



SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Associated Policies:	NPAT Safer Recruitment Policy NPAT Whistleblowing Policy NPAT Code of Conduct (Staff) NPAT Acceptable Use of IT Policy NPAT Complaints Policy NPAT Health and Safety Policy NPAT Equality & Diversity Policy NPAT Visitors Policy NPAT Allegations against Staff and Volunteers Procedure
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1. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees. It will be implemented through the schools' induction and training programmes and in day-to-day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and through staff performance measures.

2. AIM OF THE POLICY

Nothing is more important than keeping all of our children safe, especially the most vulnerable. The aim of this policy is to ensure that all Northampton Primary Academy Trust (NPAT, or the Trust) children and young people are safe and feel safe, that children, parents/carers and staff are able to talk about any safeguarding concerns and feel assured that they will be listened to, and that all staff and volunteers are aware of and implement safeguarding procedures and guidance, including what to do if they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing or be at risk of harm.

To consistently safeguard and promote our pupils' welfare, safety, mental and/or physical health, and development, we aim to foster an honest, open, caring, and supportive climate at all times.

NPAT schools recognise our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We will endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We will be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We recognise that our schools are part of a wider safeguarding system, and we work closely with our partner local authority Safeguarding Children Partnerships and other agencies to promote the welfare of children. We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and consider what is in each child's best interests at all times.

We understand that children can be abused by adults or by other children. We are committed to creating a culture of safety that minimises the opportunity for any form of abuse (including all forms of child-on-child abuse) through training, education and robust response procedures.¹

¹ For full details about how we work to prevent and respond to child-on-child abuse, please see Appendix 1.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure that appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- Promote safeguarding and child protection and to provide information about how we work to keep children safe
- Ensure that all staff are aware of and clearly understand their statutory safeguarding responsibilities
- Provide all members of staff with the information required to meet their safeguarding duty and protect children from harm
- Provide stakeholders with clear information relating to the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures, and to
- Ensure that we are protecting children from maltreatment or harm.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, Governors, Volunteers and Trustees working in or on behalf of **Northampton Primary Academy Trust** schools. All references in this document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

4. DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 as:

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

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'safeguarding' refers to everything that a school does to keep children safe and promote their welfare, including (but not limited to):

- Supporting pupils' health, safety and well-being, including their mental health

- Providing early help support to improve outcomes for children and families at the earliest possible opportunity
- Meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- The use of reasonable force
- Meeting the needs of children with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Educational visits
- Intimate care and emotional wellbeing
- Online safety and associated issues, including IT filtering and monitoring procedures
- Appropriate arrangements to ensure school security, taking into account the local context
- Keeping children safe from risks, harm and exploitation
- Child protection.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. [Appendix 2]

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. [Appendix 2]

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

Children/Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

Child-on-child abuse refers to the abuse of a child or children perpetrated by another child or children. [Appendix 1] Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

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

- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery).
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of indecent images includes those that have been “digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including what are sometimes described as ‘deepfakes’.
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm, and
- Initiation/hazing-type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).²

Prevention of Radicalisation and Extremism refers to safeguarding children and families who may be vulnerable to being radicalised into holding extreme views, including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence or steer them into ideologies that could cause harm to others. [Appendix 3]

Within this policy:

- **‘Parent’** refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role, for example adoptive parents, step parents, kinship carers and foster carers.
- **‘Staff’** or **‘members of staff’** refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, Governors, Volunteers and Trustees working in or on behalf of Northampton Primary Academy Trust.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) may be abbreviated to ‘KCSIE’.

² Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)

- **‘Victim’** is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels comfortable with.
- **‘Alleged perpetrator(s)’** and **‘perpetrator(s)’** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what’s appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

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.

5. LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

The Trust adheres to all relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and guidance from the relevant local authority Safeguarding Children Partnership.

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory guidance;

Statutory Guidance

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2026\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2026\)](#)
- [Academy Trust Governance Guide](#)

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

Legislation

- [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 regard 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
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Schedule 4), which defines what ‘regulated activity’ is in relation to children
- Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty, which explains schools’ duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- The Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they support 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
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 Part 3, which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school
- 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](#).

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

Guidance from the local Safeguarding Children Partnerships is available on local authority websites.

The Trust also has regard to relevant non-statutory guidance relating to safeguarding, including:

- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2015)
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (2022)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (2022)
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges (DFE).

This policy links with other Trust and **school** policies and procedures, including:

- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Privacy Notices
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Sex and Relationship Education Policy
- Curriculum Policy.

6. EQUALITY STATEMENT

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

We give special consideration to children who:

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

7. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) does not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Lawful and secure information sharing between schools, children's social care, and other local agencies is essential for keeping children safe and ensuring they get the support they need.

The school adheres to the Data Protection Act (2018) and the General Data Protection Regulation (2018). **Please see the NPAT GDPR Policy and Privacy Notices for more information.**

7.1 Sharing information with parents

All NPAT schools will ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available publicly via their school website.

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will normally do this in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure. Other staff will only talk to parents about such concerns after consulting the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so. In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents of all the children involved.

7.2 Consent

The Data Protection Act 2018 introduced 'safeguarding' as a reason to be able to process sensitive, personal information, even without consent (DPA, Part 2, 18; Schedule 8, 4). All relevant information can be shared without consent if gaining consent would place a child at risk. Fears about sharing information **must not be allowed** to stand in the way of promoting the welfare and protecting the safety of children. All professionals responsible for children should not assume that someone else will pass on information that they think may be critical to keeping a child safe.

As with all data sharing, appropriate organisational and technical safeguards are in place and will be adhered to when processing safeguarding and child protection information.

When considering whether to share safeguarding information (especially with other agencies), NPAT schools will record who they are sharing it with and why. If a decision is taken not to seek consent from the data subject and/or parent, this should also be recorded in the safeguarding file.

All staff in NPAT schools will be made aware of their duties under the General Data Protection Regulations and safeguarding, particularly regarding confidentiality. This includes the following:

- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation, as this may not be in the child's best interests.
- Staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.
- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.

- Information must only be shared on a ‘need-to-know’ basis, but consent is not required to share information if a child is suffering, or at risk of, serious harm.³

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

8.1 Board of Trustees and Local Governing Bodies (LGB)

Local governing bodies have a strategic leadership responsibility for their school’s safeguarding arrangements. The governing body will appoint a senior governor as Governor Safeguarding Lead to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing body. This is always a different person from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The NPAT Board of Trustees will appoint a senior board-level (or equivalent) Trustee Safeguarding Lead to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the Board of Trustees.

Trustees and governors will ensure mechanisms are in place to help staff understand and fulfil their statutory safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Governors will ensure the school works with local safeguarding partners and contributes to multi-agency working, adhering to Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026). All governors will read Part 1 of KCSIE (2026) and a record will be kept of this.

Part 2 of KCSIE (2026) sets out the responsibilities of governing bodies. NPAT school governors and Trustees will adhere to this guidance at all times. As part of these responsibilities, the governors will:

- Ensure that they comply with their duties under statutory guidance and legislation, including their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and the school’s local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Work to facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, by ensuring that safeguarding and child protection underpin all relevant aspects of policy and process

³ See Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026) for more information.

- Ensure that policies, procedures and training at their school are effective and comply with the law at all times and that they allow concerns to be responded to in a timely manner
- Ensure that safeguarding training for staff, including online safety training, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning
- Ensure that the school takes into account local criteria for action and protocol for assessment, and supplies information as requested by the three safeguarding partners
- Ensure that the school has an effective safeguarding and child protection policy, which is published on the school website and/or available by other means and that this is reviewed annually
- Ensure that the school has systems in place to allow children to raise concerns, which are well-promoted, well-understood and easily accessible
- Ensure that the school takes safeguarding concerns seriously and takes the wishes and feelings of children into account
- Ensure that there are systems in place for young people to express their views and give feedback on safeguarding practice safely
- Ensure that the school has a suitable individual Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy for pupils, and that all are familiar with the NPAT Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers
- Ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, will include an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) on induction and regularly thereafter
- Consider a whole-school approach to online safety, including the use of mobile technology in school
- Ensure that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying when children may be experiencing mental health problems
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety. See Section 10.6 of this policy and the NPAT Online Safety Policy for further information
- Ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to respond to children missing from education and those who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods
- Appoint an appropriate member of staff from the senior leadership team to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and ensure that the DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
- Ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to keep children safe online

- Review at least annually the provision and effectiveness of school filters and monitoring systems. The leadership team, DSL and relevant staff should be:
 - aware of and understand the systems in place
 - manage them effectively
 - know how to escalate concerns when identified
- Ensure that there are appropriate procedures in place to manage both allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) and concerns that do not meet the threshold (low-level concerns), and
- Respond to allegations of abuse against the Headteacher. The Chair of Governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the Headteacher, where appropriate. See Section 17 and Appendix 5 for more information.
- The Governing Bodies of our schools will support the ethos and values of our schools and will support the schools in tackling extremism and radicalisation.

8.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy. The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that the school uses the annually reviewed NPAT Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Ensure that this policy and associated procedures are adhered to by all staff and take action as necessary if not
- Ensure that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of the school's systems that support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
- Ensure that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and Prevent training.
- Communicate this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensure that all staff are made aware of the named Governor Safeguarding Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Ensure that the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead is explicit in the role-holder's job description, that they have appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Decide whether to have one or more Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs), and ensure they are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Ensure the DSL (or a designated deputy) is always available during school hours in term time, ordinarily in person.

- Organise appropriate cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead for any out of hours/out of term activities, including explicit cover arrangements if the Lead DSL is unavailable due to unexpected leave or absence.
- Ensure that, in the event of the children or close family members of the DSL attending the same school, appropriate alternative DSL arrangements are made
- Appoint a Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously-Looked-After Children to promote the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously-looked-after children
- Appoint a lead for online safety (usually the DSL)
- Ensure that all recruitment follows the safer recruitment guidance (see Part 3 of KCSIE) and the NPAT Safer Recruitment Policy, and that a single, central record (SCR) is maintained with evidence of statutory security checks having been conducted, plus other required details of all members of staff, volunteers and third-party contractors who are in contact with children
- Respond to allegations of abuse against all other members of staff and act as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate, in line with the NPAT Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers Policy
- Make decisions regarding all low-level concerns – (see Section 17 and the NPAT Staff Code of Conduct for further information)
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required
- Ensure that the school works with social care, the police, health services and other services to: promote the welfare of children, provide a co-ordinated offer of early help when need is identified, contribute to inter-agency plans for children subject to children protection plans, and to protect children from harm
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teachers' Standards, 2012)
- Ensure that children's social care (from the host local authority or placing authority) has access to the school to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct a Section 47 or Section 17 Assessment, as per Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
- Ensure the relevant staffing ratios are met, and that each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person
- Ensure all governors have read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
- Ensure all staff who work directly with children have read and understood Part 1 and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
- Oversee the safe use of technology, mobile phones and cameras in the setting

- Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, ensure that the other body has appropriate policies and procedures in place to safeguard and protect children.

8.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The full responsibilities of the DSL are set out in Annex C, KCSIE (2026).

The DSL is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and a qualified teacher. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place).

When the DSL is absent, the Deputy/Deputies Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) will act as cover. If the DSL and Deputy/Deputies are not available, the Headteacher will act as cover (for example, during out-of-hours/out-of-term activities).

Any Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will be trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained Deputies, ultimate **lead responsibility** for child protection, as set out above, remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead; this **lead responsibility** should not be delegated.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Act as a source of support and expertise on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection to ensure that other members of staff can carry out their safeguarding duty
- Advise on the response to safeguarding concerns
- Liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Identify if a child may benefit from early help
- 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
- Make referrals to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and/or support staff who make a referral to Channel
- Support the school with regard to their responsibilities under the Prevent duty and provide advice and support on protecting children from radicalisation
- Refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed

- Be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. In the event that they are not available, a deputy will be made available
- Undertake training to equip themselves with the skills to carry out the role, and update this every two years
- Update their knowledge and skills regularly and keep up with any developments relevant to their role
- Ensure all staff who do not work directly with children have read either Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Provide staff in the school with the knowledge, skills and support required to safeguard children
- Ensure **ALL** staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and regular updates, which should include an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring
- Take responsibility for the accurate and timely recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns, and take overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection files and records
- Take responsibility for the transfer of safeguarding files when a child leaves the school
- Attend or ensure an appropriate representative attends multi-agency safeguarding or child protection meetings
- Work closely with other relevant education professionals (e.g. SENCo, Virtual School Head) to ensure children with additional vulnerabilities are safeguarded
- Help to promote educational outcomes of children who have experienced or are experiencing safeguarding or child protection issues by sharing relevant information with teachers and the school leadership team. The DSL(s) will take lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement. This will include understanding their academic progress and attainment and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort and supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential
- We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. The DSL will use the information they hold about children with a social worker to make decisions in the best interests of the child's safety and welfare, and to help promote educational outcomes. The DSL will ensure that staff know who these

children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children

- Promote a 'culture of safeguarding', in which every member of the school community acts in the best interests of the child
- Ensure that staff are aware of the unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures
- Regularly meet with the Governor Safeguarding Lead and/or Chair of Governors to review safeguarding at the school, and liaise with the Headteacher regarding safeguarding cases and issues
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour, and how to support children in the event that this issue arises
- Know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search.

8.4 All staff

Staff play a particularly important role because they are in a position to identify concerns in order to provide help for children. All staff:

- Have a responsibility to provide a safe environment, where children can learn
- Will be trained so that they know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- Will be able to identify indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Will be made aware of systems in the school that support safeguarding and child protection
- Will be made aware of safeguarding issues that put children at risk of harm and behaviours associated with these risks
- Should ensure that they know what to do if a child makes a disclosure of abuse and never promise confidentiality when a child makes a disclosure
- Will be made aware of and should be clear on the school's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
- Will be made aware of the early help process and understand their role in it

- Should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help and will discuss early help requirements with the safeguarding lead in the first instance
- May be required to support social workers and other agencies following a referral
- Will be made aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care (through the MASH), understand statutory assessments and the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments
- Should be prepared to make referrals to the MASH if they have concerns about a child's welfare, and understand the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments
- Will receive regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training to cover all of the above, as well as online safety, including IT filtering and monitoring procedures and how to report related safeguarding or technical concerns
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Will receive safeguarding updates throughout the year as part of continuous professional development
- Will be encouraged to contribute to the development of safeguarding policy and practice
- Should always seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are unsure
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBT to speak out and share their concerns.
- Where there are concerns about extremism or radicalisation, pupils and staff will be encouraged to make use of our internal systems to whistleblow or raise any issue in confidence. (Please refer to the separate NPAT Whistleblowing Policy for details.)

All teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teachers' Standards, 2012).

All staff will be made aware of our systems and documents that support safeguarding, including this policy, the NPAT Code of Conduct, the role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and any Deputies, the Behaviour Policy, the Online Safety Policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from

education and children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods.

All staff who work directly with children will be provided with a copy of, and must read, Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) annually and will receive annually updated training on their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Staff who do not work directly with children will be provided with a copy of Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) and must read it.

All staff must read this policy at the beginning of each academic year and record in the Every system that they have reviewed the guidance.

Although extensive mechanisms are in place to support staff understanding of safeguarding and child protection, staff are expected to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay if they are unclear about any aspect of school safeguarding policy or practice so that additional training can be put in place.

9. RECOGNISING ABUSE: TRAINING

The school/Trust is committed to continuous professional development, and all staff undergo rigorous, ongoing safeguarding training. We strive to ensure staff fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities, that training promotes a culture of safeguarding and that it equips staff with the skills to identify any signs of abuse, neglect or harm.

9.1 All staff

- All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction (including online safety and whistle-blowing procedures) to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems, their responsibilities and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. This training will be updated regularly and will align with advice from the three safeguarding partners.
- All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.
- Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.
- Contractors who are provided through a private finance initiative (PFI) or similar contract will also receive safeguarding training.
- Volunteers will receive appropriate training, as applicable.

Teachers will receive training to manage behaviour effectively, ensure a safe educational environment, and understand the needs of all pupils.

9.2 The DSL and Deputy DSLs

- The DSL and Deputy DSLs will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.
- In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).
- They will also undertake Prevent awareness training and online safety training.

9.3 Governors

- All governors receive safeguarding training (including online safety) at induction which is regularly updated, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities including providing strategic challenge and ensuring there is a whole school approach to safeguarding.
- The Chair of Governors may be required to act as the ‘case manager’ in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the Headteacher, they should receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

9.4 Recruitment – interview panels

At least one person conducting any interview for a post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, at a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education’s statutory guidance, KCSIE (2026), and will align with local safeguarding procedures.

9.5 Supervision

All staff who have regular and sustained contact with parents and/or wider families will be offered supervision, which will provide support, coaching, and training; promote the interests of children; and allow confidential discussions of sensitive issues.

9.6 Specific safeguarding issues

Staff will also receive specific training on the following issues, and action will be taken if the school suspects that a child is at risk of or is the victim of:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse

- child sexual exploitation
- emotional abuse
- neglect
- child criminal exploitation (including involvement in county lines)
- domestic abuse
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith-based abuse
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- gangs or youth violence
- gender-based violence
- hate
- online safety
- child on child abuse
- radicalisation
- relationship abuse
- serious violence
- sexual violence or sexual harassment (including child on child abuse)
- sexting or sharing of youth-produced sexual imagery
- so-called 'honour-based' abuse
- trafficking and modern slavery.

All staff will be made aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside these environments (including online). All staff are expected to consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harm).

Staff will also be made aware of the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities of:

- children in the court system
- children missing education
- children with family members in prison
- children who are homeless
- children who have or have had a social worker
- children who are young carers
- children looked after or previously looked after (including those living in kinship care arrangements)
- children with mental health problems.

All Staff training records will be recorded and maintained on the 'Every' system.

10. RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING TO ABUSE: HOW TO TAKE ACTION

If a member of staff, parent or member of the public is concerned about a pupil's welfare, they should report it to the DSL as soon as possible. On occasions when the DSL is not available, it should be reported to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) without delay. If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL (or Deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local children's social care.

Although any member of staff can make a referral to children's social care, where possible there should be a conversation with the DSL. All staff must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

All staff will be alert to indicators of abuse (including child-on-child abuse) and will report any of the following to the DSL immediately:

- Any concern or suspicion that a child has sustained an injury outside what is reasonably attributable to normal play
- Any concerning behaviours exhibited by children that may indicate that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, including unusual changes in mood or behaviour, concerning use of language and/or concerning drawings or stories
- Any significant changes in attendance or punctuality
- Any significant changes in a child's presentation
- Any indicators that a child may be experiencing child-on-child abuse
- Any concerns relating to people who may pose a risk of harm to a child, and/or
- Any disclosures of abuse that children have made.

More information about our approach to child-on-child abuse (including sexual violence and sexual harassment) can be found in Appendix 1.

The following procedures are in line with statutory guidance (see Section 4), including the relevant local authority's Safeguarding Children Partnership's Threshold Guidance. Referral procedures can be found in Section 9.5.

10.1 If a child discloses that they are suffering or at risk of suffering abuse

If a child discloses that they have been abused in some way, the member of staff/volunteer will:

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said

- Allow the child to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but do not make promises that it might not be possible to keep
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child
- Reassure them that what has happened is not their fault
- Stress that telling someone was the right thing to do
- Listen, only asking questions when necessary to clarify
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- Enter the details onto MyConcern (see Section 14 on Record Keeping), and
- Pass the information to the school's DSL without delay. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral directly to children's social care and/or the police (see Section 9.2), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so.

All staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Bear in mind that some children may:

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

None of this should stop staff members from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if there are concerns about a child.

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

If you think that a child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, you must report this to the DSL immediately. On occasions when the DSL is not available, it should be reported to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or a senior member of staff without delay.

Where possible, there should be a conversation with the DSL, but a referral must be made if a child may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm. **Anyone can make a referral to children's social care.** If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral to children's social care or to the police, they should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

10.3 If there are concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Figure 1 (on Page 26 of this policy) illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare. Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action (see Section 9.2).

The DSL will decide the most appropriate course of action and whether to refer the concerns to children's social care, using the relevant local authority's threshold guidance. If it is decided to make a referral to children's social care, the parent will be informed, unless doing so would place the child at further risk or undermine the collection of evidence. See Section 6.1 for more details.

All concerns, discussions and decisions will be recorded in writing.

The DSL will provide guidance on the appropriate action. Options will include:

- Managing any support for the child internally via the school's own pastoral support processes
- Seeking advice from the local early help co-ordinator/s
- An Early Help Assessment, or
- A referral for statutory services where the child is or might be in need or suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

10.4 Early help

- Early Help is a preventative approach providing support for families as challenges first emerge to stop them from escalating.
- Family Help is an evolving national strategy that groups traditional Early Help with formal "Child in Need" statutory support under one connected framework. Further information can be found in the DfE guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. If early help is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review, with consideration given to referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

All staff will be made aware of the early help process and understand their role in identifying emerging problems, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment of a child's needs. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues from escalating. This also includes staff monitoring the situation and feeding back to the DSL any ongoing/escalating concerns so that consideration can be given to a referral to children's social care if the child's situation does not appear to be improving.

We recognise that any child can be the victim of abuse and may benefit from early help. However, we will be particularly vigilant to potential need for early help if a child:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school or is in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Is a privately fostered child.

10.5 Referrals

If it is appropriate to refer the case to local authority children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or another person will do so. If a person makes a referral directly (see Appendix 6), they must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

Children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home, so the school will provide as much information as

possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm.

The local authority will decide within 1 working day of a referral what course of action to take and will let the person who made the referral know the outcome. The DSL or person who made the referral must follow up with the local authority if this information is not made available, and ensure outcomes are properly recorded.

If the child's situation does not seem to be improving after the referral, the DSL or person who made the referral must follow local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and that the child's situation improves.⁴

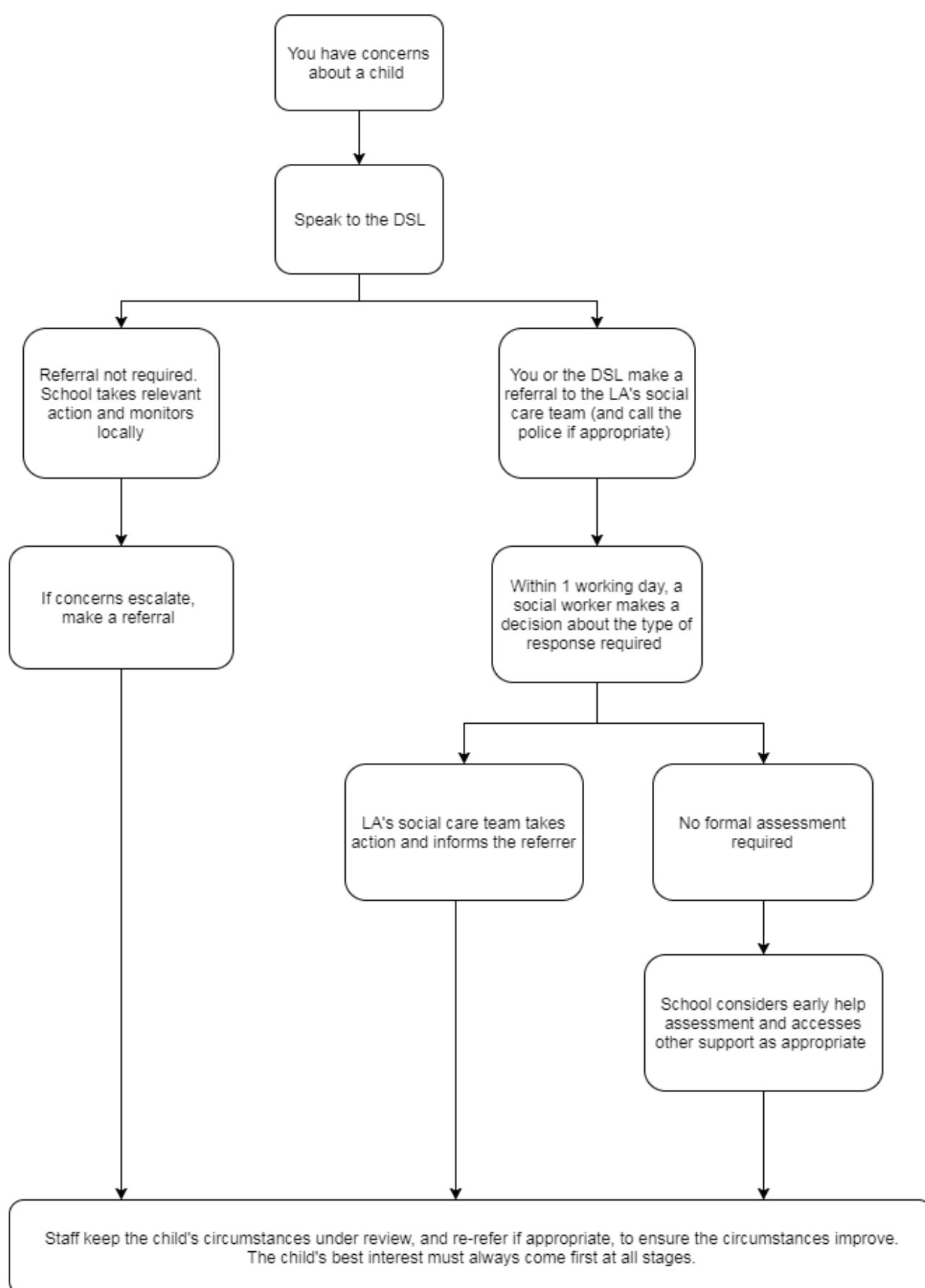
The DSL should refer all cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), police (where a crime may have been committed), and the Channel programme (where there is a radicalisation concern). Safeguarding referrals must be made in one of the following ways:

- By telephone contact to the local authority Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- By using the local authority online referral form
- In an emergency outside office hours, contact children's social care out-of-hours team or the police⁵
- If a child is in immediate danger at any time, left alone or missing, you should contact the police directly and/or an ambulance using 999.

⁴ The NSCP Case and Conflict Resolution Protocol can be found here: <https://northamptonshirescp.org.uk/working-with-children-professionals/resolving-conflicts>

⁵ The Designated Safeguarding Lead may make use of the NPCC guidance '[When to call the police](#)'.

10.6 Figure 1: Reporting and responding to concerns flowchart



11. SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

For more information relating to specific safeguarding issues, please see Appendix 2.
For more information about child-on-child abuse, please see Appendix 1.

11.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Any teacher who discovers (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. Unless they have good reason not to, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate. Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

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

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

11.2 Radicalisation and extremism

All schools are subject to a duty under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 in the exercise of their functions to have "due regard" to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. In the event that concerns are raised relating to radicalisation and extremism, the DSL should be informed immediately.

We adhere to the Prevent Duty statutory guidance (2023).

We promote tolerance and cohesion through our inclusive approaches through our targeted PHSE curriculum, promoting British Values and community development work. [Appendix 3]

11.3 Children potentially at greater risk of harm

The school recognises that some children need a social worker due to abuse, neglect, exploitation or family circumstances and that abuse and trauma can leave children vulnerable to further harm, as well as educational disadvantage.

The DSL will hold information relating to social workers working with children at the school. This information will inform decisions about safeguarding and promoting welfare (including the provision of pastoral and/or academic support).

We will also take action to promote the educational outcomes of and to protect:

- Children missing education
- Children who are absent from education (KCSIE 2026, Page 152)
- Children missing from home or care.

Other family issues can also have a detrimental impact on children. We work with other agencies in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) to support children and families in the following circumstances:

- Children facing court procedures and/or children in the court system
- Children with family members in prison
- Children who are homeless
- Children who need a social worker.

11.4 Mental health

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse, neglect and exploitation, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these experiences can affect children's mental health, behaviour and education.

Warning signs that all staff should know to look for include (KCSIE 2026, para 46):

- Significant changes in behaviour.
- Persistent difficulty sleeping.
- Withdrawing from social situations.
- Loss of interest in activities a pupil usually enjoys.
- Physical signs of self-harm or self-neglect.

If staff have a concern about a child's mental health, we will respond to the concern, inform and discuss the concerns with parents/carers and seek ways to support the child in and out of school.

If a person has a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they need to take immediate action by following the steps in Section 9.

If a person has a mental health concern that is not also a safeguarding concern, they should speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health concern. However, the school will provide information and signposting services to children and parents and assist with the teaching of emotional health and wellbeing in our curriculum.

All schools have access to a trained Mental Health First Aider who can provide such information.

Refer to the Department for Education guidance on [Mental health and behaviour in schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2)⁶ for more information.

11.5 Child-on-child abuse

NPAT takes all reports and concerns about child-on-child abuse, including child-on-child sexual violence and harassment, very seriously. This includes reports or concerns about events that have occurred outside school premises or online.

In order to ensure that our policy on child-on-child abuse is well-promoted, easily understood and accessible, we have included information about our approach to minimising and responding to child-on-child abuse as an appendix. Full details of how NPAT schools prevent, respond to and support victims of child-on-child abuse can be found at Appendix 1.

11.6 Online safety, including filtering and monitoring

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

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as ‘mobile phones’)

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate.
- Review all monitoring and filtering systems at least annually to ensure systems are robust.

The NPAT Online Safety Policy is a separate policy, and more information can be found there.

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

- Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
- Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

We ensure that we have effective mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate. Online safety is included in our curriculum at all levels and information is also provided to parents/carers.

NPAT has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, these processes will be reviewed at least annually to ensure their effectiveness. The Senior Leadership Team, the Central Team and other relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

NPAT will consider the age range of children accessing the IT system alongside those who are potentially at greater risk of harm when making decisions about safeguarding risks versus proportionality of cost.

NPAT will consider the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty when deciding on the appropriate filtering and monitoring systems.

NPAT will carry out appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and networks, this will include devices issued to staff. Please refer to the NPAT Online Safety Policy for more information.

All staff are made aware of the policy on online safety, which sets our expectations relating to:

- Creating a safer online environment – including training requirements, filters and monitoring
- What staff should be alert to, what to report and how staff should report any concerns, including those related to the efficacy of filtering and monitoring systems
- Giving everyone the skills, knowledge and understanding to help children and young people stay safe online
- Promoting safe and responsible use of and behaviour in online spaces.
- Safe use of mobile phones, both within school and on school trips/outings
- Safe use of camera equipment, including camera phones, and
- What steps to take if you have concerns and where to go for further help.

Staff must read the Online Safety Policy in conjunction with the Code of Conduct in relation to personal online behaviour.

Any concerns related to children's safety online (either safeguarding or technical) should be reported to the DSL immediately.

11.7 Children who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or gender questioning

We recognise the fact that a child being gay, lesbian, bisexual or gender questioning is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, we understand that these children can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or gender questioning (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

We will:

- Create a culture where these children are able to speak out and share their concerns
- Support and safeguard children in line with guidance and legislation
- Train staff so that they understand that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBT) can be targeted by other children.

11.8 Elective home education

We understand that some parents choose to educate their children at home, are legally able to do so and that this in itself is not a safeguarding issue. We encourage parents who are considering removing a pupil from roll for home education to meet with us prior to making a final decision to discuss this with us. This is particularly important where a child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or has a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable.

From September 2016 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended so that schools must inform their local authority of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll. As such, we will notify the relevant local authority, and social worker where relevant, when a child is removed from roll to be educated at home.

11.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (sexting)

Where staff are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images (deepfakes) that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (also known as ‘sexting’ or ‘youth-produced sexual imagery’), they must report it to the DSL immediately.

Staff must **not**:

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

Staff should explain that they have a requirement to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

11.10 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

Northampton Primary Academy Trust recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Schools will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy, anti-bullying or behaviour policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school.

11.11 Use of photographs and information on social media

Images are often used to capture and celebrate special moments of a child's time in school, whether that is an achievement, trip or performance. While sharing photographs is a recognised form of celebration, schools have a duty to identify any risks associated with sharing images and ensure they are managed effectively.

Schools will ensure consent and storage of images is in accordance with the ICO guidance 'Data Protection: Taking and using photos and videos and using CCTV in schools' (2026).

Information and photographs of events or school trips will only be posted on social media after the event so that no live information is shared publicly. (Please refer to the NPAT EVC Policy for further details on trip risk assessments.)

Staff should risk assess the use of photographs that show close-up images of children's faces or head-to-toe shots of children, as these may be vulnerable to being used as part of AI-generated images. Schools may choose to use low-resolution group photos on social media or use images where children are not identifiable for this reason.

Alternatively, schools may use a secure, password-protected platform, such as a parent portal, to limit the use of identifiable images being made public.

The Trust ensures a 'names-no-images/images-no-names' policy for all online posts.

For further advice, schools may refer to the NSPCC guidance 'Photographing and Filming Children' and the UK Safer Internet Centre 'Guidance to Support School Pupil Image Security'.

12. PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group, including:

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

NPAT schools offer extra pastoral support for pupils with SEN and disabilities. Please see individual school SEND reports, which are available on all school websites.

More information can be found about support for children with SEND here:

- [SEND Code of Practice⁷](#)
- [North Northamptonshire's Local Offer: SEND Local Offer⁸](#)
- [West Northamptonshire's Local Offer: SEND Local Offer⁹](#)
- [Milton Keynes' Local Offer: SEND Local Offer¹⁰](#)

13. PUPILS WITH A SOCIAL WORKER AND THOSE WHO HAVE PREVIOUSLY NEEDED 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. We work with the local authority to ensure we provide effective support for this group of children.

The role of virtual school head now includes a non-statutory responsibility to oversee the attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker and children in kinship care.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

⁸ <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/schools-and-education/local-offer-send-and-ehc-plans>

⁹ <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/local-offer>

¹⁰ <https://www.mksendlocaloffer.co.uk/>

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

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

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

We have contact plans for children with a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where they won't be attending school.

14. LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUSLY-LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN

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

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked-after legal statuses, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements. The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant Virtual School Heads.
- We have appointed a designated teacher who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously-looked-after children in line with [statutory guidance](#).¹¹
- The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL 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 (PEPs).

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

15. RECORD-KEEPING

All safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded in writing on MyConcern. This includes instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss this with the DSL.

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer should:

- Record as soon as possible after the conversation on MyConcern
- Not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court
- Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any injuries if relevant, and
- Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions.

All written notes need to be given to the DSL promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer.

The DSL will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, and
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

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

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

- Five days for an in-year transfer, or

- Within the first five days of the start of a new term.

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

Appendix 4 sets out our policy on record-keeping specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-employment checks. Appendix 4 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff.

16. RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) AND HEALTH EDUCATION

16.1 Promoting safeguarding and welfare in the curriculum

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

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

Please see individual school policies on Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and RSE which are available on school websites.

17. SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

We work to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency, in which the Trust and school's values and expected behaviours (as set out in the NPAT Code of Conduct) are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

We expect all staff to act with professionalism at all times. To reduce the risk of unsafe or harmful practice, all staff should receive training on safer working practice and should be familiar with the guidance contained in the Staff Handbook, NPAT Code of Conduct and Safer Recruitment Consortium document [Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings \(September 2022\)](https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/).¹²

Governors and senior leaders will ensure that this policy is adhered to by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others through effective training
- Empowering staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns or 'nagging doubts'
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage, and
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.

Governors, with the assistance of the NPAT-appointed external safeguarding auditor, will help to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system.

Schools will quality assure the safeguarding policies and practices of external agencies whose staff come into contact with NPAT children.

Staff are expected to adhere to the NPAT Code of Conduct at all times. In the event of any concerns or allegations, the school will deal with them promptly, in line with local guidance and KCSIE (2026).

Please refer to the NPAT Visitors in School Policy for information about safer practice for visitors.

¹² <https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/>

17.1 Staff use of mobile phones and smart technology

Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use but must limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present. Staff members' personal phones will remain in their bags or cupboards during contact time with pupils. Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras.

We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

17.2 Children's use of mobile phones and smart technology

All NPAT schools will ensure that they operate as mobile phone-free environments for children throughout the school day. Children will not have access to mobile phones during lessons, transitions between classes, break times or lunchtimes. Children's access to smart technology is permitted by exception only, such as for specific medical needs (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) assistive technology. Please refer to the DfE guidance Mobile Phones in Schools 2026 for further information.

18. SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT AND ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF

18.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

In the event that there is an allegation of abuse against a member of staff, we will follow Part 4, Section 1 of KCSIE (2026) and local authority Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance. See Appendix 5 for more details.

The NPAT Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers Policy must be referred to.

Allegations that may indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm if they continued to work in their present position or in any capacity with children in a school or college include:

- Staff having behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Staff possibly committing a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Staff behaving towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, and/or
- Staff behaving or possibly behaving in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

This includes behaviour or incidents that have occurred both inside and outside of school.

Allegations against the Headteacher and CEO

If an allegation is made against the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Chair of Governors without delay. If an allegation is raised against the NPAT CEO, it must be reported to the Trustee Safeguarding Lead.

Allegations against staff

If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against any member of staff, supply teacher or volunteer other than the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Headteacher without delay. This includes supply staff, volunteers and anyone working in or on behalf of the school, whether paid or unpaid. Allegations of abuse against staff must be reported to the Headteacher as appropriate and not discussed directly with the person involved.

The Headteacher should consider if the concern or allegation meets the threshold for Designated Officer intervention in consultation with the NPAT CEO.

Allegations against staff relating to a position of trust issue will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours. If a child has suffered or may have suffered abuse or harm, a MASH referral will also be made, and the police will be contacted if necessary.

A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made if a member of staff is dismissed or removed from their post as a result of safeguarding concerns or would have been removed if they had not resigned.

18.2 Safeguarding concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns)

In the event that there is a safeguarding concern about a member of staff, we will adhere to guidance outlined in Part 4, Section 2 of KCSIE (2026) and local authority Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance.

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harm threshold. A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt', that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

It is essential that low-level concerns are reported. Such behaviours can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. We will act quickly, proportionately and appropriately in the event of a low-level concern, to prevent abuse or harm of a child and to promote a culture of safeguarding. Dealing with low-level concerns also protects those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

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

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

Staff will receive training about what may constitute a low-level concern. More information can be found in Part 4 of KCSIE (2026).

Reporting low-level concerns

Low-level concerns should be reported to the Headteacher.

All low-level concerns should be recorded on MyConcern. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

The Headteacher may:

- Speak directly to the person who raised the concern (unless it has been raised anonymously)
- Speak to the individual involved and/or witnesses.

The Headteacher will then categorise the type of behaviour and decide on an appropriate course of action. This will be recorded, along with rationale for any decisions made and details of action taken.

Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. In the event that patterns and/or wider cultural issues within the school are identified, the school will either:

- Take action through our disciplinary procedures
- Refer behaviour to the Local Authority Designated Officer/s where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harm threshold, and/or
- Revise policies or implement extra training as appropriate, to minimise the risk of behaviour happening again.

18.3 Supply staff

Although the Trust does not directly employ supply teachers, we will ensure that any concerns or allegations against supply teachers are handled properly. We will never cease to use a supply teacher for safeguarding reasons without finding out the facts and liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to reach a suitable outcome.

NPAT schools will liaise with the supply agency to determine whether to suspend or redeploy the supply teacher whilst they carry out their investigation.

NPAT schools will inform supply agencies of its process for managing allegations and will take account of the agency's policies and their duty to refer to the DBS as personnel suppliers. Informing supply agencies of our process for managing allegations includes inviting the agency's human resource manager (or equivalent) to meetings and regularly updating agencies on relevant school policies.

19. COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS ABOUT SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

19.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with low-level concerns or allegations of abuse made against staff (see Section 17). Please refer to the NPAT Allegations against Staff and Volunteers Procedure.

19.2 Other complaints

Please refer to the NPAT Complaints Policy.

19.3 Whistleblowing

Please refer to the NPAT Whistleblowing Policy for the process on raising concerns within the workplace on safeguarding and other issues.

20. USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES FOR NON-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll) we will:

- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, including in any transfer of control agreement and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply.

In the event that the school receives an allegation relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation was using their school premises for the purposes of running activities for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO.¹³

For further details on processes and expectations for visitors to schools, please refer to the NPAT Visitors Policy.

21. HOW WE SAFEGUARD PUPILS ATTENDING ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we understand that we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and we will satisfy ourselves that the placement meets the pupil's needs. This includes checking on the provider's safeguarding provision in addition to their educational and pastoral provision. We will review placements in alternative provision every half term.

¹³ Further information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice/keeping-children-safe-during-community-activities-after-school-clubs-and-tuition-non-statutory-guidance-for-providers-running-out-of-school-settings>

22. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the NPAT Board of Trustees so that it can be shared with schools ahead of the start of each academic year. It will be implemented through the school's induction and training programme, and as part of day to day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the local governing body, the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and through staff performance measures.

APPENDIX 1 CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

1. What child-on-child abuse is

Child-on-child abuse is any abuse of a child or children that is perpetrated by another child or children. This includes all forms of sexual harassment, sexual violence and abuse. We strive to create a culture of safety, where children are free from harassment or abuse of any kind. We take a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment; it is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated.

We know that even if we do not receive any reports relating to child-on-child abuse, it does not mean that it is not happening. We support and encourage anyone – especially our pupils – to come forward to share any concerns about child-on-child abuse so that we can take action to keep all children safe.

2. What child-on-child abuse includes

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

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, misogyny)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm, and
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All children are capable of abusing their peers and we recognise that girls are more likely to be the victims of child-on-child abuse and boys are more likely to be perpetrators. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

We recognise that children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. We refer to problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour as 'harmful sexual behaviour'. Low level sexual behaviours may be an indicator of safeguarding concerns, as such all reported incidents require robust safeguarding attention for both the victim *and* the alleged perpetrator.

When responding to sexualised behaviours incidents, we will:

- Consider the behaviours in a child protection context
- Consider the ages and developmental stages of the children involved
- Take all reported concerns seriously, for example, not dismissing misogynist comments as 'banter'.
- Take action in line with local thresholds and pathways guidance and relevant statutory guidance, and
- Seek specialist support as required.

We will take action at the earliest possible point, to safeguard children and to prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

We recognise that children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma and we will offer support as required.

All reported incidents of

3. Staff training

All staff are made aware that children can abuse other children, that this can happen online or in person, at school or outside of school. All staff will receive training so that they can confidently recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse in order to identify it and respond appropriately to reports. All staff will be made aware of the school policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the crucial role that they play in preventing it and responding to it as necessary. It will be made clear that addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

4. Procedures for minimising opportunities for child-on-child abuse

We recognise that a crucial part of our safeguarding responsibility is to minimise the opportunity for child-on-child abuse to occur. In order to do this, and to establish a safe environment for all children, we:

- Have a robust Behaviour Policy, which makes it clear that we have a zero-tolerance approach to any kind of child-on-child abuse
- Ensure staff understand what is meant by child-on-child abuse and the school's policy on child-on-child abuse
- Train staff thoroughly so that they challenge inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous)
- Train staff thoroughly so that they are confident to challenge inappropriate behaviours between peers, that are actually abusive in nature
- Never downplay certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys", as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it, and
- Recognise that sexual harassment and sexual violence, as well as other forms of child-on-child abuse, may be happening even if they are not reported.

5. How we address child-on-child abuse within the curriculum and across the school

We ensure our systems for reporting all safeguarding concerns are well promoted, easy to understand, and accessible so children can confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously. We ensure that children are aware of our safeguarding and child protection procedures, including how to raise concerns about child-on-child abuse.

6. Additional vulnerabilities

We recognise that some children may be more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse than others. For example, children who have already experienced abuse, those that have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), children living in care and children who are LGBTQ+ may be more likely to face child-on-child abuse than other children. We recognise that girls are more likely to be the victims of child-on-child abuse than boys. Some children may face additional barriers to telling anyone about abuse because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. All NPAT schools work to protect children with additional vulnerabilities. Please see individual school Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies for more information on how this handled locally.

7. How to report concerns

Our pupils

If a young person witnesses or experiences any form of child-on-child abuse, we strongly encourage them to speak to a trusted member of staff, parent or trusted adult about it. If a child discloses to an adult outside of school, the adult should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay to report the issue.

All victims will be taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school will be treated equally seriously. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence or sexual harassment. A victim will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report or have their experience minimised.

Please see individual school Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies for more information on ways that pupils can disclose abuse both in school and outside of school.

In the event that a pupil reports or discloses child-on-child abuse, we will take their report seriously, take prompt action to respond and to safeguard the child or children involved, and we will ensure that we are listening to the voice of the child when deciding on the best course of action to take. We will always act in the best interests of children. Following any disclosures or reports of child-on-child abuse, we will review our school systems, training and policies to determine if any learning can be derived from the situation to further strengthen our approach to this issue. We will always encourage our pupils to safely express their views and give feedback on how they have been supported following a safeguarding concern.

Our staff

Any member of staff that has concerns about child-on-child abuse should follow the procedure set out in Section 9 and must report concerns immediately.

Others

We encourage everyone to report any form of abuse or harm perpetrated by or against our pupils. Any concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), using the details on the front page of this policy.

8. Wider concerns

We strive to create a safe and welcoming environment for all children. If you have any concerns about our culture of safeguarding, policies or procedures, please direct them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately or follow the NPAT Complaints Policy.

9. What happens when an allegation of child-on-child abuse is made?

We will adhere to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) when responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse. The Trust takes child-on-child abuse seriously and will respond to all concerns or disclosures of child-on-child abuse, including those that have occurred outside of school and online, immediately.

Upon receiving a concern, report or disclosure of abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will decide what further action is necessary.

The subsequent action taken will vary depending on the type of child-on-child abuse and the severity of the incident/s disclosed. The DSL will take contextual factors into account when managing the report.

The DSL will always consider the following:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. The victim will be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered
- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including the level of coercion or threat, whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour
- Both the chronological ages and developmental stages of the children involved
- Any power imbalance between the children, including consideration of the age of children and whether children have special educational needs or disabilities
- The impact on the victim
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place in intimate personal relationships between children
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse
- If there are ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff, and
- Other related issues and wider context, such as links to child criminal or child sexual exploitation.

Depending on the nature of the incident/s, the DSL may:

- Seek further information from those involved and witnesses
- Undertake a risk assessment and needs assessment to ascertain steps necessary to safeguard the victim, alleged perpetrator, adults and other children
- Decide to manage the concern internally

- Organise a meeting with relevant staff and agencies to assess risk and agree a safety plan
- Refer the victim and/or the perpetrator to local services for Early Help.
- Refer the case to children's services via a MASH referral
- Liaise with social workers working with children involved (if applicable).
- Make a report to the police
- Liaise with specialist services.

In the event of a disclosure of child-on-child sexual violence, we will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. The risk and needs assessment will consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)
- Whether there may have been other victims
- The alleged perpetrator(s), and
- All the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms.

More information about these options in relation to sexual violence and sexual harassment can be found in Part 5 of KCSIE (2026).

10. Recording procedures

Members of staff will follow the procedures for recording a disclosure using MyConcern, as outlined in Sections 9 and 14 of this policy.

11. How we support victims of child-on-child abuse

The Trust recognises that child-on-child abuse has a significant impact on young people and victims are likely to need ongoing support. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment, wherever it happens, will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. Appropriate support will be put in place for victims of child-on-child abuse whilst the investigation is taking place and following the initial response. Support will continue as long as needed and will be reviewed regularly to ensure the victim is receiving appropriate care. The school will do everything it can to maintain the victim's normal routine. We will do everything we can to protect the victim from further bullying, harassment or abuse as a result of their disclosure.

If a victim of child-on-child abuse moves to a new setting, the DSL will share the necessary information to ensure that support for the child continues.

12. How we will support alleged perpetrators and perpetrators of child-on-child abuse

We have a responsibility to safeguard and support all children. We will adhere to KCSIE (2026) when managing reports of child-on-child abuse and decide on action and support on a case-by-case basis.

The school has a responsibility to ensure that an alleged perpetrator continues to receive a suitable education and will consider a range of options for continuing educational provision if they are unable to attend school.

We recognise that children who perpetrate child-on-child abuse may be being abused themselves. The school will continue to safeguard the alleged perpetrator and provide them with support.

A plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator will be put in place as part of the risk assessment made following the alleged abuse. The DSL will take advice from children's social care, specialist services and the police, as necessary.

The school may choose to impose a sanction or punishment on the alleged perpetrator following an incident of child-on-child abuse. In this case, we will follow the school Behaviour Policy in determining the level and severity of sanction.

If the alleged perpetrator moves to another setting, the DSL will share information as necessary to safeguard the individual and other children at the new setting.

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

13. How we will support other children who may have been affected by child-on-child abuse

We recognise that victims and perpetrators are not the only children who can be affected by child-on-child abuse and are mindful of providing appropriate support to those who feel affected.

14. Local Safeguarding Arrangements and making referrals

NPAT adheres to local safeguarding arrangements, as outlined by the local authority Safeguarding Children Partnership.

For further details of how NPAT schools deal with partner agencies in responding to safeguarding incidents (including incidents of child-on-child abuse), please see the main body of this policy.

15. Informing parents

We will inform parents of incidents unless sharing information puts a child at greater risk of harm. Children will always be encouraged to speak to parents about child-on-child abuse unless it puts them at greater risk of harm.

16. Whole-school response

We will keep detailed records of any incidents of child-on-child abuse on MyConcern and will look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. If we identify a pattern, we will take appropriate action. Consideration will be given to whether there are wider cultural issues that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur and, to minimise it happening again, we may:

- Dedicate more teaching time to a particular issue or topic
- Deliver additional staff training.

APPENDIX 2 TYPES OF ABUSE

This appendix is based on the advice in Annex B of KCSIE 2026.

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

1. **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
2. **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
 - Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
 - Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
 - Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
 - Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.
3. **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children

to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

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

4. 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 care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Provide a suitable education.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

5. Children who are absent from education and children missing from education

Children absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation (particularly county lines), or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage. Many circumstances can cause a child to be 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 school
- Come from new migrant families.

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence, dealing with persistently absent pupils and children missing education to help identify the risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked-after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need at least two up-to-date contacts for parents/carers. Parents/carers should remember to update the school as soon as possible when these contact details change.

This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements for sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

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

If a staff member suspects a child is suffering harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including 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.

6. Child criminal exploitation

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

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

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or

pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same; however, professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

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

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

7. County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".'

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model, with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move (and store) drugs and money. Offenders will

often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

8. Serious violence

Signs that a child is at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime include:

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

There are a range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as:

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

If a member of staff suspects a child is involved in or at risk of serious violent crime, 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.

9. Child sexual exploitation

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

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

Children and young people often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

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

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

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

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

10. Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members, by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances) and by strangers. Other community safety incidents near a school can raise concerns among children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

In the event that anyone has concerns about child abduction or community safety incidents, they should speak to the DSL immediately.

11. Cybercrime

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

Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded

- Denial of Service (DoS or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources
- Making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If we have concerns about a child and a possible risk of being drawn into cyber-crime, the DSL will consider referring them to the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. We may also include early help and will refer to children's social care if we think a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering harm.

12. Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse.

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Domestic abuse can impact children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and/or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

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

At NPAT, we work in partnership with North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council, Milton Keynes Council, Thames Valley Police and Northamptonshire Police to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic abuse in their household; nationally, this scheme is called Operation Encompass. In order to achieve this, the relevant councils will share police information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead for all domestic incidents where one of our pupils has been affected. On receipt of any information, the DSL will decide on the appropriate support the child requires; this could be silent or overt.

All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with the local safeguarding partnership protocols. We will record this information and store it in accordance with the record-keeping procedures outlined in this policy.

The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

13. Homelessness

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

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

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

14. 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.

15. Female Genital Mutilation

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

Section 10 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

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

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

- The girl's family having a history of 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
- A girl:
 - having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
 - having limited level of integration within UK society
 - confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"

- talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
- requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
- talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to 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 exhaustive.

16. 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. Since February 2023, it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. Forced marriage legislation applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

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 have only one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

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

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place.
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer.
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk if required.
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate.

17. Private fostering

A private fostering arrangement 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 step-parents; 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 exploitation, or are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority when they are aware of, or suspect, that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools 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 school. However, the school should be made aware of who has parental responsibility.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the child's family to confirm they understand their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

18. Missing pupils

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

- [Children missing education in West Northants.](#)¹⁴
- [Children missing education in North Northants.](#)¹⁵
- [Children missing education in Milton Keynes.](#)¹⁶

19. Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, the school will:

1. Contact the parent/career and all other named contacts
2. After one hour of no contact, seek advice from the MASH team
3. Record actions and advice on MyConcern
4. Meet with the parent on subsequent occasions if required to outline expectations and adhere to the school agreement.

¹⁴ <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/attendance-and-behaviour-support-schools/tracking-children-and-their-families-who-have-gone-missing>

¹⁵ <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/attendance-behaviour-and-home-schooling/tracking-children-and-their-families-who-have-gone-missing>

¹⁶ <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/information-schools/children-missing-education>

APPENDIX 3 PREVENTION OF RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM

1. Ethos and Practice

NPAT is committed to providing a secure environment where pupils feel safe and are kept safe. All adults in NPAT recognise that working to prevent extremism and radicalisation is one element of our overall Trust arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in line with our statutory duties set out at S157 of the Education Act 2002. Our Trust's Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy also draws upon the guidance produced by our local authority Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships; the current version of the DfE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" and HM Government document "Prevent Duty Guidance (2026)" <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales-accessible>

2. Definitions of Radicalisation and Extremism

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

The Trust refers to the updated Government definition of extremism (March 2025) as follows:

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 following definitions break this down for the purposes of the policy:

- **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.
- **Ideology** is a system of ideas and ideals, especially one which forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

- **Terrorism** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our Trust, whether from internal sources: pupils, staff or governors or external sources: school community, external agencies or individuals. Our pupils see our schools as a safe place where they can explore controversial issues safely and where our teachers encourage and facilitate this. We have a duty to ensure this happens.

As a Trust, we recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for children and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern as set out in this Policy. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views, we are failing to protect our pupils.

Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances of young people. Education is a powerful weapon against this, equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and critical thinking to challenge and debate in an informed way.

3. Promoting British Values and the Curriculum

Northampton Primary Academy Trust is committed to serving its communities. The Trust recognises the multicultural, multi-faith, and ever-changing nature of the United Kingdom. We also understand the vital role it plays in ensuring that groups or individuals within our schools are not subjected to intimidation or radicalisation by those wishing to unduly or illegally influence them.

The Trust follows equality and equal opportunities guidance, which guarantees no discrimination against any individual or group, regardless of background, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion, belief, faith, sexual orientation, political or financial status, or similar. Our schools are dedicated to preparing children for adult life beyond the formal curriculum and to teaching, promoting, and reinforcing British Values for all children. This is reinforced within our NPAT Values Statement as follows:

We have clear values and beliefs that guide how we act and the decisions we make. We are driven by the determination to ensure our schools sit at the heart of their local communities and drive educational excellence for all. Our moral purpose is rooted in high aspiration and ambition for all children, including those who face

the greatest disadvantage in our most deprived communities and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. We are responsible for developing future citizens who have a voice that is heard, and who understand their place and responsibility in society. We hold safety and safeguarding in the highest regard at all times and in everything that we do. Schools must ensure that key British Values, as outlined in the government Prevent Strategy 2011, are taught in all UK schools. The government set out its definition of British Values in 2011.

The five British Values are:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance

Within the Trust, we ensure that British Values are taught within the context of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic education.

We will all strive to eradicate the myths and assumptions that can lead some young people to become alienated and disempowered, especially where the narrow approaches children may experience elsewhere make it harder for them to challenge or question these radical influences. In our schools, we will achieve this through strong teaching, primarily via Citizenship and PSHE sessions. All NPAT schools will provide a broad and balanced curriculum, delivered by skilled professionals, so that our pupils are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity, and also ensure they thrive, feel valued, and are not marginalised. We aim to build a sense of ownership; create a safe space for dialogue between staff and pupils; build resilience in pupils; improve pupil skills for collaborative work and improve pupils' ability to interact with each other.

Each NPAT school will ensure that all teaching approaches help pupils build resilience to extremism and develop a positive sense of identity by developing critical thinking skills. We will teach and encourage pupils to respect one another and to respect and tolerate diversity and difference. It is indeed our most fundamental responsibility to keep our pupils safe and prepare them for life in modern multi-cultural Britain and globally.

We will also work with local partners, families and communities to challenge extremist views and broaden our pupils' experiences and horizons.

4. Recognising the Indicators of Vulnerability to Radicalisation

There is no such thing as a “typical extremist”: those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. School staff must be able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

Signs of radicalisation may include:

- **Isolation:** The person isolates themselves from friends and family
- **Unwillingness to discuss views:** The person is unwilling or unable to discuss their views
- **Increased anger:** The person becomes increasingly angry about issues or events they feel are unfair or unjust
- **Intolerance:** The person becomes intolerant of other people's views
- **Secretiveness:** The person becomes increasingly secretive, especially around internet use
- **Disrespectful attitude:** The person develops a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- **Scripted speech:** The person talks as if from a scripted speech
- **Risk factors:** The person has low self-esteem, feels isolated, or has unmet aspirations.

In addition, risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters;
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element;
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature;
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage;
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues;
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations; and
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour;
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and/or personal crisis.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by pupils or staff will always be challenged and, where appropriate, dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy for pupils, the Code of Conduct for Staff and, where necessary, the relevant local authority Prevent referral process.

We will ensure all staff are equipped to recognise extremism and are skilled and confident enough to challenge it. All staff will receive training to raise awareness of Prevent, and radicalisation and extremism will be an integral part of annual staff safeguarding training.

Every school is required to identify a Prevent Leader to lead safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism.

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the school Prevent Leader, senior leader or Designated Safeguarding Lead. Schools will support pupils who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities. Where we believe a pupil is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences, we will ensure the pupil is offered assistance. Additionally, in such instances our schools will seek external support from the police, Local Authority and/or local partnership structures working to prevent extremism.

Our schools will closely follow the locally agreed procedure as set out by the relevant local authority Safeguarding Hub for safeguarding individuals vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation.

Procedures for Reporting and Referrals

All concerns regarding the radicalisation of children should be logged using the school safeguarding reporting system, My Concern, and discussed in the first instance with the school designated Safeguarding Officer.

Staff will refer any concerns through the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will decide, in consultation with professionals, on the appropriate course of action on a case-by-case basis and whether a referral to external agencies is needed.

Any concerns about an individual who may be at risk of radicalisation can be referred to the police or through the local authority safeguarding hub, following local safeguarding practices.

5. Use of External Agencies and Speakers

The school encourages the use of external agencies or speakers to enrich our pupils' experiences; however, we will vet any external agencies, individuals, or speakers we engage to provide these learning opportunities. This includes checking the DBS of all external providers, reviewing any materials that will be used beforehand, and conducting a social media check on such agencies or individuals.

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

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

Therefore, by delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, augmented by the use of external sources where appropriate, we will strive to ensure our pupils recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate to their age and ability, but also to help pupils develop the critical thinking skills needed to engage in informed debate.

6. Further Reading:

Government Prevent Duty Guidance: [Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\) - GOV.UK](#)

Government Definitions of Extremism: [New definition of extremism \(2025\) - GOV.UK](#)

APPENDIX 4 SAFER RECRUITMENT

Please refer to the NPAT Safer Recruitment Policy for full details of our safer recruitment practice, which fully adheres to Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026). We consider safeguarding throughout the recruitment process, including when defining and advertising roles.

We reserve the right to carry out an online search of shortlisted candidates as part of our due diligence process. We will complete this as part of our safer recruitment process and in line with our GDPR responsibilities.

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Where appropriate, we will hold copies of these checks in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out in the NPAT Safer Recruitment Policy.

We will apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice in general and, in doing so, will deny opportunities for inappropriate recruitment or advancement. We will be alert to the possibility that persons may seek positions within our schools to influence the school's character and ethos unduly. We are aware that such persons seek to limit opportunities for our pupils, thereby rendering them vulnerable to extremist views and radicalisation.

Therefore, by adhering to safer recruitment best practice techniques and ensuring an ongoing culture of safeguarding and vigilance within our school and staff team, we will minimise opportunities for extremist views to prevail.

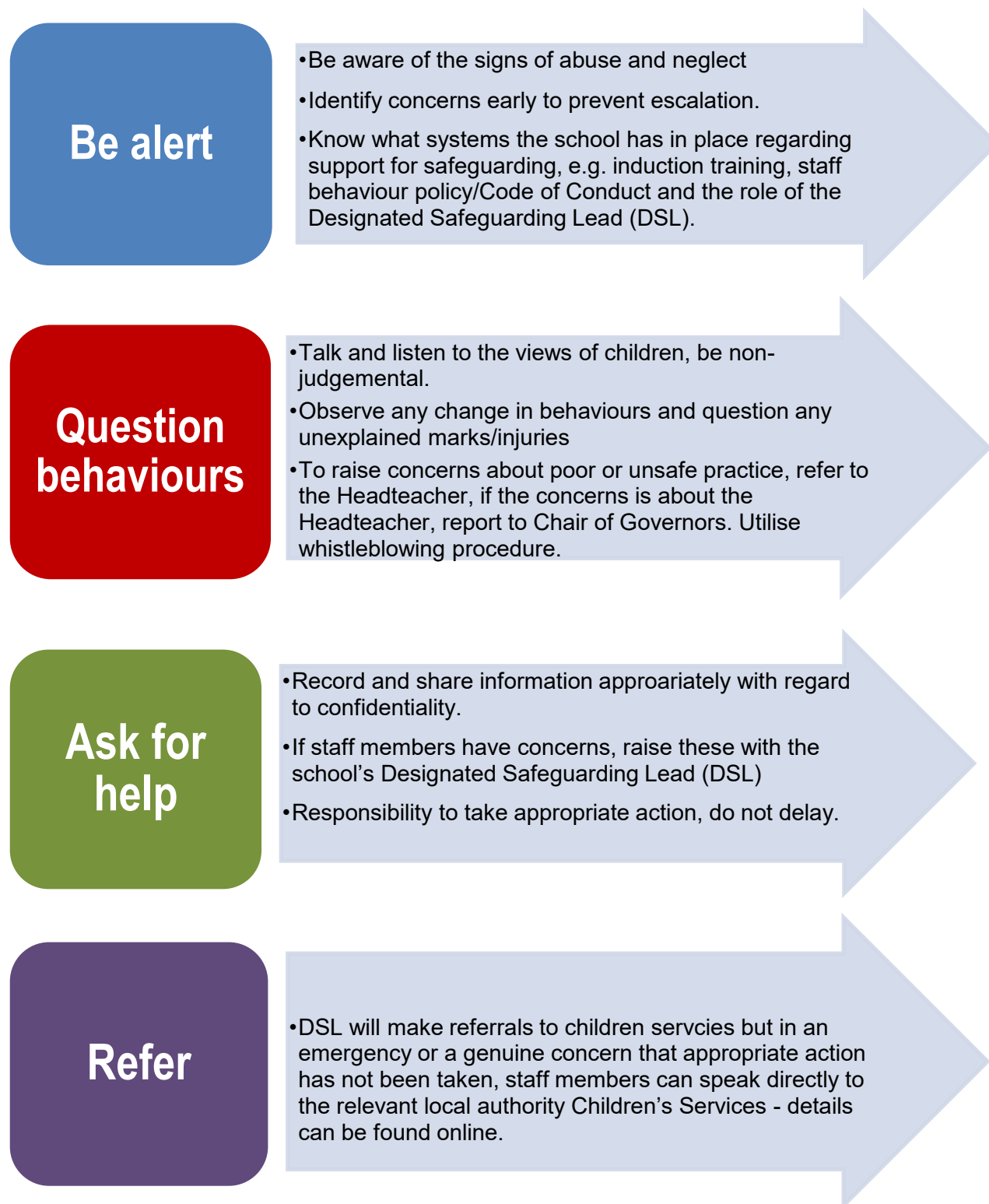
APPENDIX 5 HOW THE SCHOOL RESPONDS TO ALLEGATIONS THAT MAY MEET THE HARM THRESHOLD

Please refer to the NPAT Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers Procedure, which applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

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

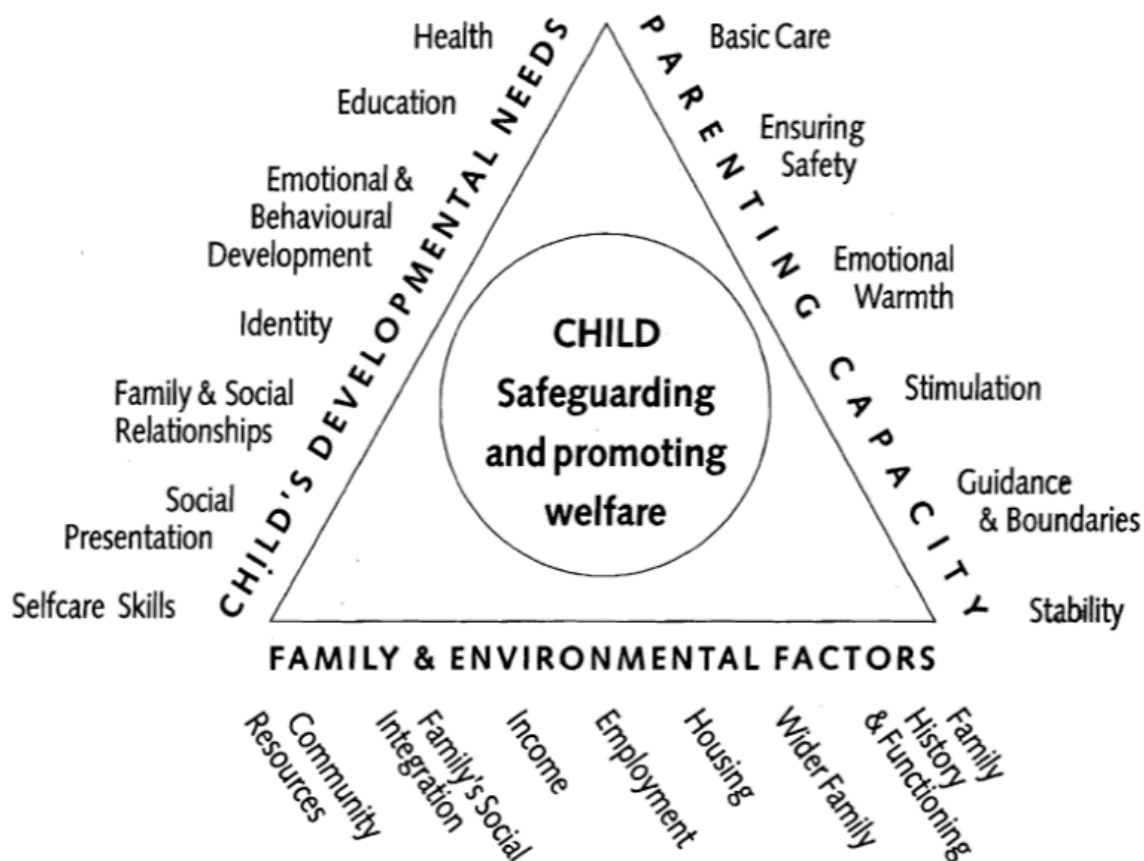
APPENDIX 6 WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED: ADVICE FOR PRACTITIONERS (DFE 2018)

Flowchart



APPENDIX 7 INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The framework for understanding children's needs:



APPENDIX 8 RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN

Feeling safe and happy at school

At Ecton Brook Primary School, we want to make sure that you feel looked after, safe and happy when you are in and out of school. Sometimes we don't know if something bad is happening, so you need to tell us.

This policy looks at child-on-child abuse and bullying, and what you can do when you feel you are being abused or bullied, or when you notice someone else being abused or bullied.

We can help you by:

- Teaching you what child-on-child abuse is.
- Teaching you what to do if you feel like you are being abused, or if someone else is being abused.
- Making sure you know the grown-ups you can speak to if you are worried.

1

What is child-on-child bullying and abuse?

A **peer** is someone who might be your friend, a child at school with you, or another child you may know.

Abuse is something which usually physically or emotionally hurts another person by using behaviour that is meant to scare, hurt or upset that person.

Sometimes, it can be hard to know when abuse is happening, because not all abuse will hurt, scare or upset you, and you might not know it is happening. It's really important you know when you are being abused so we can make sure it stops.

There are lots of different types of abuse. It is important you know what these types of abuse are, so you know what to do if you see them.

2

Bullying

Bullying can be different things and isn't just hitting or kicking another person.

Emotional bullying is hurting someone's feelings, leaving them out or bossing them about.

Physical bullying is punching, kicking, spitting, hitting or pushing someone.

Verbal bullying is teasing someone, calling them names or using rude hand signs. People can also use verbal bullying to be **racist** or **homophobic**.

Racist means bullying someone because of their skin colour, race or what they believe in.

Homophobic means bullying someone because of their gender or sexuality; calling someone gay or lesbian to hurt their feelings would be homophobic.

Sexist means bullying someone because of their sex (whether they are a boy or a girl).

Cyberbullying involves sending horrid messages over the internet or by text message. Bullying can be done through another person, by one person sending another person to say nasty things.

3

Sexting

This is sending inappropriate pictures, videos or messages – they can sometimes be called ‘nude pics’, ‘rude pics’ or ‘nude selfies’, but can also be rude messages.

Pressuring someone into sending these pictures, videos and messages is abuse.

Even if you are not the person who is sending them, it is illegal to have these kinds of pictures or videos of a person if they are under 18 years old.



4

Sexual harassment

Sometimes, people can **act sexually towards others**, and it might make them feel uncomfortable.

This can happen **online**, on social media, through messages and **face-to-face**. It might make someone feel **scared, embarrassed, uncomfortable** or **upset**.

It could be:

- Someone making **sexual comments**, like telling sexual stories, saying **rude things** or saying sexual things about someone's **appearance** or clothes.

- Calling someone **sexual names**.
- **Sexual jokes** or teasing.
- Being physical, like **touching** you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, messing with your clothes, or **showing pictures** or **drawings** which are of a sexual nature.
- Being sexual online, like **sharing sexual pictures** and **videos**, or posting sexual comments on social media.
- It might also be **sexual threats** or pushing you to do something sexual that you don't want to or aren't ready for.

5

Relationships

Any relationship you have should be **good** and **happy**.

A bad relationship might make someone feel **scared**, **confused**, **worried** and even **unsafe**. It's really important that you know the **DIFFERENCE** between a good relationship and a bad relationship.

Good relationships

- You are **comfortable** around that person.
- You can be **honest** with that person.
- You can say how you **feel**, what you are **thinking**, and you **listen** to each other.
- You **support** each other and treat each other nicely.
- You feel **safe**.
- You **trust** that person.
- You are **equal** – you don't boss each other around or tell each other what to do.
- You feel **looked after**.



Bad relationships

- The person might **push** you, **hit** you or **destroy** your things.
- The person might **tell you what to do**, what to wear or who you can see.
- You might feel **scared** – they might say they will hurt you if you don't do something. They might also say they will hurt you if you do something too.
- The person **calls you names**, makes you feel bad in front of other people and **makes you feel bad about yourself**.
- The person gets **angry easily**, and you don't know what will make them angry – it might make you feel **nervous**.



- The person might **pressure** you to do things **you don't want** to or aren't ready for, like sex, or using drugs and alcohol.
- The person **might not take no for an answer** when you say you don't want to do something.



How do I know if someone is being abused?

It might be hard for you to know if you are being abused, and you **might not really understand** that it is happening. It is important that you can **recognise** when behaviour isn't appropriate.

It's also important to notice when **someone else** might be being abused.

Some signs might be:

- Not going to school.
- Having injuries, like bruises
- Feeling sad and down
- Feeling like they can't cope
- Feeling withdrawn or shy
- Getting headaches or stomach aches
- Feeling nervous
- Not being able to sleep, sleeping too much or getting nightmares
- Feeling panicked
- Using alcohol or drugs
- Changing appearance to look much older
- Being abusive to someone else.

Remember: you can feel all of these things too. Listen to how you feel and know that these signs can mean you are being abused.



What do I do if someone else is being abused?

If you see someone else being abused, it is important to **help** that person.

You should **never walk away** and ignore the problem if you see someone else being abused, because the person might keep upsetting them.

If you can, and it is **safe** to do so, tell the person abusing you to **stop**, but never get angry or hit them.

Tell a **grown-up**, such as a teacher, as soon as you've seen someone being abused. Grown-ups can **stop the abuse** and make that person feel happy again. You should **never feel scared** to tell someone about abuse.

Sometimes, you might not **see someone being abused**, but you might be **worried** about them. Or, you might think they are being abused by **someone you don't know**, or someone they have **told** you about.

It's really important you **tell someone** even if you are worried but haven't **seen** any abuse.



What do I do if I am being abused?

The first thing you should do is **tell someone** you trust. This could be a family member, a friend or **any adult in our school**.

You can also **tell the person abusing you** to leave you alone. If telling them to leave you alone would **make you feel too scared or worried that they might hurt you**, make sure you tell **someone** so they can help.

You should try not to:

- Do what the person says.
- Let what the person says or does upset you.
- Get angry or hit them.

Always remember that if you are being abused, **it is not your fault** and you are **never alone**. You shouldn't be scared to **talk to someone** if you are being abused. If you talk to a grown-up, we can **make the abuse stop**.



Who can I talk to?

It is important that you **tell someone** as soon as you are being abused, or you notice someone else being abused.

Speaking to someone like your mum, dad, carer or teacher will mean that we can make sure the **abuse stops** and doesn't happen again.



The list below shows some of the grown-ups at our school that you can speak to:

- class teacher
- a teaching assistant
- a midday supervisor.



How can I help stop abuse from happening?

We can all help stop abuse at our school by:

- Making sure we **understand** how we should **act** towards others.
- **Helping** others when they are in need.
- Being **kind, friendly and respectful** to others.
- Thinking about people's **feelings** before we say or do something.
- Taking part in **school activities**, like assemblies, PSHE lessons and circle time, which talk about peer-on-peer abuse.
- **Talking to someone** when we are worried.



You should know that abuse is never OK, and it is serious. It is not funny or part of growing up. If you abuse someone, you will get into