LIGHTWOODS PRIMARY ACADEMY

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Committee and Date Approved	Trust Board – Summer 2026
Category	Statutory
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Policy Availability	Trust & Academy Website
Officer Responsible	CEO & Principal

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1. Introduction

This document is the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust academies and any extended services that it provides. This policy applies to all staff (teaching and non-teaching), Standards and Performance Committee Members, volunteers, temporary and supply/visiting staff working in the academy. Where it states Academy, this also refers to both Tinywoods Preschool and First Steps Nursery. It will be reviewed annually by the Trust Board and is in line with the expectations of Ofsted which inspects safeguarding arrangements as part of the academy's Leadership and Management along with the requirements of the (Local) Safeguarding Partnership.

Our Nurseries and Academies within Sandwell, Dudley and Wolverhampton Local Authority often have children/young people attending who live in any one of the Local Authorities. It is therefore important that all staff are aware of the reporting procedures for all Local Authorities. The Academy will continue to liaise with the Local Authority Children's Services/Trusts that they are situated in and the DSL will keep up to date with information from the neighbouring Local Authorities.

KCSIE 2026 defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as follows:

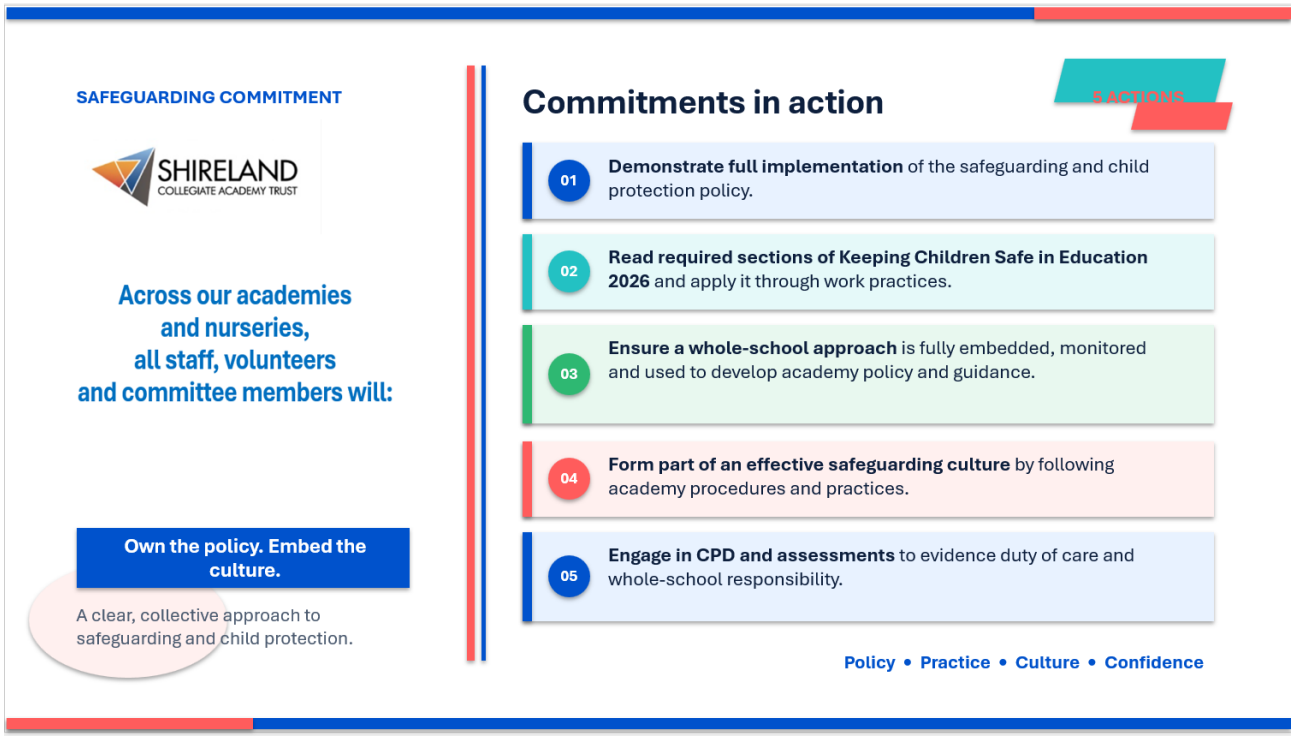
1. Schools, colleges and their staff form an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children, as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children.
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Children includes everyone under the age of 18. All practitioners must take a child-centred approach and consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.
3. No single practitioner will have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. To ensure children and families receive the right help at the right time, staff must identify concerns, share information and take prompt action. For the purposes of this policy, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

Child protection forms part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the action taken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust and all academies will ensure that safeguarding practice is child-centred, that decisions are made in the best interests of the child, and that local safeguarding partnership procedures are followed.

We are committed to safeguarding children and expect all staff and visitors to share this commitment. The Trust and its academies will always act in the best interests of the child and will ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff understand their statutory safeguarding responsibilities.
- Staff are trained to recognise, record and report safeguarding concerns as part of a culture of vigilance.
- All children feel confident that a member of staff will listen to them and take any concerns they have seriously.



Ethos

We believe that every person who passes through our doors deserves the very best that we can offer. We understand that each Academy is unique, but our emphasis and expectations will remain the same.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure all staff, volunteers, Trustees, visitors, sessional workers, agency staff and external professionals understand the legal framework for safeguarding and child protection.
- Provide a framework for academies to develop and implement safeguarding and child protection procedures in line with this policy.
- Set out clear procedures for responding to safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- Support staff to work safely and responsibly and to maintain appropriate professional standards.
- Set out the safeguarding responsibilities of key stakeholders.
- Support the Trust's commitment to a safe learning environment where children and adults feel safe, valued, listened to and taken seriously.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are responded to appropriately and without discrimination based on protected characteristics.
- Ensure staff remain vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and follow procedures to protect children from harm.
- Confirm that this policy applies to all children aged 0 to 18 whose care and education sit within the remit of the academy.
- Ensure families understand the academy's safeguarding responsibilities by publishing this policy on the academy website and making it available on request.
- Identify related Trust policies that support safeguarding and child protection.

This policy forms part of the Trust's wider safeguarding framework and applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, temporary and supply staff. It is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with statutory guidance, local safeguarding procedures and Ofsted expectations. Related policies include:

- Attendance and Punctuality
- Admissions
- Anti-bullying
- Educational Visits
- Code of Conduct
- Safer Recruitment
- Behaviour Policy (Including physical intervention)
- Management of Allegations
- Online Safety
- Whistleblowing
- Intimate Care

2. Legislation

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026), and the Academy trust governance guide - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- 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 Principal 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.

- Part 3 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.
- 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.
- The Education Act 2002 (section 175/157)
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to plan to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Section 157 of the same act and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.
- Information sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers (May 2024).
- Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026).
- Children and Families Act 2014.
- The Education (Academy Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019.
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- This policy also complies with our funding agreement in articles of association.

Statutory guidance

- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government (2023) 'Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced Marriage'
- HM Government (2025) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people susceptible to radicalisation'
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2023) 'The Prevent duty'
- DfE (2025) Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law)

- DfE (2018) ‘Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006’
- DfE (2023) ‘Academy trust handbook 2023’
- DfE (2024) ‘Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement’
- DfE (2026) “Working Together to Safeguard Children”

Guidance

- DfE (2015) ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’
- DfE (2024) ‘Academy governance guidance’
- DfE (2017) ‘Child sexual exploitation’
- DfE (2024) ‘Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people’
- DfE (2024) ‘Behaviour in Schools
- DfE (2024) “Information Sharing”
- DfE (2023/2024) Filtering and Monitoring Standards for Schools and Colleges
- DfE (2026) “Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges”
- DfE (2016) ‘Children Missing Education’
- DfE (2022) ‘Searching, Screening and Confiscation’
- DfE (2019) ‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) and Health Education’
- DfE (2026) ‘Working together to improve school attendance’

3 Equality Statement

The Trust and its academies recognise that some children and young people may be at increased risk of abuse, both online and offline. The Trust and its academies acknowledge that additional barriers may affect a child's ability to recognise abuse, disclose concerns and access support. All Trust academies are committed to inclusive and anti-discriminatory practice and will take account of the diverse circumstances and vulnerabilities of children and young people. Staff will understand these barriers and will adapt their practice accordingly to ensure all children receive appropriate support and protection.

In fostering a safe and inclusive environment, it is paramount that all children/young people, irrespective of the challenges they may encounter, receive equal protection and support. Specific consideration is given to those children who fall under the following categories:

- Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) or health conditions.
- Young carers.
- Individuals facing discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality.
- Children with English as an additional language (EAL).
- Youngsters residing in challenging environments, for instance, temporary accommodations, or households grappling with issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence.
- Individuals at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation.
- Asylum seekers.
- Individuals vulnerable due to their own or a family member's mental health requirements.
- Looked after or previously looked after children.
- Children who are missing or absent from educational settings for extended periods.
- Those whose parent/carer has signified an intention to opt for home education.

Staff will remove barriers to disclosure and ensure safeguarding responses are inclusive, proportionate and responsive to individual need.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection are shared responsibilities across all Trust provisions, including academies, nurseries, extended services, off-site provision and activities. This applies to all staff, volunteers, Standards and Performance Committee Members and any adults working with or on behalf of the Trust.

At Tinywoods Preschool and First Steps Nursery, any reference to the Principal also applies to Nursery Managers.

The Academy recognises its pivotal role in providing preventive education, particularly within the broader framework of adopting a whole-school strategy to equip pupils with the necessary skills and knowledge for navigating contemporary society. Central to this ethos is the fostering of a culture defined by zero tolerance towards sexism, misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/harassment. This commitment is further reinforced by our adherence to:

- **Behaviour Policy**: Outlining clear expectations and consequences related to pupil conduct.
- **Pastoral Support Systems**: Providing holistic support structures to cater to the individual well-being of all pupils.
- **Planned Programme of Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE)**: Delivering a comprehensive curriculum that is both inclusive and regularly addresses pertinent issues, such as:
    - Healthy and respectful relationships.
    - Boundaries and consent.
    - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality.
    - Body confidence and self-esteem.
    - Identifying abusive relationships (including coercive and controlling behaviour).
    - Understanding concepts and laws relating to sexual consent, exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic violence, honour-based violence (e.g. forced marriage, FGM), and avenues for seeking support.
    - Identifying instances of sexual harassment and violence and emphasising their unconditional unacceptability.

Staff, volunteers and governors

All staff, volunteers and the standards and performance committee have responsibility for the following:

- To provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Identify children who may need extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- To take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.
- To keep themselves updated with the systems within the academy which support safeguarding that were explained to them as part of their induction (including the staff Code of Conduct). This includes knowing the role and working with, the academy's designated safeguarding lead.
- To ensure they receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including digital safeguarding/online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) which is regularly updated.
- In addition to working with the designated safeguarding lead or deputy, staff members should be aware that they may be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual children.

Academy staff

All academy staff are responsible for:

- Knowing who the academy's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy designated safeguarding lead are and raising any concerns with the DSL/DDSL in the event of safeguarding concerns.
- Completing a written safeguarding concern when making a referral. Staff should be clear that this should be done immediately, always on the same day as stated within this policy.
- Ensuring that their safeguarding and child protection training including digital safeguarding is up to date.
- Being alert to the signs of abuse, including child on child abuse and their need to refer any concerns to the designated staff member.
- Maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.
- Knowing the academy's procedures for dealing with children who are persistently absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and reporting any such concerns to the designated lead.
- Listening to, and seeking out, the views, wishes and feelings of children.
- Sharing information and working together to provide children with the help they need.
- Recognising that safeguarding concerns may arise in different contexts, including outside the home or academy, through peer groups, online activity and the wider community.
- Being aware of emerging safeguarding risks, including online harm, AI-related risks such as deepfakes, and exploitation.

- Recording all concerns accurately, including the rationale for decisions made, in line with safeguarding recording expectations.
- Referring to the Principal any concerns about another member of staff immediately, or if the concerns are about the Principal, referring them to the Trust's HR Director.
- Raising concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the academy's safeguarding regime through the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.
- Seeking early help/family help where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency via the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- Knowing the Academy's procedures for dealing with child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence between children.
- Reading KCSIE 2026 Part 1.

The Principal

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

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff, teacher training staff) and volunteers:
    - Are informed of our systems that support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction with access to relevant training throughout the academic year.
    - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect.
- Communicating this policy to families when their child joins the Academy and via the Academy website.
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent or off site for meetings.
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 5).
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this.
- Reviewing safeguarding policies, procedures and training in line with statutory guidance, including KCSIE and Working Together.
- Ensuring a whole-school approach to safeguarding, including online safety, behaviour, attendance and curriculum.
- Ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place to meet responsibilities under Martyn's Law / Protect Duty.
- Adequate and relevant staffing ratios within our Early Years Settings and Primary Schools to ensure safety.
- Ensuring that each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person.
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the leadership team (see Appendix 1 for academy specific contact details).

The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the academy. This includes ensuring that all staff, teaching and non-teaching (including supply staff), know who the designated member of staff is and that they are aware of their individual responsibility to be alert to the signs of abuse and to consider the context within which specific safeguarding issues occur.

During term time, the DSL will be available during Academy hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If a member of staff has a concern out of academy hours, they are to contact the Single Point Access in the Academy's Local Authority on emergency out-of-hours number. When the DSL is absent, the deputy (see Appendix 1) will act as cover.

In the absence of the DSL and the deputy DSL the most senior member of staff in the academy will assume responsibility for any child protection matters that arise. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead.

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

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters.
- Discuss concerns as required with outside agencies e.g., specific agency for single need (e.g., speech and language, Inclusion Support), early intervention multiagency (e.g., Early Help/Family Help process) or Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)/existing social worker (child protection/significant harm concerns).
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so.
- Contribute to the assessment of children.
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police) and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and academy leadership staff.
- Keep the Principal informed of any issues and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.
- Take lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place within the academy.
- Work with IT leads and senior leaders to ensure filtering and monitoring systems are understood, effective and used to safeguard pupils.
- Access Safeguarding Supervision as stated under the Ofsted Inspection Framework and Working Together 2026.

- Keep the academy's SLT, Standards and Performance Committee, Local Authority, Social Services and the trust executive leadership team informed about safeguarding and child protection issues as requested.
- To participate in regular supervision sessions, providing them with invaluable support in their practice and professional development. These sessions also offer guidance on handling escalation procedures and navigating complex safeguarding cases, aligning with the primary aim of safeguarding: to keep children safe in education. Safeguarding supervision will support reflective practice, decision-making and staff wellbeing.

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

Role of Families (those with Parental responsibility)

We uphold an open-door policy, encouraging parents to voice any concerns about their own children or other children who may be at risk of harm. All concerns will be addressed promptly and with sensitivity. We will seek parental consent to involve partner agencies for additional support to meet the needs of the child or young person and their family. However, if obtaining consent would place the child or young person at significant risk, we will proceed without it.

Parents and carers have a crucial role in safeguarding by ensuring their child attends school daily, arrives on time, and is collected promptly. If a pupil is not collected on time, the school will implement safeguarding measures, ensuring the child is supervised by a staff member until the parents or carers arrive. In exceptional cases, we will consult the appropriate Local Authority Safeguarding Team for support and advice to ensure the child's safe return home, which may involve assistance from partner agencies or transportation by a trusted adult other than the parent or carer.

We also expect parents and carers to inform us of any changes in family circumstances, address, or contact numbers and to provide more than one emergency contact number whenever possible.

The Standards and Performance Committee

The Standards and Performance Committee has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient measures in place to safeguard the children in their establishment. A link governor for safeguarding & child protection is appointed to take lead responsibility.

The Standards and Performance Committee will:

- Monitor and review the whole-academy approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Note this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.
- Complete annual KCSIE training.
- Monitor and review safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures are in place and reviewed annually.

Ensure that:

- Safer recruitment procedures are in place and reviewed annually.
- A DSL, who is a senior member of Academy leadership team, is appointed.
- There is a dedicated teacher for Looked after Children who has been appropriately trained and has a key role in promoting the educational achievement of Looked after Children and engaging with the DSL.
- Relevant safeguarding / child protection training is accessed by all Academy staff / volunteers according to their role and responsibilities.
- That they receive an annual report from the DSL regarding safeguarding/child protection work including details of Early Help/Family Help involvement.
- Deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements are remedied without delay, liaising with relevant bodies for support as required.

5. Confidentiality

In line with the Academies' approach to safeguarding and confidentiality, it is essential to understand the significance of data protection, specifically in relation to data protection/GDPR regulations. Safeguarding children is of paramount importance, and timely sharing of information within the Academy and Multi-Academy Trust is crucial for ensuring child welfare and safety. It is imperative that fears regarding sharing information do not hinder the promotion of child safety and GDPR compliance should not be a barrier to sharing information that is vital for safeguarding purposes.

Fears about sharing information must never prevent staff from acting to safeguard children. Where there is a concern about a child's safety or welfare, information will be shared without delay.

The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the UK GDPR explicitly state that sharing information for the purpose of safeguarding children is not prohibited or restricted. Additionally, if there is a need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 outlines 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a legitimate processing condition, allowing practitioners to share information without consent in circumstances where obtaining consent is not feasible or may place a child at risk.

Staff members must never assure a child that they will keep reports of abuse confidential if sharing this information is in the child's/Young persons best interests. Even if a victim requests that information regarding sexual violence or harassment is not disclosed, staff will still be required to share this information if there is a legal basis under the UK GDPR that permits it. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) shoulders the responsibility of weighing the victim's wishes against the duty to protect both the victim and other children, considering factors such as informing parents or carers, making referrals to appropriate authorities and involving law enforcement agencies for criminal offenses.

All information-sharing decisions must be recorded clearly, including the rationale, whether information was shared and with whom.

Maintaining anonymity is crucial when handling cases of sexual violence or harassment. Staff members will be well-versed in procedures to protect the anonymity of children involved in such reports, considering the potential impact of social media in compromising anonymity and spreading rumours. The government's guidance on information sharing for safeguarding professionals provides seven 'golden rules' to aid staff in making informed decisions about sharing sensitive information and emphasises consulting the DSL when in doubt.

Safeguarding children requires a proactive and collaborative approach within our Academies where information sharing is a key element. Upholding confidentiality while prioritising a child/young persons safety demands a thorough understanding of data protection regulations and a commitment to overcoming any barriers that may impede the sharing of crucial information. By adhering to established protocols and seeking guidance when necessary, staff members play a vital role in safeguarding the well-being of children/young people within all of our academies.

6. Staff Training

Every year all staff (including non-teaching and volunteers) must undertake a variety of Child Protection and Safeguarding training including on Keeping Children Safe in Education. This training will be informed by national and local context as well as identified gaps in knowledge and understanding. The Academy will ensure:

- Training is recorded and logged. All staff are informed clearly how to report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay. In addition, all staff are required to read at least Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- All new members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers and teaching assistants, will be given induction that includes basic child protection training. This will include:
    - how to recognise signs of abuse;
    - how to respond to any concerns;
    - online safety, including filtering and monitoring;
    - familiarisation with the safeguarding and child protection policy, behaviour policy and staff code of conduct;
    - systems and processes for CME and Keeping Children Safe in Education:
        - Statutory Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy Guidance for Academies and Colleges
        - Part One and Annex A (September 2026), and
        - other related policies.
- The DSL will undergo updated level 3/DSL level child protection training every two years and in addition to formal training, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at least annually.
- All staff members of the academy will undergo safeguarding and child protection training (whole-academy training) which is regularly updated.
- All Standards and Performance Committee Members and Trustees must undergo Safeguarding training which includes KCSIE update and online awareness.

- The DSL will monitor and track training to ensure that staff members who miss the whole-academy training undertake other relevant training to make up for it, e.g., by joining another academy's whole academy training. It is the responsibility of each member of staff to ensure they have completed all mandatory safeguarding training.
- We will ensure that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g., supply teachers and contractors, have received appropriate child protection training commensurate with their roles before starting work. They will be given the opportunity to take part in whole academy training if it takes place during their period of work for the academy.
- The DSL will provide an annual briefing to the Academy on any changes to child protection legislation and procedures and relevant learning from local and national serious case reviews.
- The DSL will ensure the academy maintains accurate records of staff induction and training.
- Safeguarding training will be reviewed annually and updated to reflect current statutory guidance, local safeguarding priorities and emerging risks, including online safety, AI-related harm, Martyn's Law / Protect Duty, and reasonable force and de-escalation.

7. Recognising abuse and taking appropriate and timely action

Recognising abuse and acting promptly are fundamental to safeguarding practice. All staff members are expected to possess the capability to identify and acknowledge various forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation. All staff must act immediately on any concern about a child, report it to the DSL without delay and record it in line with academy procedures. Staff must never assume someone else will act and should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

It is imperative that our staff remain vigilant and attentive to any potential signs indicating the requirement for early intervention for a child in need. This includes but is not limited to situations involving a child who falls under the following categories:

- Has disabilities.
- Has special educational needs (with or without a statutory Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan).
- Is a young carer.
- Is bereaved.
- Shows signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including involvement in gangs, county lines, organised crime groups, serious violence, and knife crime.
- Frequently goes missing or is absent from educational settings, care environments, or their home.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation.
- Is at risk of radicalisation or exploitation.

- Is exposed to problematic or inappropriate online content or develops inappropriate relationships in the online sphere.
- Challenges within the family setting, such as issues related to drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health conditions and domestic abuse.
- Is involved in drug or alcohol misuse.
- Has mental health issues.
- Is or is perceived to be **LGBTQ+** and may face additional barriers to disclosure.
- Has been reintegrated into the family from care.
- Is at risk of 'honour'-based abuse, including practices like female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage.
- Is in a situation of private foster care.
- Has a parent or carer in custody or affected by parental offending.
- Is missing, persistently absent from school, or not receiving full-time education.
- Has a history of multiple suspensions and is at risk of or has already been permanently excluded.
- Is exposed to emerging technology risks, including AI, deepfakes, online exploitation or harmful digital content.

Refer to Appendix 3 – Dealing with disclosure of abuse.

Concerns about a child/young person

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their work may have changed, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are okay or if they can help in any way.

Staff should record these early concerns. If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should alert the DSL to their concern. Records must be factual, accurate and made as soon as possible, using the child's own words where appropriate. Staff must also record and report concerns based on observations, behaviours or patterns, even where there has been no direct disclosure.

All academies use CPOMS as the central safeguarding recording system. Staff must record concerns on CPOMS as soon as possible and on the same day. Once recorded, CPOMS will alert the DSL so that concerns can be reviewed and acted on without delay.

Reporting systems for our pupils/young people

Our academies have clear and accessible reporting systems so pupils can raise safeguarding concerns with confidence. Pupils are taught, through classroom discussion, assemblies and pastoral support, how to report concerns, including online abuse, bullying, exploitation and harmful content. When a pupil speaks to an adult, they will be listened to, taken seriously and supported. Staff will consider the child's wishes and feelings, where appropriate, but will always act in the best interests of the child and ensure concerns are responded to promptly and in line with safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding in the Curriculum

Safeguarding education forms part of our whole-school approach and helps children understand risks, recognise unsafe situations and seek help. This includes teaching about emerging and contextual safeguarding risks, including online exploitation, misinformation, harmful online trends, AI misuse, deepfake content, peer relationships, the local community and online environments.

This education will be customised to address the unique needs and vulnerabilities of each child, including those who have experienced abuse or have special educational needs or disabilities.

We will educate children about online challenges and hoaxes and will share this information with parents and carers. Relevant topics will be incorporated into Relationships Education for primary pupils, Relationships and Sex Education for secondary pupils, and Health Education for both primary and secondary pupils, in accordance with statutory guidance.

We uphold a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, and sexual violence/harassment. Our values and standards will be consistently demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life, supported by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral care system, as well as a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly scheduled lessons and reinforced throughout the entire curriculum.

Our programmes are fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (especially when considering the needs of children with SEND and other vulnerabilities). This is underpinned by:

- The Trust’s behaviour policy.
- A pastoral support system (The structure of this support system will be dependent on the size and staffing of the academy).
- A planned programme of PSHE delivered regularly, tackling issues such as: boundaries; consent; body confidence; stereotyping and sexual harassment. Child protection and wider child safety issues will be addressed in its wider context through the curriculum as appropriate in lesson time, focus days and during assemblies. Relevant issues will be addressed through the curriculum, for example self-esteem, emotional literacy, assertiveness and bullying.

8. Online Safety and Filtering and Monitoring

The Trust recognises that online safety is a core safeguarding responsibility. All academies will provide a safe online environment by maintaining appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, educating pupils about online risks and ensuring staff understand how to recognise, report and respond to online safety concerns.

The Trust will meet the DfE filtering and monitoring standards and the wider digital and technology standards for schools and colleges. Filtering will be used to prevent access to illegal, inappropriate and potentially harmful content, including content in text, image, audio, video and AI-generated formats. Monitoring will be used to identify concerning activity so that safeguarding staff can review, record, risk assess and escalate concerns where required.

- Identify and assign clear roles and responsibilities for filtering and monitoring.
- Review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually, including consideration of emerging risks, vulnerable pupils, remote access and AI-generated or dynamic online content.
- Block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably restricting teaching, learning or legitimate safeguarding education.
- Maintain effective monitoring strategies that meet the safeguarding needs of each academy.
- Ensure concerns identified through filtering and monitoring are reviewed by safeguarding staff, recorded, risk assessed and escalated where required.
- Use Lightspeed filtering and monitoring software to support online safeguarding, with alerts reviewed by the DSL or deputy DSLs.

The SPC will oversee online safety, including filtering and monitoring, by reviewing reports, understanding the systems in place and holding leaders to account. Where required, the SPC will consult the DSL, IT staff and service providers to ensure standards are met.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will lead on the safeguarding aspects of online safety, including oversight of filtering and monitoring systems. The DSL will ensure any concerns identified through these systems are reviewed promptly, recorded on CPOMS where appropriate, and acted on in line with safeguarding procedures.

Where pupils access learning remotely or use academy devices away from the academy site, safeguarding expectations, filtering and monitoring arrangements and reporting routes will continue to apply as far as reasonably possible.

The Trust will review its online safety approach annually, supported by risk assessment, to ensure arrangements remain effective and responsive to changing technology and emerging safeguarding risks.

Online safety risks, including AI-related harm, harmful content, online exploitation, misinformation and harmful online behaviours, are addressed through safeguarding practice, curriculum provision, pastoral support, filtering and monitoring arrangements.

The academy will also:

- Maintain clear processes for identifying, responding to and escalating online safety concerns involving pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors.
- Promote safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile phones, smart technology and academy ICT systems.
- Set clear expectations for acceptable use by pupils, staff, volunteers, visitors and parents or carers where relevant.
- Ensure staff understand their role in recognising, monitoring and responding to online safety concerns.
- Teach pupils how to stay safe online, understand the real-world impact of online behaviour and report concerns.
- Work with parents and carers to promote online safety through appropriate information, guidance and support.

The four key categories of online risk

Our approach to online safety addresses the following categories of risk:

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

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

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

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

The use of Mobiles and Smart technology

The use of mobile phones, cameras, and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities is carefully regulated to ensure the safeguarding of all individuals involved. When utilised appropriately, these devices can enhance learning experiences, facilitate communication and capture valuable moments. However, they also pose potential risks if misused or if boundaries are not respected.

To uphold safeguarding requirements and compliance, our Academies have established clear guidelines regarding the use of personal devices within the setting. Staff must follow the academy's Staff Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy when using mobile phones and smart technology. Personal devices must never be used to capture or store images of pupils.

Staff will be vigilant in monitoring the use of such devices to prevent inappropriate capturing or sharing of images or information. Leaders will ensure that visiting parents and carers are aware that they must seek explicit consent before taking photographs or videos, especially where children or vulnerable individuals are involved. Any concerns about the misuse of devices, including capturing or sharing images, must be reported to the DSL immediately and recorded in line with safeguarding procedures.

We will ensure that, pupils are aware of safe device usage and understand the importance of respecting privacy, consent and boundaries. Regular training and discussions on safeguarding will reinforce these principles. By fostering a culture of awareness and accountability, we aim to create a safe and secure learning environment where technology complements education without compromising safety (See Appendix 7).

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are increasingly accessible and may be used by staff, pupils and families in everyday life and education. AI can support teaching, learning and school operations when used safely and appropriately; however, it also presents safeguarding risks where it is misused or used to create, share or access harmful content.

Deepfakes are AI-generated or AI-manipulated images, audio or videos that can appear genuine. They may be used to misrepresent a person, create harmful or distressing content, support bullying or harassment, or facilitate grooming, coercion and exploitation.

AI-related safeguarding risks include deepfake images, audio or videos, AI-facilitated bullying, harassment or coercion, harmful or inappropriate content, impersonation, misinformation and the use of AI to support grooming or exploitation.

Any safeguarding concern linked to AI misuse will be recorded, reviewed and responded to in line with this policy, including procedures for online safety, behaviour, anti-bullying, child-on-child abuse, filtering and monitoring and referrals to external agencies, where required.

Staff will remain alert to the safeguarding implications of AI and report concerns to the DSL without delay. The Trust Ed-Tech team will risk assess new AI tools before use in academies, considering safeguarding, data protection, age-appropriateness, content generation, monitoring and staff oversight.

Lightspeed alerts will be checked regularly by the DSL or deputy DSLs. Any safeguarding concerns identified through alerts will be recorded, risk assessed and responded to in line with safeguarding procedures.

Cyber-crime

For the purposes of this policy, “cyber-crime” is defined as criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. This includes ‘cyber-enabled’ crimes, i.e. crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online and ‘cyber-dependent’ crimes, i.e. crimes that can be committed only by using a computer.

Crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers, known as ‘hacking’.
- Denial of Service attacks, known as ‘booting’.
- Making, supplying or obtaining malicious software, or ‘malware’, e.g. viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence.

All staff will be aware of the signs of cyber-crime and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise. This may include the DSL referring children or young people to the National Crime Agency’s Cyber Choices programme.

Children with skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), will consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme.

Our schools take Cyber Security seriously and ensure that we meet the required DFE Cyber security standards for schools. All staff have appropriate training in Cyber Security.

9. Notifying parents or carers

Decisions about informing parents or carers will be made in the best interests of the child, taking account of their safety, welfare and wishes and feelings where appropriate.

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child’s parents or carers. The DSL will manage this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure with Academy leaders. The academy will always discuss concerns with parents/carers and consent for any referrals should be sought unless to do so would:

- Place the child at risk of significant harm or further risk of significant harm.
- Place a vulnerable adult at risk of harm.
- Compromise any enquiries that need to be undertaken by children’s social care or the police.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL. If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children’s social care team before doing so. In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. The Academy will endeavour to ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on the Academy and staff for safeguarding children.

We strive to ensure that parents understand the safeguarding responsibilities placed on the Academy and its staff. In the best interests of safeguarding children, there may be times when the school consults with other agencies without informing parents or carers beforehand. Such consultations may lead to formal referrals, potentially resulting in visits from social care and/or the police. We recognise that this can be a distressing situation and will follow the procedures required by the multi-agency partnership arrangements.

If a visit is requested by the police or social care, it may take place at the school. In such cases, parents or carers will be asked to remain on the school premises until the authorities arrive. Should parents or carers choose to leave with their child, the school will notify the police or social care of their decision. Additionally, our school will arrange for an interpreter if needed.

10. Referrals to the police

The academy will refer to the police without delay where there is an immediate risk of harm, a child or others may be in danger, or there is reason to believe that a criminal offence may have been committed. This may include, but is not limited to, concerns relating to serious violence, sexual violence or abuse, exploitation, threats to life or safety, weapons, FGM, forced marriage, online offences, or any situation requiring an urgent police response.

Staff must use professional judgement and must not delay seeking police advice or support where there is uncertainty about risk, criminality or immediate safety. The welfare and protection of the child will remain the primary consideration.

The DSL, deputy DSL or most senior member of staff available will normally make the referral to the police. In an emergency, any member of staff must call 999 if this is necessary to protect a child or another person from immediate harm. Where a referral is made, the DSL must be informed as soon as possible.

All police referrals, advice received, decisions made and the rationale for those decisions will be recorded on CPOMS. Records will include who made the referral, when it was made, the information shared, any crime or incident reference number provided and the agreed next steps.

A referral to the police does not replace the academy's safeguarding procedures. Where there is concern that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care or MASH in line with local safeguarding procedures. The academy will work with the police, children's social care and other relevant agencies to support a coordinated safeguarding response and will act at all times in the best interests of the child.

Operation Encompass

We are fully compliant and promote Operation Encompass, which is a police and Education early intervention safeguarding partnership that supports children and young people exposed to Domestic Abuse. It aims to ensure Schools are notified in a timely manner of any Domestic Abuse incident where child/ren are present. This includes undertaking the Key Adult online Training. A trained Key Adult (usually the DSL or deputy DSL) is responsible for receiving and responding to Operation Encompass notifications and ensuring all parents/carers are aware we are part of this initiative via newsletters, prospectus, Academy website and induction. On receipt of an Operation Encompass notification, the Key Adult will ensure appropriate support is in place for the child. This may include:

- providing immediate pastoral support.
- sharing relevant information with staff on a need-to-know basis.
- monitoring the child's wellbeing, presentation and behaviour.
- recording actions securely in line with safeguarding procedures.

Use of Reasonable Force

We believe that it is important to allow children to do what they can for themselves, but depending on age and circumstances (i.e., a child who is hurt, who needs instruction in the use of a particular instrument/piece of equipment, safety issues such as the need to prevent a child hurting themselves or others), it may be necessary for some physical contact to take place. Reasonable force will only be used as a safeguarding measure of last resort where necessary to prevent harm to a child or others.

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use 'reasonable force' to prevent a pupil from:

- committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil).
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil).
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the Academy or among any pupils receiving education at the academy, whether during the teaching session or otherwise.

The general guidance on Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) DfE advice template (publishing.service.gov.uk) DfE advice template (publishing.service.gov.uk) Use of reasonable force – Advice for Principals, staff and governing bodies (2013) is available to schools and may be supplemented by specialist guidance.

Children and Learning Act 2009 requires the Trust Board to ensure that a procedure is in place, within member academies, for recording each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil; and reporting each such incident to each parent of the pupil as soon as practicable after the incident. Following any use of reasonable force, the incident will be recorded promptly and accurately, including the rationale for the action taken. The child's welfare and any injuries will be checked, any underlying safeguarding concerns or unmet needs considered and appropriate support provided to the child and staff involved.

The incident must be reported to the DSL and recorded on CPOMS. Records will include the incident details, actions taken, rationale for the use of force, parent/carer communication where appropriate and any follow-up support or risk assessment updates required.

Staff will receive appropriate de-escalation training to minimise the need for physical intervention.

11. Children and young people who are potentially more susceptible to harm

Each Academy within the Trust recognises that some groups of children can face additional safeguarding challenges. They also understand that further barriers may exist when determining abuse and neglect in these groups of children and young people. Additional considerations for managing safeguarding concerns and incidents amongst these groups are outlined below:

Children or young people with a social worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children. Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. They will also ensure that the social worker is updated on any relevant information.

For example, Academies will inform them on decisions about:

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

Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities

Children with SEN and disabilities can be more susceptible to safeguarding risks as:

- Staff may not be able to spot the signs of abuse in children with SEND or assume that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration.
- Children with SEND may be prone to peer group isolation and more vulnerable to bullying, coercion and 'grooming' without outwardly showing any signs.
- Children with SEND may experience increased feelings of anxiety which prevent them from 'speaking out'.
- Some children with SEND rely on adults for personal care and this vulnerability puts them at greater risk of being harmed or abused.
- Children with SEND are more likely to work alone with a single adult, putting them at greater risk of being harmed or abused.
- Children with SEND may not be able to recognise that they are being abused.

In addition to these increased risk factors, disabled children may have communication difficulties which make it difficult to tell others what is happening to them. Adults, including professionals assessing their needs and caring for them, may concentrate on the child's special needs and overlook signs and symptoms that they are being maltreated.

All staff must therefore be aware of and extra vigilant to the possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect for disabled children. The DSL will liaise regularly with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo), the behaviour lead, and the attendance lead, maintaining a culture of vigilance and being alert to any relevant new information or concerns.

If staff have a concern for a child with disabilities, they must consider:

- The child's communication needs and how they can communicate effectively with them.
- What information in relation to the child's disability and special needs staff need to be aware of in order to assess risk of abuse.
- What resources staff require in order to undertake an informed assessment of safeguarding risk.
- Where child protection issues are considered regarding a child with disabilities, there must be involvement by key professionals who know the child well, including those who have a comprehensive understanding of the child's disability, method of communication and any associated medical condition.

Academies should consider what specialist advice, guidance and training may be required in order for staff to understand why children with SEND can be more vulnerable to abuse and how to recognise signs of abuse and/or neglect of disabled children.

Our Academies will consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place. Further information can be found in the departments:

- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) | NSPCC Learning and
- Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning

Children and young people who are LGBTQ+ and/or questioning their gender

Being LGBTQ+ or questioning gender identity is not a safeguarding risk in itself; however, some children may be more vulnerable to discrimination, targeted abuse or barriers to disclosure.

Staff within the Trust will also be aware that, in some cases, a child or young person who is perceived by others to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children or young people who identify as LGBTQ+. Staff within the Trust will also be aware that the risks to these children and young people can be compounded when they do not have a trusted adult with whom they can speak openly with. All staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by these children and young people and provide a safe space for them to speak out and share any concerns they have. When addressing sensitive issues like gender questioning and social transition, our school is committed to prioritising the child's best interests. Each individual will receive personalised support from our safeguarding and pastoral teams.

Our schools will follow the Department for Education's guidance on gender questioning to ensure appropriate support for each pupil is providing in the best way.

Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

The Academy will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children and previously looked-after children safe. All staff will be aware that looked after and previously looked after children may face additional safeguarding challenges, including the impact of trauma, attachment difficulties and adverse childhood experiences.

We will ensure that:

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked-after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility and care arrangements.
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads. Each Academy in the Trust has appointed a designated teacher who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked after children in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant experience to perform the role. As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

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

At Lightwoods Primary Academy the Designated Looked After Children Teacher is John Ashton.

Private Fostering

There is a mandatory duty on the Academy to inform the local authority of a private fostering arrangement they are aware of. Privately fostered children may be more vulnerable and their welfare must be safeguarded:

- A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and stepparents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

- Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence. Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse, neglect and/or exploitation, or be involved in trafficking or modern-day slavery.

- The Academy has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although Academies have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the Academy. However, it should be clear to the Academy who has parental responsibility.

Children in the court system

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed.

The academy will use age-appropriate resources to help children understand the court process and reduce anxiety. Family court proceedings, including child arrangements following separation, may affect a child's wellbeing.

This can be stressful for children. Our school will use the Ministry of Justice online child arrangements information tool to support this process and will make this information available to parents and carers if they require our assistance.

Children and young people with family members in prison

Children with a family member in prison may experience emotional harm, stigma or social isolation. Staff should be aware of the potential impact on wellbeing, behaviour and attendance and report any concerns to the DSL.

Children and young people with a family member in prison will be offered pastoral support as necessary. They will receive a copy of 'Are you a young person with a family member in prison? From Directory of Resources | NICCO' where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

Mental health

All staff are aware that mental health issues can sometimes indicate that a child has experienced or is at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect, or exploitation. We recognise that only trained professionals should diagnose mental health problems. However, our staff are well-positioned to observe children daily and identify those whose behaviour may suggest they are facing mental health challenges or are at risk of developing them.

Common signs of mental health issues include sudden changes in mood and behaviour, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, unexplained physical changes like weight fluctuations, sudden drops in academic performance, sleep disturbances and changes in social habits such as withdrawal or avoiding friends and family.

Children who have suffered abuse, neglect, or other traumatic experiences may have lasting impacts on their mental health, behaviour, attendance and academic progress. Our staff are aware of these potential impacts and are vigilant in identifying them.

If a staff member has a mental health concern about a child that also raises safeguarding issues, they will take immediate action in line with this policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy right away.

We support our pupils' mental health and wellbeing through the PSHE curriculum, ensuring they are aware of strategies to support their own wellbeing and that of their peers. We foster a culture of open communication, empathy and respect where children feel comfortable seeking help. We balance the need for confidentiality with the need to safeguard our children, ensuring information is shared appropriately with relevant professionals. We are mindful of cultural and religious beliefs that may influence attitudes towards suicide and mental health.

Our schools have trained mental health staff who provide appropriate support to children with mental health concerns and involve external agencies such as School Nurse services, Reflexions, CAMHS, Base 25 and MASH as necessary. Staff will also direct children to mental health support services.

If a child discloses suicidal thoughts to a staff member, we will immediately contact MASH and the parent or carer. If the child is in immediate danger, we may call 999. In the event of a critical incident, all pupils and staff will receive appropriate support through the LA Education Psychology team and other relevant professionals. Support will also be provided to parents and the local community as needed.

Voice of the child

Listening to the voice of the child is a fundamental part of safeguarding practice.

The child's voice and feelings are taken into account when deciding on actions and services to provide. We have systems in place for children to express their views and provide feedback. All systems and processes are designed to prioritise the best interests of the child. The academy will review pupil voice systems through feedback and safeguarding audits.

Community Safety

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent or person with legal responsibility. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends, and acquaintances) and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. We teach children about community safety through our PSHE, Personal Development and RSE curriculum. The academy will work with external partners, including the police, to reinforce key safeguarding messages and review community safety concerns so that safeguarding measures remain appropriate.

12. Attendance

Our academies adhere to the Inclusive Attendance approach, recognising the critical importance of regular school attendance for both educational success and safeguarding. Consistent attendance is essential for ensuring the well-being and safety of our pupils. When there are periods of absence that raise concerns, we will conduct home visits to understand the reasons behind the absences and to ensure the child's safety. These visits are a proactive measure to address any potential safeguarding issues and to provide the necessary support to the child and their family. Knowing where children/young people are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding.

Poor attendance or absence from education may indicate safeguarding concerns, including neglect, exploitation or harm and will be considered within a safeguarding context.

We have a separate attendance policy/guidance (which includes protocols to be followed for those with unexplained and/or persistently absent from education and those seeking elective home education). This policy references both Working together to improve school attendance and Children persistently absent from education Working together to improve school attendance.

Academy attendance leads will deliver training, in addition to the general safeguarding training that all staff receive. They are also given access to role specific safeguarding training to ensure they understand the safeguarding implications behind poor or non-attendance.

- Academy leaders and Standards and Committee Members ensure that attendance data, particularly for identified vulnerable groups is closely and regularly monitored, identifying trends or patterns which may indicate safeguarding concerns.
- Where appropriate, social workers will be involved, informed and updated about attendance issues in keeping with Moments matter, attendance counts DfE guidance.

Attendance and Safeguarding

All of our schools follow and Inclusive Attendance Approach. Our staff understand that prolonged or repeated absences from school can be a critical indicator of various safeguarding concerns, such as neglect, child sexual and criminal exploitation (especially county lines), mental health issues, substance abuse, travel to conflict zones, female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour'-based abuse, or forced marriage. Early intervention is crucial to identify any underlying safeguarding risks and to prevent future instances of a child going missing. This applies not only when issues first arise but also for children already known to social services and in need of a social worker, such as those with child protection plans or those in care, where absences may heighten existing risks within the family or community.

Our schools maintains both an admission register and an attendance register. All children are recorded on these registers from the first day they are expected to attend. If a child does not attend on the agreed date, we will inform the local authority as soon as possible to prevent the child from going missing. We keep our attendance, and admission registers up to date and encourage parents and carers to notify us of any changes promptly. Our schools regularly monitor attendance and address any concerns in accordance with our attendance policy. Our schools follow guidance set out in DfE Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026) and in partnership with the Local Authority we will:

- **Expect** high standards of attendance for all pupils.
- **Monitor** attendance rigorously.
- **Listen and Understand** barriers to attendance and agree how to resolve them.
- **Facilitate support** to ensure all barriers are removed which may be outside the school setting.
- **Formalise support,** when necessary, through attendance contracts.
- **Enforce** attendance through statutory intervention when appropriate.

Our schools will inform the local authority about any child who does not attend school regularly or has been absent without permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, as agreed upon by the school and the local authority. We will also collaborate with the relevant Local Authority and appropriate agencies if we have concerns about a child's attendance.

Where a child is unable to attend school due to a safeguarding matter, the academy will consider this within a safeguarding context and work with parents or carers, children's social care, the local authority and any other relevant professionals to agree appropriate arrangements. The academy will maintain regular contact with the child and family, ensure safeguarding oversight remains in place, record actions and decisions on CPOMS and keep the arrangements under regular review so that the child's safety, welfare and access to education are promoted.

Children Persistently Absent from Education

Children who have unexplained or persistent absent from education are at significant risk. Children who are already known to children's social care, who are on a child in need or child protection plan or in the care of the local authority (looked after children) are additionally vulnerable and in need of additional protection.

We will follow the protocols laid out in our attendance policy/guidance:

- The DSL will ensure the Academy response to identifying children persistently absent from education supports identifying potential abuse or exploitation and prevents them from becoming persistently absent in the future.
- The Academy will ensure compliance with the guidance and regulations contained in the appropriate sections of the Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) document and Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026).

We recognise that a child persistently absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage. There are many circumstances where a child may become persistently absent from education, but some children are particularly at risk.

These include children who:

- are at risk of harm or neglect.
- are at risk of forced marriage or FGM.
- come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- come from the families of service personnel.
- go missing or run away from home or care.
- are supervised by the youth justice system.
- cease to attend a school.
- come from new migrant families.

The Academy will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are persistently absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect and exploitation and to help prevent the risks of becoming persistently absent in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the Academy without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points. Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being persistently absent, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage. If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

Attendance and Safeguarding arrangements for alternative provision

The academy retains safeguarding responsibility for pupils attending alternative provision. The academy will quality assure the provision, including safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and pupil wellbeing and will share relevant safeguarding information to ensure continuity of care and support.

Before a pupil attends alternative provision, the academy will complete and record appropriate safeguarding checks. These will include confirming whether the provider is required to be registered with Ofsted and where required, checking that registration is in place. Checks will also cover staff suitability, DBS arrangements, safeguarding policies, attendance procedures, reporting routes and how safeguarding information will be shared. The academy will maintain regular contact with the pupil, parent or carer and provider, complete face-to-face visits and record all visits, communication and safeguarding information on CPOMS.

Attendance will be checked daily, with a clear and established procedure in place to address absence promptly. Throughout this period, the pupil will remain on the academy register, ensuring consistency and continuity in safeguarding measures. By adhering to these protocols, we uphold our commitment to providing a safe and secure environment for all pupils under our care, promoting their welfare and well-being as paramount concerns within our educational settings. The academy will review placements regularly to ensure they remain safe, appropriate and responsive to the pupil's needs.

Home-educated children

Parents and carers may choose elective home education (EHE) for their children in some cases, EHE can mean that children and young people are less visible to the services needed to safeguard and support them. Elective home education will be considered within a safeguarding context, particularly where a child is vulnerable or known to services.

In line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, each Academy within the trust will ensure it informs their LA of all deletions from the admissions register when a children and young people is taken off roll. Where a parent or carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from an academy within the trust for EHE, the academy, in collaboration with the Trust, LA and other key professionals, will coordinate a meeting with the parent, where possible, before the final decision has been made, particularly if the child or young person has SEND, is vulnerable and/or has a social worker. Where a child or young person has an EHCP, the academy will seek to convene an emergency review with the family and LA keyworker before the child is removed from roll. Where a parent or carer intends to educate their child at home, the Academy must be formally notified in writing of this decision, making clear that the family will carry out their responsibility to educate their child suitably and the date from which their decision is effective.

Educational Neglect

Educational neglect is recognised as a safeguarding concern and may constitute neglect. It will be responded to in line with attendance, safeguarding and child protection procedures.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that persistent failure to send children to school may be an indicator of neglect. The NSPCC has cited, 'failure to ensure regular school attendance which prevents the child reaching their full potential academically' as one of their six forms of neglect. 'Working together to safeguard children' provides a neglect description, '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'. Therefore, the academy will manage cases of those who are severely absent in line with local safeguarding and attendance procedures.

13. Multi-agency working

Effective multi-agency working is essential to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust is committed to effective multi-agency working as part of its statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

The Trust is aware of, and will follow, the local safeguarding arrangements. The academies within the Trust will be fully engaged, involved and included in local safeguarding arrangements. Once the Trust and its Academies are named as a relevant agency by local safeguarding partners, it will follow its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies. Academies within the Trust will act in accordance with the Trust's safeguarding arrangements. All Academies will work with Children's social care, the police, health services and other services to protect the welfare of its children and young people, through the early help/family help process and by contributing to multi-agency plans to provide additional support.

Where a need for early help/family help is identified, the Academies within the trust will allow access for Children's social care from the host LA and, where appropriate, a placing LA, for that LA to conduct (or consider whether to conduct) a section 17 or 47 assessment. The Trust also recognises the particular importance of inter-agency working in identifying and preventing Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation.

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

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

Referral to children's social care

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care where a child is suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

In the above circumstance, contact will be made with the MASH, the police (in an emergency on 999 or on 101) and/or Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service. Professionals can consult with a children's Social Worker in the Local Authority if they are unsure whether a Social Work Assessment is necessary and this can be done directly to the Locality Children's Team but if a referral is to be made, this should be done through the MASH and all actions undertaken logged on the Academy safeguarding software.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child, however during academy hours staff should follow the academy processes in relation to safeguarding.

Early Help/Family Help Assessments

Early Help/Family Help forms part of a continuum of safeguarding support. Effective early intervention helps prevent concerns from escalating to statutory services.

Early Help/Family Help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Any child or young person may benefit from Early Help/Family Help, but in particular, staff within the Trust will be alerted to the potential need for children and young people who:

- Have disabilities, have certain health conditions or have specific additional needs.
- Have Special Educational Needs, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan.
- Have mental health needs.
- Are young carers.
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home.
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation.
- Are at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Have family members in prison or are affected by parental offending.

- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse.
- Misuse drugs or alcohol.
- Have returned home to their family from care.
- Are at risk of Honor Based Abuse, such as FGM or child marriage.
- Are privately fostered.
- Are persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the academy day.
- Show early signs of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation in other ways.
- Pupils who have experienced multiple suspensions.
- Pupils who are at risk of being permanently excluded from school and or in an Alternative Provision/pupil referral unit.
- Pupils displaying non-violent Harmful Sexual Behaviours.

The DSL/DDSL in the Academy will take the lead where Early Help/Family Help is appropriate and must know what the local Early Help/Family Help process is and how and where to access support. This includes liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. The DSL/DDSL will report to the Principal about the progress of any children or young people who are open to Early Help/Family Help support. The DSL/DDSL will report about the number of families engaging with Early Help/Family Help. Staff within the Trust may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an Early Help/Family Help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to Children's Social Care for assessment for statutory services if the children and young people situation is not improving or is worsening. Early Help/Family Help cases will be reviewed regularly to ensure support remains appropriate and effective.

14. Complaints and concerns which relate to safeguarding

Complaints against staff that may require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff. Other complaints refer to Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust's complaints policy and procedures. Early Years providers in our Trust will take account of requirements related to complaints set out in the safeguarding and welfare section of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Record Keeping and Information Sharing

The Academy will keep clear, detailed, accurate, written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care immediately. Language used should be professional, factual, and non-inflammatory. Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust will regularly quality assure the internal record keeping effectiveness.

All concerns must be recorded on CPOMs as soon as possible and on the same day to ensure timely safeguarding action.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Concerns and referrals will be stored on the academy Safeguarding Software in a separate safeguarding file for each child. The DSL will oversee the quality, accuracy and completeness of safeguarding records.

Records will include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern;
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- a detailed body map, where appropriate;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- The decisions made, including the rationale, should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care of the prevent programme etc.

Safeguarding records will be quality assured regularly to check consistency, accuracy and effectiveness.

A historic hardcopy of previous safeguarding files should be kept confidential and stored securely, away from pupils' standard school files. Electronic records are stored on an identified, purpose-built, secure platform (CPOMS/Safeguarding software).

The DSL will ensure secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained, this will be transferred separately from the main pupil file.

The DSL will consider whether it would be appropriate to share information with the new school/college in advance of a child leaving in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

The Academy will ensure all relevant safeguarding records are sent to the receiving school or establishment when a pupil moves schools, within five days, in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026, paragraph 121.

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

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

All actions, decisions and information shared will always be in the best interests of the child. In Serious Case Reviews, a lack of effective information sharing within services and between services is a common factor. KCSIE states: 'The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe' which includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent…'.

All staff and volunteers must understand that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children. Staff must ensure confidentiality protocols are followed and information is shared appropriately. The Principal and DSL will disclose information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only whilst ensuring key information is shared with staff to support the monitoring and safeguarding of vulnerable children.

Staff who receive information about children and families in the course of their work must pass this on to the DSL/s. Where a member of staff is in doubt about whether to share information, they should seek guidance from the DSL/s.

Staff have the professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigating agencies, under the guidance of the DSL and as set out in 'Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers,' DfE, July 2023.

Safeguarding/child protection records must be kept securely held on CPOMS with hard copies of letters etc in locked storage. The storage and processing of such information is governed by the Data Protection legislation. The Principal should give clear advice to staff on their responsibilities under this legislation.

Personal information about all children and their families is confidential and is governed by the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. All staff must maintain this confidentiality. All records relating to child protection/ safeguarding incidents will be maintained by the DSL/s and only shared as is consistent with the law relating to the protection of children.

The DSL will ensure that staff are clear with children that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

In cases where the 'serious harm test' is met, Academies must withhold providing the data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. Where in doubt Academies should seek advice from the Trust Data Protection Officer.

In the event of a child who is being dealt with under the LA and Academy's safeguarding procedures transferring to another school, the academy will:

- Inform the destination school, Virtual School Principal and Local Authority, as appropriate.
- Find out the name of the receiving school.
- Contact the relevant member of staff at that school to discuss the transfer.
- Deliver all information relating to the child in person to the receiving school and get a dated and signed receipt or send by signed for recorded delivery. The academy must keep a record of receipts and signatures relating to the transfer of confidential files.
- Check with the receiving school that the child has arrived there on the expected day.
- Inform all relevant agencies, including the Designated Officer for the Local Authority, of the transfer.
- Work with agencies to ensure vulnerable pupils such as those with SEND or previously looked after, remain safe.

Our Standards and Performance Committee and Trust Board are 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. Our Academies will follow ICO guidance For organisations | ICO which includes information about your obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information and providing access to official information.

15. Safer Recruitment

The Academy will ensure that safer recruitment practices always follow KCSIE and will be adhered to by staff. This can be read in conjunction with (Safer Recruitment (shirelandcat.org.uk).

An enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be undertaken for all staff members engaged in regulated activity. A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if, as a result of their work, they:

- Are responsible on a daily basis for the care or supervision of children.
- Regularly work in the Academy at times when children are on the premises.
- Regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age.

The DfE's DBS Workforce Guides will be consulted when determining whether a position fits the child workforce criteria.

The Board of Trustees will conduct the appropriate pre-employment checks for all prospective Trust employees, including internal candidates and candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK. This responsibility may be delegated by the Board of Trustees as required.

The appropriate DBS and suitability checks will be carried out for all Members, Trustees, local Governors, volunteers and contractors within the Trust.

The Chair of Trustees will undertake a suitability check by the ESFA and an enhanced DBS check that will be carried out regardless of checks previously performed by other organisations or how recently these took place.

Staff suitability

All settings that provide care for children under the age of eight must ensure that staff and volunteers working in these settings are not disqualified from doing so under the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018. A person may be disqualified if they:

- Have certain orders or other restrictions placed upon them.
- Have committed certain offences.

Ongoing suitability

Following appointment, consideration will be given to staff and volunteers' ongoing suitability – to prevent the opportunity for harm to children/young person or placing children/young person at risk. The Trust-wide SCR and DBS policies offer further on timescales in relation to this matter. All staff will sign a declaration about their ongoing suitability for work at the start of an academic year.

Whistleblowing

In the event of significant concerns staff are aware of their right to refer to Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust whistleblowing policy and procedures that cover concerns regarding the way the Academy safeguards pupils – including poor or unsafe practice, or potential failures. If the options above have been explored fully and the concern still isn't being handled effectively and is therefore placing the child or young person at risk, they are aware that they can escalate their concerns by contacting the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285.

Referral to the DBS

The Trust will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed a child or poses a risk of harm to a child/young person, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed an offence and has been removed from working in regulated activity. The duty will also apply in circumstances where an individual is deployed to another area of work that is not in regulated activity or they are suspended.

The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018

The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 set out grounds for disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 where the person meets certain criteria set out in the Regulations.

For example:

- an individual will be disqualified where they have committed a relevant offence against a child.
- been subject to a specified order relating to the care of a child.
- committed certain serious sexual or physical offences against an adult.
- been included on the DBS children's barred list.
- been made subject to a disqualification order by the court.
- previously been refused registration as a childcare provider or provider or manager of a children's home or had such registration cancelled.

A disqualified person is prohibited from providing relevant early or later years childcare as defined in the Childcare Act 2006 or being directly concerned in the management of such childcare.

We understand that schools are also prohibited from employing a disqualified person in respect of relevant early or later years childcare.

16. Dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers which meet the harms threshold

The academy holds a comprehensive 'Allegations against staff' policy and a staff code of conduct which can be found on the Trust website and which outlines in detail expected standards of adult behaviour and procedures to take where there are concerns. Where any member of the academy staff or any volunteer has concerns that a person has caused harm or poses a future risk of harm to vulnerable groups, including children they must act in accordance with this Trust policy.

This policy will be used in any case where it is suspected or alleged that a member of staff or a volunteer at the Academy/Trust has:

- Behaved in such a way that may have harmed a child/young person or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm. This includes allegations and concerns raised in relation to all staff including supply staff, contractors and volunteers.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children The bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children. This is known as transferable risk.

We will prevent people who pose risks to children from working in our Academies by ensuring that all individuals working in any capacity at our academy have been subjected to safeguarding checks in line with the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

The Academy recognises the possibility that adults working in the Academy may harm children. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the Academy should be taken to the Principal without delay (or where that is not possible, to the DSL); any concerns about the Principal should go to the Trust's HR director, who can be contacted by 0121 558 8086.

If for any reason you cannot make a referral through these routes you have a duty to refer directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) sandwell_lado@sandwellchildrenstrust.org

Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the Principal. Allegations against the Principal should be reported to the Director of HR or CEO.

Where a child makes an allegation against a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer, the allegation will be taken seriously and acted upon immediately and assessed to determine if they meet the harms threshold or can be dealt with under the 'low level concerns' advice in KCSIE 2026 Part 4. The LADO will also be contacted and parents will be informed as soon as reasonably possible. The child will be offered support and their wishes will be carefully considered before any actions are carried out.

Under its duty of care for its employees, the Academy will ensure they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provide the employee with a named contact if they are suspended. The Academy will ensure its obligations for confidentiality when an allegation has been made.

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold/low level concerns

The Academy holds a comprehensive 'Allegations against staff' policy and a staff code of conduct which outline, in detail, expected standards of adult behaviour and procedures to take where there are concerns. Where any member of the academy staff or any volunteer has concerns about a member of staff, they must act in accordance with this academy policy.

A low-level concern is described in KCSIE as:

- behaviour, which is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside work; and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

All staff will be made aware that is it crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the Principal or DSL, recorded, and dealt with appropriately.

17. Checking the suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of Academy staff and will be informed of safeguarding practices/procedures whilst on site.

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

Visitors are expected to sign in via our 'Inventry System' and wear a visitor's badge with a lanyard.

Regular visitors to the academy who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and social workers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

- Will be asked to show their DBS certificate, which will be checked alongside their photo ID; or

- The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an appropriate level of DBS check has been carried out (if this is provided, we will not ask to see the DBS certificate).

Organised events which involve visiting speakers in our Academies will be required to undergo relevant safeguarding checks to ensure the safety and well-being of our pupils. Safeguarding checks for visiting speakers will encompass various aspects to guarantee a secure environment for all participants. This will include viewing Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for each visiting speaker along with photograph identification. Additionally, letters of assurance and references will be obtained and thoroughly vetted to verify the speaker's credentials and reputation.

Safeguarding procedures will also include providing clear guidelines and expectations to visiting speakers regarding appropriate conduct and boundaries when interacting with pupils. Our Academies will also ensure that all speakers are aware of the institution's safeguarding policies and procedures and their responsibility to adhere to them. Visiting speakers will always be accompanied by a member of staff.

Safeguarding checks and procedures for visiting speakers play a vital role in creating a safe and secure educational environment for pupils. By implementing rigorous checks and clear guidelines, we safeguard the well-being of our pupils and uphold the highest standards of safeguarding in educational settings. This commitment to safeguarding not only protects our pupils but also demonstrates our dedication to providing a safe learning environment where all individuals can thrive and fulfil their potential.

We will not invite any speakers into our Academies who are known to disseminate extremist views or hate speech.

Use of academy premises

Where academy premises are used outside the school day, the academy will ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place. The academy retains overall responsibility for safeguarding and will require external organisations or individuals using the premises to provide appropriate assurances, including safeguarding policies, procedures and staff suitability checks.

Safeguarding checks and assurances will include:

- appropriate DBS checks for adults working with children
- safeguarding policies and procedures
- staff training and supervision arrangements
- clear safeguarding reporting routes

The overall responsibility for ensuring that suitable safeguarding practices are maintained lies with the leadership team. It is their duty to oversee the implementation of all necessary safeguarding measures, assess the suitability of the activities taking place and monitor the conduct of those using the premises.

In the event that we receive information relating to an incident or allegation whilst the Academy site has been in use outside of Academy hours; we will follow our own safeguarding policies and procedures which will include making referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) plays a crucial role in ensuring the safety and well-being of children and young people, particularly during out-of-school hours when the Academy premises are being utilised. It is important to note that the DSL is responsible for addressing any allegations related to the use of the Academy premises, regardless of whether the children or young people present are officially registered at the Academy or not. This includes incidents that may occur during community events, after-school activities, or any other programs taking place on the premises.

Safeguarding checks for the use of academy premises outside of the academy day are essential to uphold the highest standards of safeguarding and promote a safe and secure environment for all individuals. By implementing robust safeguarding arrangements, clarifying overall responsibility, ensuring suitable use and vetting suitable adults, academies can create a protective environment that prioritises the well-being and safety of everyone involved.

18. Prevent

Preventing radicalisation is an essential part of our safeguarding strategy, as children may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Our approach to safeguarding includes protecting children from this risk, just as we protect them from other forms of harm and abuse.

The Prevent initiative aims to prevent individuals from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It also focuses on rehabilitating and disengaging those already involved in terrorist activities.

Extremism involves promoting or advancing ideologies based on violence, hatred, or intolerance, with the intent to:

1. Destroy or negate the fundamental rights and freedoms of others;
2. Undermine, overturn, or replace the UK's democratic system and rights;
3. Create an environment that allows others to achieve the goals mentioned above.

Radicalisation is the process by which individuals adopt extremist ideologies and potentially engage in or support terrorism.

Terrorism involves the use or threat of serious violence against individuals or property, aimed at influencing the government or intimidating the public to advance a political, religious, racial, or ideological cause. We recognise that there is no single way to identify if a child is susceptible to radicalisation. Various factors, including family and social influences, can contribute to a child's vulnerability. Radicalisation can occur through multiple methods, such as social media and the internet. Our staff will use their judgement to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation and take appropriate action, which may include making a Prevent referral to the Channel programme.

Since 1 July 2015, we have had a duty to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, known as the Prevent duty.

We will:

- Assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology.
- Collaborate with parents, children, families and statutory agencies.
- Evaluate the risk in our local area and ensure all staff undertake Prevent awareness training to protect children from radicalisation.
- Ensure our DSL/DDSL completes training for Channel referrals.
- Maintain a Prevent risk assessment/action plan, reviewed annually, in line with the Prevent Duty guidance 2023.
- Ensure lockdown drills are completed in accordance with DfE guidance.
- Implement suitable filtering and monitoring on all devices in our setting, including those loaned for home use. Our pupils are taught to stay safe online as part of our curriculum.

We aim to build children's resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment and incorporating aspects of the curriculum, including SMSC, British Values, PSHE, RSE, and Citizenship.

Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 – Martyn's Law

The Trust recognises the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, known as Martyn's Law, and will prepare for and comply with its requirements as they come into force. The academy will ensure appropriate and proportionate arrangements are in place to reduce the risk of harm from terrorism and respond effectively to an incident.

This will include:

- Regular risk assessments of the site, facilities and events.
- Appropriate security arrangements, including access control and visitor management.
- Staff training on recognising suspicious behaviour and responding to potential threats.
- Regular review of lockdown and emergency procedures.
- Clear communication systems in the event of an incident.
- Working with local partners, including the police and local authority, where appropriate.

These arrangements form part of the academy's wider safeguarding and health and safety responsibilities.

Appendix 1: Local Safeguarding arrangements

Please see individual academy website for Local Safeguarding Arrangements

Role	Name	Email
Principal	John Ashton	Jashton@lpa.shirelandcat.net
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Helen Crowther-Hess	Hcrowtherhess@lpa.shirelandcat.net
Deputy DSL	John Ashton Lisa Lines Kate Timms	Jashton@lpa.shirelandcat.net Llines@lpa.shirelandcat.net Ktimms@lpa.shirelandcat.net
Looked After and Post Looked After Children Designated Teacher	John Ashton	Jashton@lpa.shirelandcat.net
Special Education Needs Lead (SENCo):	Kate Timms	Ktimms@lpa.shirelandcat.net
Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL)	John Ashton	Jashton@lpa.shirelandcat.net
Online safety lead	John Ashton	Jashton@lpa.shirelandcat.net
Standards and Performance Committee Chair	Elizabeth Warwick	EWarwick@lpa.shirelandcat.net
Safeguarding SPC Link	Elizabeth Warwick	EWarwick@lpa.shirelandcat.net
External Services		
Sandwell **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and other services:**	**Phone-** 0121 569 3100 **Email -** access_team@sandwellchildrenstrust.org **Website-** Home - Sandwell CSP **MASH Education Officer** Lisa Harvey **Email-** lisa_harvey@sandwell.gov.uk Louise Atkinson **Email-** Louise_Atkinson1@sandwell.gov.uk Jemma Jones **Email-** jemma_jones@sandwell.gov.uk Beverley Need **Email-** Beverley_Need@sandwell.gov.uk **Prevent** **Email-** Prevent_Inbox@sandwell.gov.uk **Horizons Exploitation Team** **Phone-** 0121 569 2524 **LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)** **Phone-** 0121 569 4770 **Virtual School** **Phone-** 0121 569 2770 **Email-** LACE_Team@sandwell.gov.uk	
Dudley	**Phone-** 0300 555 0050	

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and other services:	**Email**- Dudley Children's Portal **Website**- dudleysafeguarding.org.uk **MASH Education Officer** Diane Green **Phone**- 01384 813287 **Email**- Diane.Green@dudley.gov.uk **Prevent** **Email-** PREVENT | Dudley Safe & Sound **Exploitation** **Email-** CS.Hub@dudley.gov.uk. **LADO** **Phone- 01384 813061** **Email-** allegations@dudley.gov.uk **Virtual School** **Phone- 01384 813493**
Wolverhampton **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and other services:**	**Phone-** 01902 555392 **Email-** EMARF - City Of Wolverhampton Council **Website-** Home - Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together **MASH Education Officer** Kelly Jones **Phone**- 01902 555937 **Email**- Kelly.Jones@wolverhampton.gov.uk **Prevent** **Phone**- 01902 551214 **Email-** deborah.smith@wolverhampton.gov.uk **Exploitation** **Email**: Amy.Cooper@wolverhampton.gov.uk **LADO** **Phone**- 01902 550477 **Email**- LADO@secure.wolverhampton.gov.uk **Virtual School**
Online Safety Guidance: **Online Safety - reporting concerns:**	CEOP Education (thinkuknow.co.uk) CEOP Safety Centre
Other academy policies	Trust Policies – Shireland Trust (shirelandcat.org.uk)
Emergency Contacts for out of school hours:	Police - call 999 if a crime is taking place or someone is in immediate danger including FGM concerns Police - call 101 for non-urgent Police matters that do not require an immediate response. NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 ChildLine: 0800 1111 Counter Terrorism Helpline: 020 7340 7264 or email counter.extremism@education.gov

Appendix 2: Contextual Safeguarding and Types of abuse

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to safeguarding that recognises that young people may be at risk of significant harm not only within their home environment, but also outside it. The traditional safeguarding approach does not consider extra-familial contexts, which has led to cases of abuse and exploitation falling under the radar.

Extra-familial contexts include young people's peer groups, support networks, online contacts and local community or neighbourhood. Safeguarding concerns in these contexts could consist of harassment or violence from their peers, a risk of grooming – whether online or in person – high levels of crime or gang violence in your local area, or even a local park where frequent incident reports have been made.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is 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 (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing, causing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Under 13's can never legally consent to sexual activity.

Neglect

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

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

Domestic abuse

For the purposes of this policy, and in line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, "domestic abuse" is defined as abusive behaviour of a person towards another person (including conduct directed at someone else, e.g. the person's child) where both are aged 16 or over and are personally connected. "Abusive behaviour" includes physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or another form of abuse. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. "Personally connected" includes people who:

- Are, have been, or have agreed to be married to each other.
- Are, have been, or have agreed to be in a civil partnership with each other.
- Are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other.
- Each have, or had, a parental relationship towards the same child.
- Are relatives.

The academy will recognise the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear, or experience the effects of domestic abuse. All staff will be aware of the signs of domestic abuse and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

Homelessness

The DSL and deputy DSLs will be aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that concerns over homelessness can be raised as early as possible. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- Household debt.
- Rent arrears.
- Domestic abuse.
- Anti-social behaviour.
- Any mention of a family moving home because “they have to”. Referrals to the Local Housing Authority do not replace referrals to Children’s Social Care where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm. For 16- and 17-year-olds, homelessness may not be family based and referrals to Children’s Social Care will be made as necessary where concerns are raised.

Modern slavery

For the purposes of this policy, “modern slavery” encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can manifest in various ways, such as sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, coerced criminal activities and the illegal removal of organs. All staff will be aware of and alert to the signs that a child or young person may be the victim of modern slavery. Staff will also be aware of the support available to victims of modern slavery, the importance of informing the DSL of concerns and how this may lead to a referral through the National Referral Mechanism.

Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is a form of child abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or through violence or the threat of violence. The abuse can be perpetrated by males or females, and children or adults. It can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- suffering from changes in emotional well-being
- misusing drugs and alcohol
- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- regularly persistently absent from school or education
- not taking part in education.

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

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced in to exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation.

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts, money, or new possessions.
- Children who associate with other children involved in exploitation.
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Having a relationship of concern with a controlling adult or young person (this may involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity).
- Entering and/or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults.
- Frequenting areas known for risky activities.
- Being groomed or abused via the Internet and mobile technology.
- Having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies or fast-food outlets.
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being.
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol.
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late.
- Children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education.

We recognise that certain vulnerabilities can make children more susceptible to child sexual exploitation. These include:

- Previous experiences of neglect, physical, or sexual abuse.
- An unstable or unsafe home environment, either currently or in the past, which may involve domestic violence, parental substance misuse, mental health issues, or criminality.
- Recent experiences of bereavement or loss.
- Social isolation or difficulties in social interactions.
- Lack of a safe space to explore their sexuality.
- Economic hardships.
- Homelessness or insecure living conditions.
- Associations with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited.
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work.
- Physical or learning disabilities (SEND).
- Being in care, especially those in residential care or with disrupted care histories.
- Sexual identity.
- Neurodivergence.

We understand that not all children with these vulnerabilities will experience child sexual exploitation, and it can also occur without any of these factors being present.

Children rarely disclose child sexual exploitation themselves, so it is crucial for all staff to be aware of the potential signs. Our staff will report any concerns about children at risk of CSE to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy, who will then make a referral and coordinate with relevant statutory agencies, such as the exploitation hub, police and health professionals. If appropriate, an exploitation screening tool will be completed to support a referral for external support.

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

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

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

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- a pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place.
- a mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out on a family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues.
- a girl: having difficulty walking, sitting, or standing, or looking uncomfortable.
- finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously) spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- avoiding physical exercise or missing PE.
- being repeatedly absent from school or absent for a prolonged period.
- demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour.
- being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations.
- asking for help but not being explicit about the problem.
- talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

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

- the girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider).
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin.
- a parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out.
- a family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM.
- having limited level of integration within UK society.

- confiding to a professional that she is to have a ‘special procedure’ or to attend a special occasion to ‘become a woman’.
- talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents/carers stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period.
- requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion).
- being unexpectedly absent from school.
- having sections missing from her ‘red book’ (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.

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

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

In the case where staff discover that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM, it is imperative to understand the seriousness of this issue and the responsibilities that come with it. FGM is a harmful practice that is illegal in the UK and is considered a form of child abuse with severe physical and psychological consequences.

FGM, as defined by 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', encompasses all procedures involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other harmful alterations to the female genital organs. It can also be referred to as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision', or 'initiation'. The gravity of this act necessitates immediate action and vigilant observation by all staff members in educational settings.

There are indicators which may suggest that a pupil has already undergone FGM, as well as precursory factors that indicate a pupil may be at risk. These indications are detailed in the appendices of our safeguarding policy to ensure that staff are well-informed and able to identify potential cases.

Any staff member who is confided in by a girl under the age of 18 that she has been subjected to FGM, or who observes physical signs indicative of FGM on a female pupil under 18, has a legal obligation to report this directly to the police. This duty is mandatory and failure to adhere to it can result in disciplinary repercussions. Additionally, it is crucial for the teacher to consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and involve local authority children's social care when appropriate.

Should any other member of staff discover signs of FGM on a pupil under 18, they must promptly inform the DSL and follow the established safeguarding procedures within the academy. It is important to note that the duty to report to the police does not apply in situations where a pupil is at risk of FGM, but the act has not been confirmed to have taken place. Staff members are strictly prohibited from conducting any physical examinations on pupils.

In cases where a staff member suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM or believes that FGM has been carried out, they are required to promptly inform the DSL and adhere to the academy safeguarding procedures. The welfare and protection of the pupils are of paramount importance and it is essential that staff remain vigilant and proactive in addressing any concerns related to FGM.

By upholding these stringent policies and procedures, we can collectively work towards preventing and safeguarding our pupils from the detrimental impacts of FGM, thereby fostering a safe and secure learning environment for all.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e., we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them. If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will then report this to the DSL who will then take appropriate action.

The DSL will:

- speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place.
- activate the local safeguarding procedures through the local authority.
- seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk.
- refer the pupil to additional support which may include, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, school counsellor or other appropriate agencies.

Appendix 3: Specific Safeguarding Issues

Child on Child sexual violence and sexual harassment

This section of the policy must be read in conjunction with KCSIE 2026 Part 5.

We recognise that peer-on-peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. All forms of child-on-child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously. All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and remain vigilant.

We recognise sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex including those of primary school age within school, outside of school and/or online.

The Trust and academy will create a protective ethos in which child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

Academies will provide training for staff on how to manage a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, including measures to keep the victim, alleged perpetrator and if necessary other children and staff members, safe.

All academies must follow the statutory guidance in KCSIE 2026 relating to how to respond to all signs, reports and concerns of child-on-child sexual abuse as outlined in Part 5:

What schools should be aware of:

- Sexual Violence
- Consent
- Sexual Harassment
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- Preventing Abuse
- Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Online Harassment
- Immediate Response
- Confidentiality and anonymity
- Risk Assessment
- Action following a report including welfare of the perpetrator/s
- Managing and Referrals
- Reporting to the Police
- Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious reports
- Ongoing Support and Consideration
- Sanctions
- Working with Parents/Carers
- Safeguarding other children
- Discriminatory behaviour including racism, faith-targeted abuse

Decisions will be made in close liaison with external agencies, including police and social care, when appropriate.

Academies will provide high-quality Relationships and Health Education (RHE) and the local curriculum will include information and materials that support children in keeping themselves safe from abuse, including abuse from their peers in and out of school and online.

Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Child on Child Abuse

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between children and young people of any age and gender, both inside and outside of academy, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it and how to respond to reports.

All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. All staff will speak to the DSL if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse. Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust have anti-bullying and behaviour policies to guide, inform and support children, young people, and staff, as well as parents and carers.

All staff will understand the importance of challenge inappropriate behaviour between peers and will not tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”.

All staff will challenge behaviours (which may potentially be criminal in nature), such as physical and sexual assaults, ie grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras, lifting skirts and “dropping” trousers or shorts.

Child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many different ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers – sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting and downblousing, and ‘kegging’.
- Initiation- and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can 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.

All staff will be clear as to the policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it. All staff are clear that this child protection and safeguarding policy must be followed in order to prevent any concerns from escalating. This is in addition to the behaviour policy.

Children and young people will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Children and young people will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported and kept safe. The initial response and timeliness of action from the moment a report is received from a child is crucial. The opportunity to intervene must not be missed. No child or young person should ever feel ashamed for making such a report.

All victims will be taken seriously, regardless of the nature of the report. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the academy will not be minimised or downplayed – it will be treated equally seriously. We will ensure that children and young people know that the law is in place to protect them rather than criminalise them and this will be explained in such a way that prevents alarming or distressing the child or young person.

Victims of child-on-child abuse will be supported by the pastoral systems in the academy with referrals to specialist agencies, if appropriate. Risk assessment and / or safety planning are an integral part of this support plan, particularly regarding post-incident management.

Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on child abuse

In line with our commitment to safeguarding the welfare of all pupils at our academies, we ensure that each academy has robust procedures in place for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse. The following outlines the protocol to be followed in such situations:

- If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil, it must be recorded, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed. It is vital not to conduct any investigations independently.
- The DSL will promptly contact the local authority children's social care team for guidance and involve the police if criminality is suspected.
- A comprehensive risk assessment and support plan will be implemented for all children involved, including victims, alleged perpetrators and any affected individuals. A designated support person will be assigned to them, ensuring they have someone to talk to if required. Special attention will be given to areas such as school transport, which may pose additional risks.
- If the incident constitutes a criminal offence and there are delays in the legal proceedings, close collaboration with the police and other relevant agencies will be maintained. The DSL will oversee the protection of children/young people and, if necessary, take disciplinary actions against the accused perpetrator.
- Where appropriate, the DSL will contact the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

It is imperative that our academies maintain detailed procedures for recording, investigating and supporting all individuals affected by such allegations. Furthermore, creating a safe and supportive environment within the academy community is important to prevent child-on-child abuse. To achieve this goal, the following measures will be implemented:

- Challenging any form of derogatory language, sexualised behaviour, or inappropriate conduct between peers.
- Remaining vigilant to gender-specific issues, such as sexualised behaviour towards female pupils or initiation violence among male pupils.
- Ensuring the academy curriculum educates pupils on appropriate behaviour and consent.
- Facilitating easy and confidential reporting procedures for victims of abuse.
- Providing continuous reassurance to victims about the seriousness with which their reports are treated.

Education and training for staff are paramount in identifying and responding to child-on-child abuse effectively. Staff members will be equipped with the necessary knowledge to:

- Recognise indicators of child-on-child abuse and respond to reports appropriately.
- Understand the possibility of underreporting and the various ways concerns may be raised.
- Recognise potential barriers that certain children may face in disclosing abuse.
- Be proactive in safeguarding all pupils and responding promptly to safeguarding concerns.
- Maintain open communication with the DSL regarding any safeguarding issues they encounter.

Disciplinary procedures for addressing alleged perpetrators will be handled by the DSL and other relevant Senior Leaders, ensuring that support is provided concurrently with any disciplinary actions. The academy will consider the circumstances of each case individually, taking into account factors like ongoing investigations and external findings.

By adhering to these stringent procedures and fostering a culture of vigilance and support, we are dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of every child in our academies.

Serious violence

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

- increased absence from school
- change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- significant decline in performance
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could indicate that the child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

According to research risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence may include:

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

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

Sharing of Nudes and Semi-Nudes

Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal. Sharing youth produced sexual imagery, which is commonly known as 'sharing of nudes and semi-nudes'' covers the incidents where:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a young person under the age of 18.
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 with another young person under the age of 18 or an adult.
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

When such an incident involving child produced sexual imagery comes to a member of staff's attention, this will be shared with the designated safeguarding lead with a view to referring to appropriate agencies following the referral procedures. Further information and advice on child produced sexual imagery is available in the non-statutory guidance produced by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) *'Sexting in schools and colleges'*.

- All staff will be trained in digital safeguarding and will have a role in educating and protecting children about online harms.
- All staff will be available and approachable for children to make disclosures which will then be referred to the DSL for further action.
- We will seek to prevent children from online harms through educating them about the laws and potential consequences of activity online.

Staff must not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save images.
- Ask a child to share or download images (if you have already viewed the images by accident, you must report this to the DSL).
- Delete the images or ask the child to delete it.
- Ask the child/children who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the image (this is the DSL's responsibility).
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child it involves or their parents and/or carers.

Review meetings following reported incidents

When a report of an incident involving the sharing of nudes or sexting comes to light, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will convene an initial review meeting with relevant academy staff members in collaboration with the Principal. This crucial meeting may involve the staff member who brought the incident to attention, as well as the safeguarding or leadership team responsible for handling safeguarding concerns. The primary objective of this meeting is to assess the initial evidence presented and determine the necessary course of action.

Procedures for dealing with incidents of sharing nudes/sexting incidents include:

- Assessing whether there is an immediate risk to any pupil(s) involved in the incident.
- Considering if a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care for further investigation.
- Evaluating the need, if any, to view the image(s) to safeguard the young person (in most cases, it is advised not to view the images or videos).
- Identifying the required additional information to make an informed decision on the appropriate response.
- Determining whether the image(s) has been disseminated widely and through which services or platforms, even if this information is not readily available.
- Deciding if immediate action is necessary to delete or remove images or videos from devices or online platforms.
- Taking into account any pertinent details about the pupils involved that may influence the risk assessment process.
- Assessing the necessity of contacting another educational institution, organisation, or individual regarding the incident.
- Deliberating on whether to inform the parents or carers of the pupils involved, a step that is generally considered essential in most cases.

The DSL will initiate an immediate referral to the police and/or children's social care if any of the following circumstances apply:

- Involvement of an adult in the incident, particularly if an adult is posing as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person.
- Suspicions of coercion, blackmail, grooming or concerns about the individual's capacity to consent, especially in cases where the person is vulnerable due to Special Educational Needs (SEN).
- Evidence suggesting that the content of the images or videos depicts sexual acts that are inappropriate for the young person's developmental stage or are violent in nature.
- Involvement of sexual acts in the images or videos where any pupil depicted is under the age of 13.
- Reason to believe that a pupil is at immediate risk of harm due to the sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, such as instances where the young person displays signs of self-harm or suicidal tendencies.

If none of the above criteria are applicable, the DSL, in consultation with the Principal and relevant staff members, may choose to address the incident without involving external authorities. The decision-making process in such cases will adhere to the established procedures outlined in the safeguarding and child protection policy.

Our academies will remain vigilant and proactive in safeguarding pupils from the potential risks associated with sharing nudes or engaging in sexting. By adhering to the outlined procedures and swiftly responding to incidents, our academies can create a safer environment conducive to the well-being and development of all pupils.

Upskirting

Under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, upskirting is a criminal offence punishable by up to two years in prison. Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender can be a victim.

Any concerns related to upskirting must be reported to the DSL in line with the reporting process outlined within this policy and where appropriate staff will also consult the behaviour policy.

Appendix 4: Preventing Violent Extremism – Roles and Responsibilities of the Prevent Lead)

Extremism and SPOC

Preventing Radicalisation

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.

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

1. negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
2. undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights or
3. intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).

The types of behaviour below are indicative of the kind of promotion or advancement which may be relevant to the definition and are an important guide to its application. The further context below is also an essential part of the definition.

4.1 If you have concerns about extremism where a child is likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, you must speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action. The DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include Channel, the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, **020 7340 7264**, which academy staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil.

You can also email **counter.extremism@education.gov.uk** . Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

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

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

4.2 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism as highlighted in "the Prevent duty".

4.3 Where staff are concerned that children are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalised, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and be recorded on academy safeguarding software.

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

- refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves
- becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution
- changes in friendship groups and appearance
- rejecting activities they used to enjoy
- converting to a new religion
- isolating themselves from family and friends
- talking as if from a scripted speech
- an unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- increased levels of anger
- increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions
- accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter
- possessing extremist literature
- being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations

The **Prevent Lead** for Lightwoods Primary Academy is John Ashton, who is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff at the academy are aware of who the prevent lead is and their role in relation to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.
- Maintaining and applying a good understanding of the relevant guidance in relation to preventing pupils/young people from becoming involved in terrorism and protecting them from radicalisation by those who support terrorism or forms of extremism which lead to terrorism.
- Raising awareness about the role and responsibilities of Lightwoods Primary Academy staff in relation to protecting pupils/young people from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism;
- Monitoring the effect in practice of the Academies RE curriculum and assembly themes to ensure that they are used to promote community cohesion and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
- Raising awareness within the Academy about the safeguarding processes relating to protecting pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.
- Acting as the first point of contact within the Academy for case discussions relating to pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation or involved in terrorism.

- Collating relevant information from in relation to referrals of susceptible pupils into the Channel* process.
- Attending Channel* meetings as necessary and carrying out any actions as agreed.
- Reporting progress on actions to the Channel* Co-ordinator.
- Sharing any relevant additional information in a timely manner.

***Channel**

Is a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It is led by the West Midlands Police Counter-Terrorism Unit and it aims to:

- Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify susceptible individuals;
- Safeguard individuals who might be susceptible to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist-related activity; and
- Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.

Appendix 5: Dealing with a disclosure of abuse

It is important that all our staff know how to deal with a disclosure of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation.

Remember – If a pupil chose to confide in you, it means they trust you and want you to help them. Dealing with a disclosure may be frightening, but you should also feel privileged that the child has chosen you to talk to.

If you see or hear something that concerns:

- Don't ignore it.
- Don't feel silly – if it worries you, someone else needs to know.
- If it is related to a child being at risk – see the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately and definitely before the child goes home that day.
- Upload all information to your safeguarding software and seek advice immediately from your DSL.
- If it is something related to safeguarding, but not a child whose safety is immediately at risk – inform the appropriate person via your safeguarding software.
- All staff may raise concerns directly with Children's Services. If they feel an incident is not being dealt with appropriately, or they are unable to locate relevant staff.
- Concerns about adults in the academy should be made directly to the Principal.

Dealing with disclosures of abuse:

1. Always listen carefully and quietly – do not press for any evidence at all.
2. Do not refute or try to belittle the allegation.
3. Show that you care through open and reassuring facial and body language.
4. Do not interrogate or ask leading questions (it could later undermine a case).
5. Ensure you take a written verbatim account of the child's disclosure using the appropriate academy Disclosure Form and record keeping system or, where appropriate, through CPOMS or alternative safeguarding software.

At this point, take the following steps:

- Explain to the pupil that the disclosure must be reported – emphasise your trust in them.
- Do not promise to keep the allegation secret or that 'everything will be alright'.
- Reassure by telling the pupil that they have done the right thing in telling you, do not offer physical reassurance.
- Do not admonish in any way e.g., 'I wish you had told me sooner'.
- Inform the DSL initially verbally. Under no circumstances, discuss the matter with any other person - if the allegations prove to be untrue, any such discussion would be deemed defamatory.

With the DSL, prepare a detailed report itemising: The information revealed by the pupil with absolutely no opinion:

- Actions taken by yourself, including when the suspicions were reported, to whom the suspicions were reported and follow-up action taken within the academy.
- Date and sign any written record of events and action taken and keep confidential and secure.
- You must keep, in absolute confidence, a copy of the report, as will the DSL

Record

Recording the incident in the best detail is extremely important for the investigation. You should take precise and comprehensive notes of the situation to assist in your report and relay these where necessary. Included in the notes should be the who, what, why, when and where of safeguarding. Details of who was involved are especially important, as well as dates and times. The recording of the events should take place as soon as possible.

Refer

After the previous steps, the report should be referred to the appropriate authorities to continue the investigation.
If you believe the safeguarding risk to be more urgent, such as a suspicion that somebody is under immediate or severe threat, you should contact the relevant authority immediately, whether this is the police, fire service or ambulance crew.

Recognise

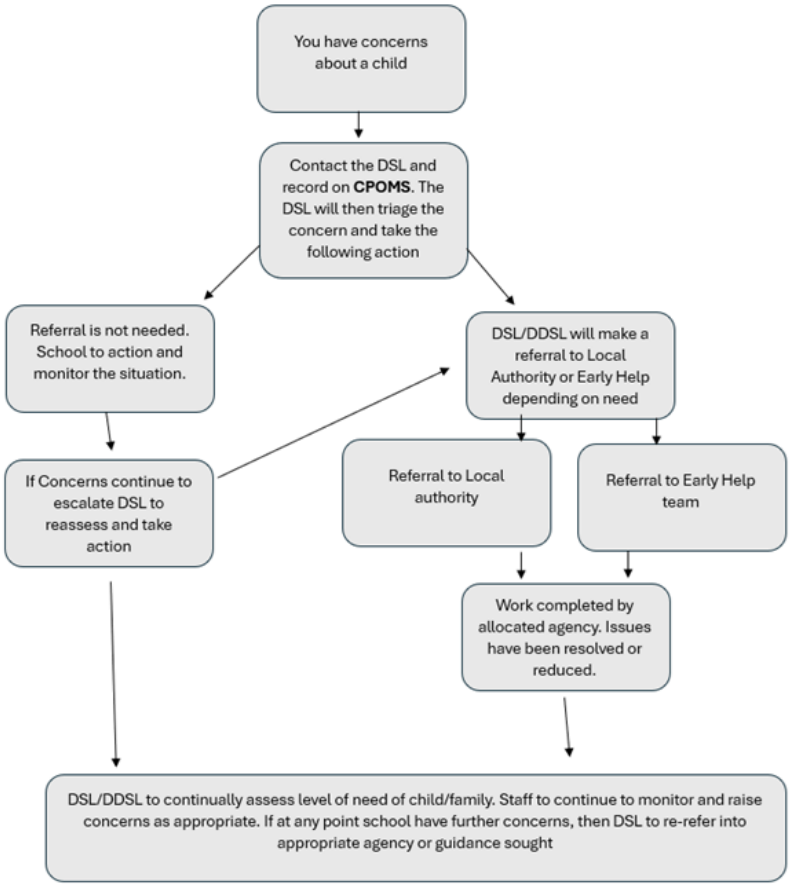
Communities surrounding children and vulnerable adults should have a clear and definite understanding of the signs of potential abuse, harm and neglect. Symptoms of abuse are not always visible, and suspicious injuries or behaviours should not be dismissed.
These surrounding individuals must adopt an understanding of suspicious and non-suspicious behaviour and injury when considering their safeguarding duty. Trusting your instinct and treating every concern as an issue is always best.

Respond

If a safeguarding issue has been detected, responding to it in an appropriate manner is extremely vital.
Some children and vulnerable adults who have fallen victim to abuse and neglect will most likely need to be handled with great care and caution. You should approach these individuals in a calm fashion and foresee that they may not be willing to talk about their situation. If they wish to discuss matters, ask open questions, which will encourage them to give just enough information to validate the claim. Once you have enough information to solidify it beyond suspicion, you should begin reporting

Report

Each organisation should have a designated person or team responsible for safeguarding issues. Another important factor in ensuring the safety and security of others is knowing who your closest safeguarding lead is. To this individual, you should report any concerns that may have arisen, and they will then take responsibility for dealing with the matter professionally



Appendix 6: Online safety and social media

Social Media is one of the most popular aspects of the internet, and with the number of apps available for download increasing constantly, keeping young people safe online has never been more important.

It is now strongly advised that through Internet Safety Training, young people develop digital resilience to help them stay safe online. Training young people in internet safety and resilience online is now more important than ever before. Discuss the importance of critical thinking online, speaking up if they ever see something that they find upsetting or worrying and online conduct regularly.

CEOP Education (thinkuknow.co.uk) have excellent resources available to train young people in digital resilience.

Below you will find a reminder of social media applications with age ratings to support children and their families.

Please see other useful websites in relation to online safety:

Information, Advice and Support to Keep Children Safe Online (internetmatters.org)

Homepage - UK Safer Internet Centre

What is Online Safety? | SWGfL

Get Safe Online | The UK's leading Online Safety Advice Resource

Childline | Childline

Appendix 7: Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and reception educational provision)

Smart Devices, Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Use

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Shireland Collegiate Academy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The increasing presence of electronic devices capable of capturing images, recording videos and facilitating communication necessitates a thorough approach to safeguarding within our educational settings. This includes, but is not limited to, cameras, mobile telephones, tablets and recording devices such as smartwatches. As technology evolves, an increasing number of devices possess the capability to connect individuals to external networks, including the internet and social media platforms. We remain vigilant and responsive to these advancements. Consequently, our policy will be adapted to encompass all devices that are considered necessary for the protection of our children. By maintaining this proactive stance, we aim to foster a safe and secure environment conducive to learning and development, ensuring that the welfare of our pupils/children remains our utmost priority.

Mobile phones and other devices that accept calls, messages and video calling

In our EYFS settings at Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust, we prioritise the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We firmly believe that our staff must be entirely attentive during their working hours to ensure that every child in our setting receives high-quality care and education. To maintain a focus on child safety and well-being, we strictly prohibit staff from using personal mobile phones, smartwatches and/or Fitbits during working hours, except within designated staff-only areas.

Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust provides mobile phones for professional use during specific circumstances, such as Educational Visits, to facilitate communication. This guidance is designed to work in tandem with our online safety policy and our safeguarding and child protection policy, thereby ensuring that children remain safe while using EYFS devices online. By adhering to these guidelines, we underscore our commitment to creating a safe and nurturing educational environment for all children.

All staff working with EYFS children must adhere to the following:

- Mobile phones are locked away during working hours.
- Smartwatches/fitbits are either turned off or on do not disturb and not accessed during your working hours.
- Mobile phones/smartwatches/fitbits can only be used on a designated break and then this must be away from the children.
- The use of EYFS devices, such as tablets, must only be used for work-based purposes.
- The EYFS devices will not have any social media or messaging apps on them, other than the one recognised by Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust.
- Any apps downloaded onto Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust devices can only be accessed and authorised by the IT Trust team. This will ensure only age appropriate and safe apps will be accessible to staff or children using them.
- Passwords/passcodes for EYFS devices will not be shared or written down.
- During educational visits, staff will use mobile phones belonging to Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust wherever possible.

- Photographs must not be taken of the children on any personal phones or any other personal information storage device. Only Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust owned devices will be used to take photographs or film videos.
- Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust class devices will not be taken home with staff and will remain secure at the setting when not in use. If a device is needed to be taken home due to unforeseen circumstances, then the person taking this device home must ensure it is securely stored and not accessed by another other individual and returned to Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust as soon as practically possible. (All devices have multi factor authentication as an additional security feature).

Parents', families and visitors' use of mobile phones and smartwatches

We recognise that there may be emergency situations which necessitate the use of a mobile telephone. However, in order to ensure the safety and welfare of the pupils/ children entrusted to our care, we kindly ask that parents, families and visitors refrain from using their mobile telephones whilst on academy and nursery premises, as well as during the collection and drop-off of children.

Should you be found using your phone inside the academy or nursery, we will respectfully request that you conclude your call or relocate outside to do so. This policy is implemented to safeguard all pupils/children and to maximise the quality of interactions during crucial handover times, enabling us to effectively share important information regarding your child's welfare and development.

We kindly request that visitors switch off their devices when invited into the main school/nursery building, thereby ensuring that mobile phones are not utilised within our educational environments. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding in adhering to this policy, as it aids us in providing a safe, engaging and distraction-free atmosphere that benefits all pupils/children in our care.

Photographs and videos

At Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust, we recognise the important role that photographs and video recordings play in the educational experience of children within the Early Years Foundation Stage. We are committed to ensuring that any images or recordings taken are conducted with the utmost respect for privacy and dignity. Consent is obtained from each child's parent or family prior to any recording and we regularly review this consent to maintain its relevance.

We request individual permissions for a variety of purposes, including documentation in a child's learning journey, display purposes, promotional materials—such as our website and brochures—and for security on our social media platforms. It is important for parents and families to understand that images featuring their child alongside others, where they are not the primary focus, may be utilised in the learning journeys of their peers.

We strictly prohibit staff from using personal devices to capture images or recordings of children and mandate that only Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust-provided equipment is used for such purposes. Additionally, recorded footage will be promptly transferred to secure storage, ensuring no images remain on mobile devices. Parents and families are likewise prohibited from using cameras or recording devices on Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust premises without prior approval from the Academy or Nursery.

Learning Journeys

At Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust, we are committed to enhancing the educational experience of our pupils/children through the use of technology. We utilise tablets in the classrooms to capture photographs and videos of the children, which we then record directly onto their electronic learning journeys via software. It is our priority to ensure that these devices are employed solely for educational purposes. Therefore, we do not install any applications, such as social media or messaging sites, onto these devices. This approach upholds our commitment to safeguarding while providing a rich and tailored learning environment for every child.

All staff members at our academy/nursery are thoroughly informed of the safeguarding procedures that govern their professional responsibilities. Every individual understands their duty to report and refer any instances where it is believed that staff have not adhered to the established processes in alignment with safeguarding protocols. This extends to the use of all technology devices, ensuring that all interactions and communications are conducted in a manner that upholds the safety and wellbeing of all children in our care.