needed. The Operation Encompass information is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information in our online confidential safeguarding files and on CPOMs. We are aware that we must do nothing that puts the child/ren or the non-abusing adult at risk. The Safeguarding Governor will report on Operation Encompass in the termly report to Governors. All information is anonymised for these reports.

What to do if a child is absent or missing from education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Children being absent from school repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, as well as children missing education, can act as a warning sign of potential safeguarding issues. Early intervention is essential to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future- refer to the school Attendance Policy.

Children missing education 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. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, child sexual exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment, or training) later in life.

Department for Education guidance makes it clear that in carrying out this duty, local authorities must have in place arrangements for joint working and information sharing with other local authorities and partner agencies. It also states that all agencies which come into contact with children must cooperate with the local authority's arrangements for identifying children thought to be missing from education.

Separate guidance is available for schools on Herts Grid for Learning, about the legitimate removal of pupils from a school roll. A child legitimately removed from roll is not in most cases missing from education and all schools, including academies and independent schools are legally required to notify the local authority when they remove/plan to remove a child from their roll.

9. ONLINE SAFETY AND FILTERING

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

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and 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.

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following 4 categories of risk as identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023:

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 pressure from another child(ren), 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 pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:

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

We will also:

- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/ carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
 - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
 - Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.
- Make all pupils, parents/ carers, staff, volunteers and 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 pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/ carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.,
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.

This section summarises our approach to online safety. For full details about our school's policies in these areas, please refer to our online safety policy.

10. WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

St. Alban & St. Stephen Catholic Primary School will ensure the Child Protection Policy is available publicly via the school website. We know parents and carers know their child best and we will always value that often, when concerns emerge, these can easily be resolved with the support of school and parents/ carers working together. To retain confidentiality within the school community other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL and where appropriate. The school will always endeavour to ensure that parents understand the responsibilities placed on the school staff for safeguarding children.

Although we will always want to be open and transparent with our parents and carers, there may be circumstances where the safety of a child overrides their liberty and rights for this to happen immediately as consent may not be appropriate/ required. Parents should be informed prior to a Child Protection Contact Referral, unless it is considered to do so might place the child at increased risk of significant harm by:

- The behavioural response it prompts e.g. a child being subjected to abuse, maltreatment or threats / forced to remain silent if alleged abuser informed.
- Leading to an unreasonable delay which would impact the safety of the child.
- Leading to the risk of loss of evidential material or impacting on a criminal investigation in some other way.

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 to seek advice when it would be the right time to share information, so that we do not interrupt planned inquiries by Children's Services or the Police.

The school may also consider not informing parent(s) where this would place a member of staff at risk.

Where reasonably possible schools and colleges should hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil and student.

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 other children 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 other agencies if there is third party involvement (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) for any decision(s).

Refer to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

11. ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST ADULTS WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The procedures for allegations of abuse apply whenever there are suspicions or allegations that a person who works with children in our school a paid or unpaid capacity (including but not limited to permanent, temporary or agency staff member, contract worker, consultant, volunteer) has in any activity connected with their role:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child; (Harm Threshold)
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against / related to a child; (Criminal Threshold)
- Behaved toward a child in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm; (Suitability Threshold -this category can include behaviour that may have happened outside of an organisation that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children.)
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. (Transferable Risk Threshold-this category can include behaviour that may have happened outside of an organisation that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children.)

Or

- It is discovered that an individual known to have been involved previously in child abuse, is or has been working with children.

All staff and volunteers at St Alban & St Stephen Catholic Primary School know that if they have safeguarding concerns, or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) posing a risk of harm to children, this is to be referred to the head teacher urgently.

- This includes individuals or organisations who have used school premises for running an activity for children, whether or not those children attend our setting. The governing body will ensure any organisation that hires the school premises is compliant with guidance set out in **Keeping children safe during community activities, after-school clubs and tuition: non-statutory guidance for providers running out-of-school settings - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)**. They will therefore seek assurance that the provider concerned has the appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed) and will ensure that there are arrangements in place for the provider to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.
- This also includes allegations reported or made by a child, parent or member of the public.

Where the head teacher or principal is the subject of an allegation or safeguarding concerns, this to be referred to the chair of governors (the case manager).

Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the DSL and if appropriate make any referral via them.



The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. S/he should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification; it is important not to make assumptions. Confidentiality should not be promised and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

Actions to be taken include making an immediate written record of the allegation using the informant's words – including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, brief details of what happened, what was said and who was present. This record should be signed, dated and immediately passed on to the Head Teacher.

The recipient of an allegation must **not** unilaterally determine its validity, and failure to report it in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

Upon receipt of the information, the Headteacher/Chair of Governors will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but will assess whether the allegation/concern meets the LADO threshold, giving consideration to our staff code of conduct, Statement of Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Staff (including low-level concerns) and **5.1.5 HSCP procedures**.

Concerns that DO meet the harm threshold or any of the four criteria set out at the start of this section always require a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). **If necessary, the Headteacher/Chair of Governors will complete a LADO referral within one working day.** The Head Teacher should, as soon as possible, **following briefing** from the LADO inform the subject of the allegation.

If it is decided that the allegation requires a child protection strategy meeting or a joint evaluation meeting, this will take place in accordance with section 5.1.5 of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual.

If it is decided it does not require a child protection strategy meeting or joint evaluation meeting, the LADO will provide the employer with advice and support on how the allegations should be managed.

If after reviewing the guidance and procedures, the Headteacher/Chair of Governors considers that the matter does not meet the LADO threshold they may consider that it can be dealt with in line with the school's complaints or as a low-level concern, following the Statement of Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Staff (including low-level concerns).

Concerns that DO NOT meet the harm threshold - Low-Level Concerns (LLC)

As outlined in **Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education** 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 LADO threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a LADO referral.

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 pupils.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example, suspicion, complaints, or allegations made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation, or as a result of vetting checks.

Low-level concerns should be shared confidentially with the DSL in line with our Statement of Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Staff and staff behaviour code of conduct. It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly, recorded and dealt with appropriately to protect staff from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

- Where low-level concerns are reported to the school/college, the head teacher will be informed of all Low level concerns and is the ultimate decision maker in respect of the response to all low-level concerns.
- Low-level concerns shared about supply staff and contractors will be shared with their employers so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
- If the school/college is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, we will consult with the LADO.
- Low-level concerns will be recorded online in the confidential safeguarding folder and reviewed so potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
- Records will be kept confidential and will be held securely and retained and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and other relevant policies and procedures (for example data retention policies).
- Where a pattern is identified, the school/college will implement appropriate action, for example reviewing the LADO threshold and completing a referral if harm test met.

Whistleblowing Policy

We strive to create a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share any concerns they have so they can be addressed appropriately.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school or education setting's safeguarding arrangements. The whistleblowing policy sets out procedures for this. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer/through the whistleblowing procedure or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

- Children's Services 0300 123 4043
- 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

Other complaints

If any of our stakeholders are not satisfied with any aspects of how we manage and operate within our policy and procedures and also how we exercise our duty of care for children, please follow our School Complaints Procedures that you can find on our school website.

HSCP escalation and complaints procedure link

https://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_resolution_disagree.html

Safer working practice

To reduce the risk of allegations, all staff should be aware of safer working practice and should be familiar with the guidance contained in the staff handbook/school code of conduct/staff behaviour policy and Safer Recruitment Consortium document, ***Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (February 2022)*** available at <https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/>

The document seeks to ensure that the responsibilities of school leaders towards children and staff are discharged by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour. This includes guidelines for staff on positive behaviour management in line with the ban on corporal punishment (School Standards and Framework Act 1998). Please see the school behaviour management policy for more information.

Safer Recruitment – interview panels

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

More information can be found in our Safer Recruitment Policy.

APPENDIX 1: Safeguarding Declaration for all Staff

All staff will be required to read the Child Protection Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 Part 1 and linked policies as part of their induction or at the start of each academic year. This will be completed online:

I acknowledge that I have read, understood and will follow the [Child Protection Policy](#). *

Yes

No

I acknowledge that I have read and understood [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 Part 1](#).

Yes

No

Please tick to show that you agree with the following statements.



Checkboxes

I know who the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding leads ...

I understand that safeguarding is my responsibility.

I know how to report any concerns about children's safety or wellbeing.

APPENDIX 2: CHANGES TO KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION 2023

Part 1: safeguarding information for all staff

All staff working directly with children are expected to read at least part 1 of KCSIE (those who don't work directly with children can read the condensed version of part 1, in Annex A). The changes to part 1 are:

Emphasis on filtering and monitoring:

- As part of their safeguarding and online safety training, staff need to understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring systems (paragraph 14). This new emphasis is repeated several times throughout the guidance

This section also now links to the latest version of the [behaviour in schools guidance](#).

Part 2: the management of safeguarding

This sets out the responsibility of governing bodies, proprietors and management committees.

Around filtering and monitoring:

- Your governing board should make sure the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) takes responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place as part of their role (paragraph 103)
- Your board should also make sure all staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of their safeguarding training (paragraph 124)
- Your child protection policy should include how your school approaches filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks (paragraph 138)
- Governing boards should review the DfE's [filtering and monitoring standards](#). Your board should discuss with your IT staff and service provider what needs to be done to support your school in meeting the standards (paragraph 142)

New wording added for clarification:

- That some children are at greater risk of harm than others, both **online and offline** (previously, it didn't make reference to online) (paragraph 170)
- Around how the term 'children missing education' is different from 'children absent from education'
- Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat can act as a warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. The guidance specifies it's important that your school's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying any abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risks of them becoming a child missing education in future (paragraph 175)

A new line has been added into the section on elective home education (EHE):

- If the parent/carer of a child with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has expressed their intention to educate their child at home, local authorities will need to review the plan and work closely with parents/carers (paragraph 178)

It's been updated with links to extra guidance and information for schools to use:

- When thinking about information security and access management, your school should consider meeting the **cyber security standards for schools and colleges** (paragraph 144)
- When out-of-school-setting providers use your school premises for non-school activities, guidance on **keeping children safe in out-of-school settings** lists the safeguarding arrangements you should expect these providers to have in place (paragraph 167)
- For further support on children with special educational needs, schools can use the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS) (paragraph 202)

Part 3: more details on safer recruitment measures

You should:

- Inform shortlisted candidates that you might conduct an online search as part of due diligence checks in the recruitment process (paragraph 221). Schools were prompted to consider doing these checks in KCSIE 2022, and now KCSIE 2023 adds that it's good practice to let shortlisted candidates know about these checks
- As part of ongoing vigilance, create the right culture so staff feel comfortable discussing safeguarding matters that happen in and outside of work – the guidance has added that this includes safeguarding matters which happen online (paragraph 343)

Other changes

Part 4: handling allegations against staff

There's a new heading and paragraph in this section titled 'organisations or individuals using school premises'.

It says that if your school receives an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using your school premises for running an activity for children, you should follow your safeguarding policies and procedures and inform the local authority designated officer (LADO), as you would with any safeguarding allegation (paragraph 377).

Part 5: child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

The word 'sanction' has replaced the word 'discipline' to reflect the most recent behaviour guidance:

- Paragraphs 542 and 544 now say that teachers can **sanction** pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them
- The heading above paragraph 544 has been tweaked to '**sanctions** and the alleged perpetrator(s)'
-

Annex A: safeguarding information for school and college staff

The changes here reflect the changes in section 1 of the guidance: all staff should receive appropriate safeguarding training that includes understanding their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of online safety (page 136).

Annex B: further information

Children who are absent from education

- This section has been updated to reflect the difference between children absent from education and children missing education. It says that children being absent from school repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, as well as children missing education, can act as a warning sign of potential safeguarding issues. Early intervention is essential to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future

- **Note:** it isn't completely clear, but the guidance implies that 'children missing education' is the next step up from children being absent from education (pages 144 and 145, also see paragraph 175)

Mental health

- Attendance has been added to the list of things which can be impacted by mental health (page 148)

Radicalisation, the Prevent duty and Channel

- The section on preventing radicalisation says children may be 'susceptible' to extremist ideology and radicalisation, rather than 'vulnerable' on preventing radicalisation (page 149)
- The section on Channel has also removed the term 'vulnerable', and now refers to people as 'susceptible' and 'at risk' of being drawn into terrorism (page 151)
- There's more clarity around the fact that someone referred to Channel will be required to provide their consent before any support through the programme is provided (page 151)

Forced marriage

- Since February 2023, it's been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. This applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages (pages 155 and 156)

Annex C: role of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The only change here is that the DSL's responsibilities have been updated to include their role in taking the lead on understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place in school (page 164).

APPENDIX 3: SAFEGUARDING ISSUES AND SPECIFIC FORMS OF ABUSE

Children occupy all types of places and spaces when socialising, either directly with other or online. Some of these contextual environments away from their home can present additional risks of harm and exploitation that could impact on their welfare and wellbeing. Preventative safeguarding is about having arrangements in place so that whole school staff are made aware of these and know the signs that a child is susceptible or already being impacted on. The aim of your school safeguarding arrangements is to identify those children so that early help support for the child and, where applicable, their family can be offered early help support.

All staff play an important part in your whole school approach to report any concern to your school's DSL or deputies without delay.

Safeguarding Issues, Child-on-child abuse	Safeguarding descriptor, links for further learning
Bullying	<p>Including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.</p> <p>Cyber Aware - NCSC.GOV.UK Helping Children Deal with Bullying & Cyberbullying NSPCC cyberbullying teachers.pdf (proceduresonline.com) 5.1.13 Bullying (proceduresonline.com) Cyberbullying Guidance Childnet</p>
Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children	<p>Sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse'.</p> <p>Teenage Relationship Abuse The Children's Society (childrenssociety.org.uk) 2008 Expect Respect LeafletEDITED-2.pdf (womensaid.org.uk) Controlling-Behaviour-in-Relationships-talking-to-young-people-about-healthy-relationships.pdf (womensaid.org.uk)</p>
Physical abuse	<p>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).</p> <p>No place for bullying.doc (live.com) How to talk to your children about bullying UNICEF 5.1.7 Children Who Abuse Others (proceduresonline.com) safe extended bully.pdf (proceduresonline.com)</p>
Sexual violence	<p>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.</p> <p>Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) or peer-on-peer sexual abuse NSPCC Learning</p>

	<p>5.3.10 Online Safety (proceduresonline.com) harmful-sexual-behaviour-pathway-2021.docx (live.com) brooks traffic light tool - Search (bing.com) harmful-sexual-behaviour-strategy-2021-23.docx (live.com) Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Overview Harmful sexual behaviour among children and young people Guidance NICE</p>
Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos	<p>Also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery.</p> <p>Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
Up-skirting	<p>This 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.</p> <p>Up-skirting: know your rights - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
Initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals	<p>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.</p> <p>Who, what, why: Why is hazing so common? - BBC News</p>
	<p>Please note: CSE, CCE, domestic violence, mental FGM, forced marriage, serious violence are set out below.</p>

Specific Forms of Abuse in Annex B of KCSiE, 2023	Safeguarding descriptor and links for further learning
Child Abduction and community safety incidents	<p>Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.</p> <p>Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns also, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.</p> <p>Home - Action Against Abduction 5.3.6 Safeguarding Children from Abroad (including Children who are Victims of Trafficking and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) (proceduresonline.com)</p>
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	<p>Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or • Through violence or the threat of violence. <p>CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.</p>

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)	<p>CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transporting drugs or money through county lines • working in cannabis factories, shoplifting, or pickpocketing • committing vehicle crime • threatening/ committing serious violence to others • become trapped by exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt • coerced into carrying weapons such as knives/ carry a knife for self-protection • children involved in CCE often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced • the experience of girls can be very different to that of boys and the indicators may not be the same, especially as they are at higher risk of CSE- girls are at risk of CCE too. <p>Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Child exploitation disruption toolkit - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Child sexual and criminal exploitation - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk) Criminal exploitation and gangs NSPCC</p>
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	<p>CSE is a form of child sexual abuse and may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical contact, assault by penetration (rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing • non-contact activities like involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet • can occur over time or be a one-off and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media • includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited as they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. <p>CEOP Education (thinkuknow.co.uk) Child exploitation disruption toolkit - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) 5.3.4 Hertfordshire's Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Exploitation (proceduresonline.com)</p>
County Lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line” • This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required • Children are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims • Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including

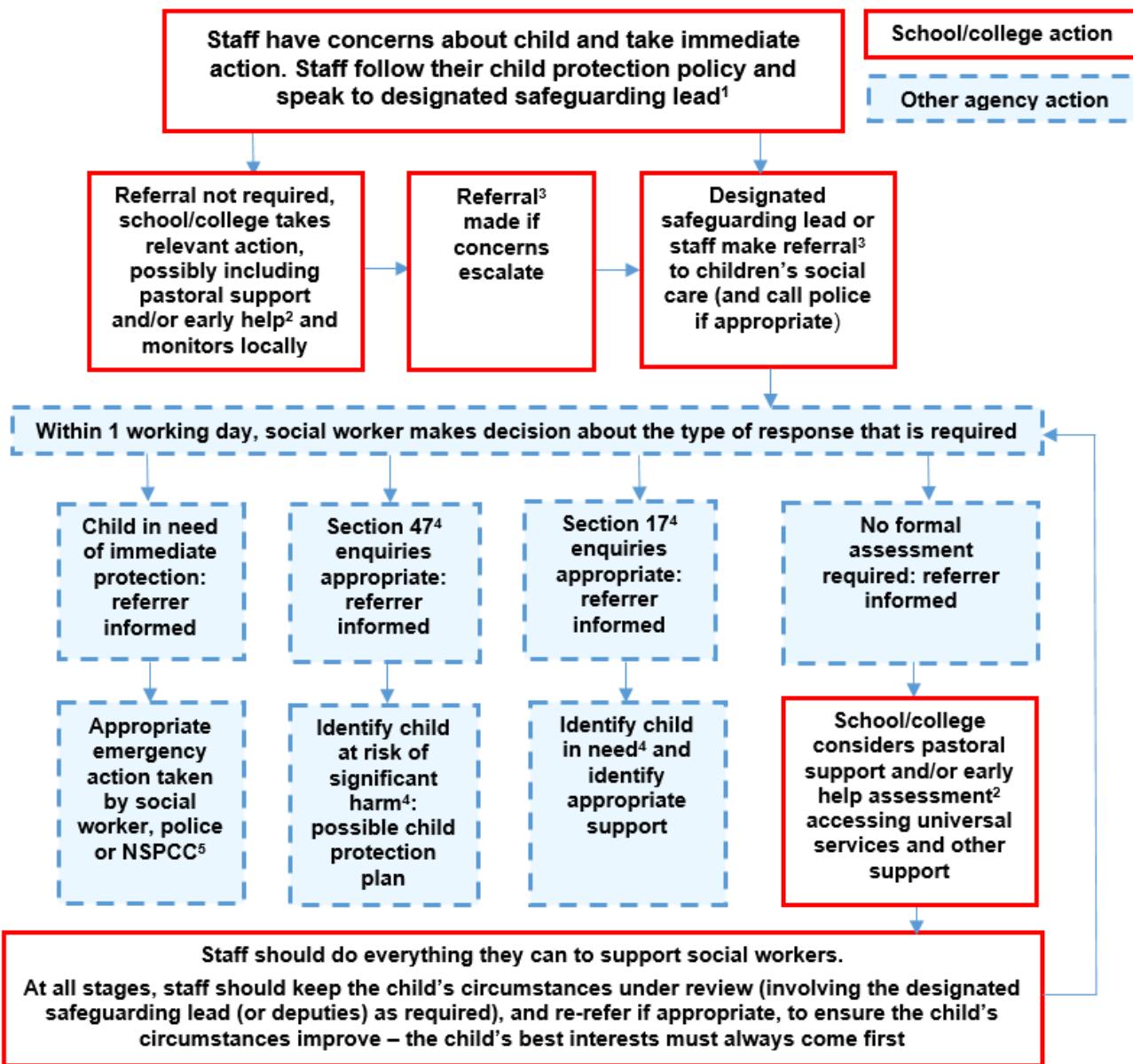
	<p>special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. <p>See CCE resources above</p> <p>Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p>
Children and the Court System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed • Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children • The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information may be unusual for parents and carers. <p>Get help with child arrangements - Get help with child arrangements (justice.gov.uk)</p> <p>Cafcass resources for professionals</p>
Children who are absent from education	<p>All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines • it may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, • risk of travelling to conflict zones • risk of female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour' based abuse or risk of forced marriage. <p>Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures.</p> <p>Children missing from education - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk)</p>
Children missing from home (NB this is not in Annex B but to illustrate the separate processes)	<p>Use school's CP procedures to escalate to Children's Services/ Police Operation Encompass for MISSING CYP is Hertfordshire's system for sharing information quickly with schools to safeguard children following the success of supporting children who have witnessed Domestic Abuse</p> <p>ch_yp_who_go_missing.docx (live.com)</p>
Children with family members in prison	<p>Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health.</p> <p>The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders (NICCO) provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.</p>

	<p>NICCO 5.6.5 Children Visiting Prisons (proceduresonline.com)</p>
Cybercrime	<p>Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘cyber-enabled’ (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or • ‘cyber dependent’ (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). <p>Cyber-dependent crimes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unauthorised access to computers (illegal ‘hacking’), for example accessing a school’s computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded • ‘Denial of Service’ (Dos or DDoS) attacks or ‘booting’. These are attempts to make a computer, network, or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and, • making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above. <p>Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Cyber Choices - National Crime Agency When to Call the Police: Guidance for Schools and Colleges - National Police Chiefs' Council (February 2020) - Youth Justice Resource Hub (yjresourcehub.uk)</p>
Domestic Abuse (DA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DA encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents • Abuse can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional • Children can be victims of DA abuse e.g. see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse) • DA can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn. <p>Domestic abuse: recognise the signs - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Helplines briefing: The impact of domestic abuse on children and young people from the voices of parents and carers (nspcc.org.uk) 5.1.9 Domestic Abuse (proceduresonline.com)</p>
Homelessness	<p>Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The DSL (and deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/ progress concerns at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • household debt • rent arrears • domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour • the family being asked to leave a property.

	<p>This is also a safeguarding issue and DSL should seek advice from Children's Social Care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.</p> <p>Homelessness - Citizens Advice Stats and facts Centrepoint Professional Resources - Shelter England</p>
Mental Health	<p>Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, attendance, and progress at school.</p> <p>Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering exploitation.</p> <p>Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a MH problem.</p> <p>Education staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviors that suggest they may be experiencing a MH problem or be at risk of developing one.</p> <p>Mental Health First Aid Kit Childline Introducing the Sandbox: New online mental health digital advice and guidance service for 10-25s - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk)</p>
Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism	<p>Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sexual exploitation • forced labour, slavery and servitude • forced criminality • the removal of organs. <p>Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance</p> <p>Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Hertfordshire Modern Slavery Partnership - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk) 5.3.6 Safeguarding Children from Abroad (including Children who are Victims of Trafficking and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) (proceduresonline.com)</p>
The Prevent duty/ Preventing Radicalisation and Channel	<p>Children may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces • Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups • 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.

	<p>Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism.</p> <p>The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools and colleges wider safeguarding obligations.</p> <p>Prevent duty guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Prevent in Education - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk) 5.3.9 Prevent Guidance (proceduresonline.com) Channel and Prevent Multi-Agency Panel (PMAP) guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges	<p>Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online • through a group of children sexually assaulting • sexually harassing a single child or group of children. <p>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 or college. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.</p> <p>Keeping children safe in education 2023 (publishing.service.gov.uk) [Title] (publishing.service.gov.uk) brooks traffic light tool - Search (bing.com)</p>
Serious Violence	<p>Indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased absence from school • change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups • significant decline in performance • signs of self-harm • significant change in wellbeing • signs of assault or unexplained injuries • unexplained gifts or new possessions. <p>Anything which could also indicate they have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.</p> <p>Advice to schools and colleges on gangs and youth violence - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Hertfordshire Serious Violence Strategy & Delivery Plan</p>
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) So-called 'honour' based abuse (includes both Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)	<p>FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.</p> <p>Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL (or a deputy) any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers they must report this to the Police.</p>

	<p>Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief – National FGM Centre</p> <p>Female genital mutilation, honour based violence and forced marriage - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (theqgrid.org.uk)</p>
Forced Marriage	<p>Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England. A forced marriage is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties • and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage • threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. <p>A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example).</p> <p>Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.</p> <p>Apply for a forced marriage protection order: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced Marriage (proceduresonline.com)</p> <p>Forced marriage Childline</p>



The National Police Chiefs' Council- *When to call the police* guidance

This advice covers incidents on school and college premises where students have potentially committed a crime. It provides guidance on what schools and colleges should bear in mind when considering contacting the police. This advice covers the following situations:

- Assault
- Criminal damage
- Cyber crime
- Drugs
- Harassment
- Sexual offences
- Theft
- Weapons

This advice aims to support schools and college to make defensible decisions when considering whether to involve the police. Further guidance can be found at;

https://www_npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf