



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

12 September 2025

About This Document

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document has been reviewed with reference to the documents Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, The Prevent Duty, Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers, July 2015, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, Guidance for Safer Working Practice For those Working With Children and Young People in Education Settings 2022, and The Children Act 2004. These documents are kept on file in the school.
- 1.2. This policy should be read alongside departmental advice:
 - i. What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, DfE (March 2015).
 - ii. Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners, DfE (July 2018).
 - iii. non-statutory interim guidance on safeguarding in schools, colleges, and other providers.
- 1.3. This policy is written in line with our:
 - i. Appointment of Staff and Safer Recruitment Policy.
 - ii. Online E-Safety Policy
 - iii. Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Sexting) Policy.
 - iv. Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy.
 - v. Whistleblowing Policy.
 - vi. Behaviour Policy.
 - vii. Anti-bullying Policy.
 - viii. Missing Children Policy.
 - ix. Staff Code of Conduct (Behaviour) Policy.
 - x. Low Level Concerns Policy.
- 1.4. These are all available on request from the school office.

2. School Statement

- 2.1. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge; protecting children from maltreatment; whether that is within or outside the home, including online; preventing 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.
- 2.2. The terms 'child' and 'children' includes everyone under the age of 18.
- 2.3. The Governors and Trustees take seriously their responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to the school's care. The Governors and Trustees will ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that

the independent school standards are met consistently; and actively promote the well-being of pupils according to section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004(a).

- 2.4. The Governors and Trustees will ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are distributed, adopted, implemented and monitored. They will also ensure that if there is no trained DSL on site, a senior member of staff will be identified to lead on safeguarding issues.
- 2.5. The Vine Christian School is a Safeguarding School. We will invoke Child Protection Procedures where necessary.
- 2.6. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs. René Esterhuizen. Her role is to provide support and direction to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and to liaise closely with other services such as the local Designated Officer, the police, and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), when managing referrals.
- 2.7. Our Safeguarding Governor and Trustee is Mr. James Neale. His role in Safeguarding is to take leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements and to take the lead in dealing with allegations of abuse made against the Head Teacher.
- 2.8. Our Head Teacher is Mrs. René Esterhuizen. Her role in Safer Recruitment is to ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on staff and volunteers who work with the children.
- 2.9. All staff members in the school must read the content of the policy. The Teacher Standards 2012 states that teachers, including head teachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.
- 2.10. All staff must undertake a regular course on safeguarding and child protection that must be updated regularly. The school is committed to an on-going training programme on such matters. Yearly updates will be undertaken at the beginning of each school year.
- 2.11. All staff that work directly with children must read Part 1 and Annex B "Further Information" of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Those staff not working directly with children must read either Part 1 or Annex A. The school will decide which one according to the role of the staff member. The school has systems in place to assist staff understand and discharge their role and responsibilities".
- 2.12. The Governors and Trustees recognise the need to build constructive links with childcare agencies, and will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.
- 2.13. The Governors and Trustees are committed to:
 - i. Listening to, relating effectively and valuing children and young people whilst ensuring their protection within school activities.
 - ii. Ensuring safeguarding is taught 'as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum', including online safety.
 - iii. Employing the expertise of the staff when reviewing safeguarding policies and providing opportunities for staff to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and the child protection policy.
 - iv. Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.

- v. Ensuring that staff members are given support and training.
 - vi. Ensuring all staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm - behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting put children in danger, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious (including that linked to county lines) radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, can be signs that children are at risk.
 - vii. Having a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
 - viii. Maintaining good links with the statutory childcare authorities.
 - ix. Ensuring the DSL and staff are aware of and follow local safeguarding partnership arrangements so that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.
- 2.14. Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action will be taken to protect that child. Action will also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk.
- 2.15. Everyone who encounters children, and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Anyone working in the school is particularly important as they can identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating; they form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. For a description of this system, see Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018.
- 2.16. All staff members have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. They have a responsibility to identify children who may need extra help or who are suffering, vulnerable, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Staff have a responsibility to review and monitor the list of these students on a regular basis and all staff members then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed, including Early Help.

3. Safeguarding Records and Retention

- 3.1. Safeguarding records are kept securely and retained until the individual reaches the age of 25. When a student transfers to another setting, the safeguarding file is transferred securely and in a timely manner. Digital systems are used to maintain chronologies, track interventions, support multi-agency work.

4. Early Help

- 4.1. All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
- 4.2. All staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.
- 4.3. If early help is appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) 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 and consideration given to a referral to children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or getting worse.

- 4.4. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later.
- 4.5. Any child may benefit from early help, but all school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:
 - i. is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs.
 - ii. has special educational needs (whether they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan or not).
 - iii. has a mental health need.
 - iv. is a young carer.
 - v. is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
 - vi. is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care.
 - vii. has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit;
 - viii. is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking sexual or criminal exploitation.
 - ix. is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
 - x. has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending.
 - xi. is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.
 - xii. is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves.
 - xiii. has returned home to their family from care.
 - xiv. is at risk of 'honour' based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage.
 - xv. is a privately fostered child.
- 4.6. In addition to working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, staff members should be aware that they might be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual children.
- 4.7. All staff members should make themselves aware of the systems within the school that support safeguarding, which are explained in the staff induction. This includes the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; the Staff Code of Conduct; and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 4.8. Staff members should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of the home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

- 4.9. All school staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.
- 4.10. Staff members should be aware of any signs of extremist views of any kind in our school, whether from internal sources – students, staff or Governors and Trustees, or external sources – school community, external agencies, or individuals. Our students see our school 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.
- 4.11. Staff members are advised to maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.
- 4.12. A child going missing from an education setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff members should follow the school’s procedures for dealing with children who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions. They should act to identify any risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation. More information can be found in this policy about children who run away or go missing from home or care.
- 4.13. If staff members have concerns about a child, they should raise these with the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead, immediately. This also includes situations of abuse that may involve staff members. The safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children’s social care, although any staff member can refer their concerns to children’s social care directly. Where a child and family would benefit from co-ordinated support from more than one agency (for example education, health, housing, police) an inter-agency assessment will be conducted. These assessments, undertaken by a lead professional (a teacher, special educational needs co-ordinator, General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, and/or health visitor), will identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
- 4.14. A concern is when you are troubled about a child’s welfare and you have reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. It involves the child’s safety and well-being.
- 4.15. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, the DSL should be informed immediately, who will make a referral to children’s social care instantly. However, anybody can make a referral in a serious situation, but please inform the DSL if you do so. If the child’s situation does not appear to be improving, the staff member with concerns should press for re-consideration. Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.
- 4.16. It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues from escalating. Research and Serious Case Reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action. Poor practice includes failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect, poor record keeping, failing to listen to the views of the child, failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve, sharing information too slowly and a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.
- 4.17. More information on Early Help is set out in Part One of KCSIE with full details of the early help process in Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

- 4.18. In all cases, if staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy.

5. Statutory Children's Social Care Assessments and Services (Contextual Safeguarding)

- 5.1. Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to local authority children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately. Referrals should follow the local referral process.
- 5.2. It is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process as local authority children's social care assessments should consider where children are being harmed in contexts outside the home. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and enable a contextual approach to address such harm.
- 5.3. Additional information is available here: [Contextual Safeguarding](#)>
- 5.4. The online tool Report Child Abuse to Your Local Council directs to the relevant local authority children's social care contact number.

6. Safer Working Practices

- 6.1. The school has regard to the Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings 2022 underpinning principles as follows:
- i. The welfare of the child is paramount.
 - ii. Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
 - iii. Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
 - iv. Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
 - v. Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.
 - vi. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from the headteacher if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.
 - vii. Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, and sexual orientation.
 - viii. Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children.
 - ix. Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action, and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

- x. Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed.
 - xi. Staff should be aware of and understand the school's Child Protection Policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, Staff Behaviour Policy, Whistle Blowing procedure and their local authority safeguarding procedures.
- 6.2. Staff should make themselves familiar with the following school documents and policies:
- i. Staff Handbook
 - ii. Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
 - iii. Appointment of Staff Policy, incorporating Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy
 - iv. Code of Conduct Policy
 - v. Grievance Procedure
 - vi. Management of Staff Absence Policy
 - vii. Staff Appraisal and Capability Policy
 - viii. Staff Discipline Policy
 - ix. Whistleblowing Policy
 - x. Data Protection Policy
 - xi. Fire Safety Policy
 - xii. First Aid Policy
 - xiii. Food Hygiene Policy
 - xiv. Health and Safety Policy
 - xv. Intimate Care and Toileting Policy
 - xvi. Risk Assessment Policy
 - xvii. Anti-bullying Policy
 - xviii. Behaviour Policy
 - xix. Complaints Procedure
 - xx. Confidentiality Policy
 - xxi. Equal Opportunities Policy
 - xxii. Exclusions Policy
 - xxiii. Late and Uncollected Children Policy
 - xxiv. Looked After Children Policy
 - xxv. Low Level Concerns Policy
 - xxvi. Missing Child Policy
 - xxvii. Misuse of Substances and Drugs Policy
 - xxviii. Physical Interventions Policy (include the use of Reasonable Force)

- xxix. School Trips and Educational Visits Policy
- xxx. SEND Policy
- xxxi. Relationships Education Policy/Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- xxxii. Online E- Safety Policy

Please refer to our Online E-Safety Policy. There is also a wealth of information, with links, to help schools and parents keep children safe online in KCSIE 2025 Annex B pages 163 – 169, which includes how to support keeping children safe online when they are learning at home and information on parental support.

7. Key Training Areas

7.1. Timescale for training:

Induction Training (mandatory)	Before starting at the school All staff, especially staff who have been redeployed in response to Covid-19, must be aware of systems within their setting which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction.
Child Protection Awareness training for whole staff including Safeguarding (statutory)	Every two years with refresher training every other year
Designated Safeguarding Lead Training (statutory)	Every two years with refresher training every other year
Safer Recruitment Training (statutory)	Every two years
Training about Preventing Terrorism (statutory)	Annually
Training for School Governors (non-statutory)	Annually
Female Genital Mutilation	Every two years
Child Sexual Exploitation	Every two years
E Safety	Annually
Mental Health Awareness Training for whole staff	Every 2 years

8. Important Contact Details

- 8.1. Safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere, and staff should be alert to possible concerns being raised in this school.
- 8.2. Safeguarding concerns about adults in the school should be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or to the Head Teacher.
- 8.3. Safeguarding concerns about independent school proprietors should go straight to the local Designated Officer - the DO.
- 8.4. To contact the following staff members please call the school office in the first instance: 0118 988 6464.
 - i. Mrs. René Esterhuizen – Designated Safeguarding Lead Person for Child Protection
 - ii. Mrs. Nadine van der Merwe – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection
 - iii. Mr. James Neale – Safeguarding Governor

- iv. Mrs. René Esterhuizen - The Head Teacher and Safer Recruitment Officer
- 8.5. All staff members may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Care services.
- 8.6. The school will work with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as deemed appropriate. The LADO provides advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations that have concerns about a person working or volunteering with children and young people who may have behaved inappropriately, or you have received information that may constitute an allegation.
- 8.7. For further advice or help contact:
 - i. The NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
 - ii. The NSPCC whistle-blowing helpline: 0800 028 0285
 - iii. The Police: 101 to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response; 999 when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened.

9. Timescales

- 9.1. An Initial Assessment should be initiated by the DSL or Deputy DSL within 24 hours of receipt of a referral and completed in a maximum of 10 working days. However, this may depend on the case and the other agencies involved.
- 9.2. An initial assessment is deemed to be completed once the assessment has been discussed with the child and family (or caregivers) and the DSL or Deputy DSL has viewed and authorised the assessment.
- 9.3. The initial assessment period may be very brief if the criteria for initiating Local Authority involvement are met, i.e., it is suspected that the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm and a strategy discussion should take place.
- 9.4. Any extension to the timescale should be authorised by the DSL or Deputy DSL, with reasons recorded and any delay must be consistent with the welfare of the child.

10. Child Protection Policy

- 10.1. The Governors and Trustees recognise that many children and young people today are the victims of neglect, and physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, including extremism and radicalisation. Accordingly, the Governors and Trustees have adopted the policy contained in this document, (hereafter "the policy").
- 10.2. The policy sets out agreed guidelines relating to the following areas:
 - i. The Prevent Duty.
 - ii. Definitions of abuse.
 - iii. Responding to allegations of abuse, including those made against teachers in the school.
 - iv. Appointing teachers/assistants.
 - v. Supervision of activities and practice issues.
 - vi. Helping victims of abuse.

- vii. Working with offenders.
- viii. Safer Recruitment including the level of DBS checks that will be undertaken for all staff working with children including volunteers, governors and trustees.

11. The Prevent Duty

- 11.1. All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.
- 11.2. The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools’ and colleges’ wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders in schools should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57 – 76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders in colleges should familiarise themselves with the Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales. The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.
- 11.3. Channel:
 - i. Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual’s engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.
 - ii. The designated safeguarding lead should consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the ‘Channel’ programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives.
- 11.4. Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: Channel guidance. For additional support see pages 157-158 KCSIE 2025.
- 11.5. Schools and EYFS providers have a critical part to play. In England, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) accordingly places clear duties on providers to keep children safe and promote their welfare. To protect children in our care, we must be alert to any safeguarding and child protection issues in the child’s life at home or elsewhere.
- 11.6. As a school and EYFS provider, we are expected to demonstrate activity in the following areas:
 - i. Assessing the risk of children being drawn into terrorism.
 - ii. Demonstrate that they are protecting children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies.
 - iii. Ensure that their safeguarding arrangements consider the policies and procedures of the local authority, the police, and the health service.

- iv. Make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism.
- v. Expected to ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet.

11.7. The school holds a separate Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy regarding this.

12. The Role of the Curriculum

- 12.1. We will work to ensure that our pupils will be skilled and equipped to be resilient and resist involvement in extreme or radical activities. Therefore, we recognise the need to build resilience in our pupils to make them less vulnerable.
- 12.2. We will therefore provide a broad and balanced curriculum within which we aim to support pupils, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC). SMSC development is promoted through all our subjects, including the ethos of our school where development of positive attitudes and values is central to everything we do.
- 12.3. Values underpinning public life in the UK have been summarised as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and the tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It is important that our pupils understand this through different approaches using a balanced and broad curriculum. This supports our pupils to be responsible citizens and prepares for an adult life living and working in Britain which is diverse and changing.
- 12.4. Our goal is to build mutual respect and understanding and to promote the use of dialogue not violence as a form of conflict resolution. We will achieve this by using a curriculum that includes:
 - i. Citizenship programmes for older students.
 - ii. PSHE
 - iii. Open discussion and debate.
 - iv. Work on anti-violence and a restorative approach addressed throughout curriculum.
 - v. Focussed educational programmes.
- 12.5. We understand that schools and colleges play a crucial role in preventative education. Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school or college approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment. The school has a clear set of values and standards, upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. These are underpinned by the school behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence based RSHE delivered in regularly timetabled lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. Our programme is fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate, according to our beliefs.
- 12.6. Our programme includes teaching, at an age-appropriate stage or according to their stage of development, on:

- i. Supporting children to develop the skills that form the building blocks of all positive relationships
 - ii. Healthy and respectful relationships
 - iii. Boundaries, consent and kindness in relationships
 - iv. Stereotyping, prejudice, and equality
 - v. body confidence and self-esteem
 - vi. how to recognise and report concerns about an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
 - vii. The concepts of, and laws relating to – all forms of sexual harassment, and abuse, and how to access support, and what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it.
- 12.7. We will also work with local partners, families, and communities in our efforts to ensure our school understands and embraces our local context and values in challenging extremist views and to assist in the broadening of our pupil's experiences and horizons. We will help support students who may be vulnerable to such influences as part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities and where we believe a pupil is being directly affected by extremist materials or influences, we will ensure that that pupil is offered mentoring.
- 12.8. The following is taken from Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings 2022:
- 12.9. Where part of the school curriculum allows for student led projects, staff should be mindful of safeguarding considerations in the topic chosen and the methodology used. For example, students often choose topics with which they have had personal experience; this may indicate a previously unknown safeguarding issue or may raise concerns about the re-traumatisation of the student. Student projects are often conducted using questionnaires with peers; these should be checked for appropriateness to ensure the student respondents are not distressed by the questions asked and that any disclosures received through these questionnaires are picked up by the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Other methodologies which might raise concerns include students visiting unknown adults alone to interview them; conducting social experiments on peers or young children without parental consent; or accessing age-inappropriate content online.

13. Significant Harm

- 13.1. Some children are in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. Decisions about significant harm should be informed by a careful assessment of the child's circumstances and discussion between statutory agencies and with the child and family.

14. Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

14.1. The following definitions of child abuse are taken from the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024'.

14.2. Abuse:

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

14.3. Physical Abuse:

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

14.4. Emotional Abuse:

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

14.5. 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 the child is aware of what is happening or not. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of the school's policy and procedures for dealing with it.

14.6. Neglect:

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in

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

- 14.7. Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in Annex B of KCSIE 2025.

15. Specific Safeguarding Issues

- 15.1. Children with special educational needs and disabilities or physical health issues:
- 15.2. Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:
- i. Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
 - ii. These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children.
 - iii. The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
 - iv. Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- 15.3. The school will consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.
- 15.4. Further information can be found in the SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 and Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions.
- 15.5. Learners with SEN and disabilities have the following safeguarding vulnerabilities:
- i. Disabled children are at significantly greater risk of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect than non-disabled children.
 - ii. Disabled children at greatest risk of abuse are those with behaviour/conduct disorders. Other high-risk groups include children with learning difficulties/disabilities, children with speech and language difficulties, children with health-related conditions and deaf children.
 - iii. Disabled children are more likely to be abused by someone in their family compared to non-disabled children. Most disabled children are abused by someone who is known to them.
 - iv. Bullying is a feature in the lives of many disabled children.
 - v. Disabled children are more likely to experience the negative aspects of social networking sites than non-disabled children.

- vi. Disabled children (and severely disabled children even more so) may disclose less frequently, and delay disclosure more often compared to typically developing children. Disabled children are most likely to turn to a trusted adult they know well for help such as family, friend, or teacher.
- 15.6. Disabled children are at greater risk of abuse and significant barriers can exist to their safeguarding and wellbeing. Understanding a child's needs, building on their strengths, overcoming the barriers, and developing innovative solutions for meeting the challenges will not only enhance the child's wellbeing and protection from abuse but will provide learning that may also be of benefit for non-disabled children. Disabled children have an equal right to protection from abuse.

16. Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

- 16.1. 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.
- 16.2. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.
- 16.3. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.
- 16.4. It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at:
www.actionagainstabduction.org and www.clevernevergoes.org

17. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- 17.1. We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county line) and sexual exploitation.
- 17.2. In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts, or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.
- 17.3. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or in groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.
- 17.4. Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.
- 17.5. Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- i. appear with unexplained gifts, money, or new possessions; • associate with other children involved in exploitation;
 - ii. suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
 - iii. misuse drugs and alcohol;
 - iv. go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
 - v. regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.
- 17.6. Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.
- 17.7. CSE can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence.
- 17.8. Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:
- i. have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
 - ii. suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.
- 17.9. Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners
- 17.10. The school holds the following documents on file if ever the need arises for such information: "Child Sexual Exploitation Definition and Guide Feb 2017" and KCSIE (Annex B).

18. County Lines

- 18.1. County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store, and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.
- 18.2. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools (mainstream and special), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes, and care homes.
- 18.3. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.
- 18.4. A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:
- i. go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home;
 - ii. have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g., knife crime);

- iii. are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs;
 - iv. are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection;
 - v. are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity;
 - vi. owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters;
 - vii. have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.
- 18.5. Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

19. Children and the Court System

- 19.1. Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age-appropriate guides to support children 5 – 11 – year olds and 12 – 17 – year olds.
- 19.2. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.
- 19.3. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.

20. Children Missing from Education

- 20.1. All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour' based abuse, or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in the future. Staff should be aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.
- 20.2. The school has a Child Missing from Education policy, written in accordance with the Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities - September 2016, which we will abide by concerning this area.
- 20.3. The school has in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.
- 20.4. In the case of a child being withdrawn from the school and their whereabouts being unknown, the school will endeavour in the first place to contact the parents or guardians.

- 20.5. If no communication is received within a week, the school will contact the LEA to enquire whether they have any information regarding the child. If the LEA do not have any facts about the whereabouts of the child, we will consult with the LEA about the next step which may involve handing the case over to the local Children's Services.
- 20.6. If this is the case, a note will be made in the Admissions Register stating that the child's whereabouts is unknown and that they have been referred to the LEA. This will be updated if any relevant information is received.

21. Children with Family Members in Prison

- 21.1. Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation, and poor mental health, NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.

22. Child-on Child Abuse

- 22.1. All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports where they believe a child may be at risk from it.
- 22.2. All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in the school it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).
- 22.3. It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just have a laugh", "part of growing up", or "boys being boys", can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
- 22.4. It is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, but child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously whoever is the victim and the perpetrator.
- 22.5. All staff should 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.
- 22.6. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:
 - i. Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')

- ii. 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)
- iii. 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)
- iv. Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- v. 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
- vi. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- vii. 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
- viii. 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)

23. Actions the school will take.

- 23.1. The school deals with a wide continuum of children's behaviour on a day-to-day basis and most cases will be dealt with via school-based processes. These are outlined in the following policies:
 - i. Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy.
 - ii. Online E-Safety.
 - iii. Attendance Policy.
 - iv. Relationships Education Policy/Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- 23.2. The school will also act to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by ensuring the establishment provides a safe environment, promotes positive standards of behaviour, has effective systems in place where children can raise concerns and provides safeguarding through the curriculum via PSHE and other curriculum opportunities. This may include targeted work with children identified as vulnerable or being at risk and developing risk assessment and targeted work with those identified as being a potential risk to others.

24. Action on Serious Concerns

- 24.1. The school will take this issue seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and address it through the same processes as any safeguarding issue. We also recognise that children who abuse others are also likely to have considerable welfare and safeguarding issues themselves.
- 24.2. Child-on-child abuse may be a one-off serious incident or an accumulation of incidents. Staff may be able to easily identify some behaviour/s as abusive however in some circumstances it may be less

clear. In all cases the member of staff should discuss the concerns and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

- 24.3. When an allegation is made by a student against another student, members of staff should consider if the issues raised indicate that the child and /or alleged perpetrator may have emerging needs, complex/serious needs or child protection concerns.
- 24.4. Any suspicion or allegations that a child has been sexually abused or is likely to sexually abuse another child (or adult) should be referred immediately to the DSL, who will refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the Police, straightaway.
- 24.5. However, staff may refer directly to the LADO or police, but please inform the DSL if you do so.
- 24.6. All allegations should be discussed with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on the day the allegation is made known to the school and advice sought from the LADO.
- 24.7. Considerations for cases where child-on-child abuse is a factor include:
 - i. What is the nature, extent, and context of the behaviour including verbal, physical, sexting and/or online abuse? Was there coercion, physical aggression, bullying, bribery or attempts to ensure secrecy? What was the duration and frequency? Were other children and /or adults involved?
 - ii. What is the child's age, development, capacity to understand and make decisions (including anything that might have had an impact on this i.e., coercion), and family and social circumstances?
 - iii. What are the relative chronological and developmental age of the two children and are there any differentials in power or authority?
 - iv. Is the behaviour age appropriate or not? Does it involve inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation?
 - v. Are there any risks to the child themselves and others i.e., other children in school, in the child's household, extended family, peer group, or wider social network?
- 24.8. The school will use resources from the Wokingham Borough council, GOV.UK website and the NSPCC on such issues to address these matters in PSHE.

25. Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in school and colleges

- 25.1. See KCSIE Part 5: Child-on child sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- 25.2. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.
- 25.3. Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- i. making clear that there is a **zero-tolerance** approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should **never** be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
 - ii. recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
 - iii. challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- 25.4. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens, may find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, likely, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.
- 25.5. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. All staff should understand it is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.
- 25.6. Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with disabilities are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers.
- 25.7. Ultimately, it is essential that **all** victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

26. Sexual Violence

- 26.1. It is important that school staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse other children in this way and it can happen both inside and outside of school. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003¹⁰⁵ which sets out a full definition for the following:
- i. **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
 - ii. **Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the

penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

- iii. **Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. Staff should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.
- iv. **Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party).

26.2. For information on 'What is consent' see page 114 KCSIE 2025.

26.3. Sexual Harassment:

- i. Sexual harassment is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive, or sexualised environment.

26.4. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- i. sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and calling someone sexualised names; and
- ii. sexual "jokes" or taunting; and
- iii. physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (the school will consider when any of this cross a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim).
- iv. displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature;
- v. upskirting (this is a criminal offence), and
- vi. online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - a) consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos; Taking and sharing nude photographs of those aged under 18 is a criminal offence. [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#) provides detailed advice for schools and colleges;
 - b) sharing of unwanted explicit content;
 - c) sexualised online bullying;
 - d) unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
 - e) sexual exploitation; coercion and threats;

- f) coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.
- vii. More guidance on this matter may be found in the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

27. Female Genital Mutilation

- 27.1. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.
- 27.2. **Teachers have a specific legal duty to act** with regards to concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM). They must personally report to the police a disclosure that FGM has been carried out (in addition to liaising with the DSL. However, all staff should speak to the DSL where there are concerns.
- 27.3. The school will access the following documents if ever the need arises for such information, as referred to in Annex B of KCSIE 2025:
 - i. 'FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers' KCSIE 2025 page 162
 - ii. 'Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation'
 - iii. 'FGM Resource Pack'
 - iv. 'FGM Fact Sheet'

28. Mental Health

- 28.1. All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 28.2. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff working with the children, however, are well placed to observe them day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- 28.3. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.
- 28.4. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the school's Child Protection Policy, and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.
 - i. See KCSIE 2025 pages 50 - 51, for advice and guidance on children requiring mental health support.

29. Radicalisation

- 29.1. Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.
- i. **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.
 - ii. **Radicalisation** is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of terrorist violence.
 - iii. **Terrorism** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause.
- 29.2. While there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern.
- 29.3. It is possible to protect the vulnerable people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may need help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

30. So-called 'Honour' based abuse (Including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

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

31. Actions

- 31.1. If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers that requires a different approach (see section on FGM).

31.2. Further information may be found in the following guidance:

- i. FGM – pages 162 KCSIE 2025
- ii. Forced marriage – page 163 KCSIE 2025
- iii. Female genital mutilation: information and resources – Home Office guidance
- iv. Female genital mutilation: multi-agency statutory guidance – DfE, DH, and HO statutory guidance
- v. Forced marriage – Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) statutory guidance
- vi. FGM resource pack – HM Government guidance

32. Other Safeguarding Issues

32.1. Specific issues:

32.2. Staff need to be aware of the following specific issues. Guidance and practical support on these specific safeguarding issues will be sought from expert and professional organisations, when needed, using the NSPCC and GOV.UK websites. Links to Additional Advice and Support may be found on pages 163 – 169 of KCSIE 2025, which signpost schools towards further information on specific safeguarding issues.

- i. Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism (KCSIE 2025 page 157)
- ii. Cybercrime (KCSIE 2025 page 153)
- iii. Domestic Abuse – inc. ‘teenage relationship abuse’ (KCSIE 2025 page 154)
- iv. Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:
 - a) NSPCC – UK domestic – abuse Signs and Symptoms Effects
 - b) Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children
 - c) Safe Young Lives: Young people and domestic abuse/Safelives
 - d) Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse).
 - e) Operation Encompass (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children)
- v. Bullying including cyberbullying - see our ‘Online E-Safety Policy’.
- vi. Children requiring mental health support (See KCSIE 2025, page 50).
- vii. Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans) (See KCSIE 2025, page 48).
- viii. Drugs.
- ix. Fabricated or induced illness.

- x. Faith based abuse.
- xi. Forced marriage.
- xii. Gangs and youth violence.
- xiii. Hate – see Educate Against Hate and Appendix I of our Anti-Bullying Policy.
- xiv. Homelessness – the DSL should be aware of the contact details and referral routes of the Local Housing Authority to enable them to raise concerns. Referrals to the Local Housing Authority should not replace referrals to children’s social care where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm. Schools should recognise that for 16- and 17-year-olds homelessness may not be family-based, and the DSL should ensure appropriate referrals to children’s services are made where necessary. (See KCSIE 2025 page 156)
- xv. Looked after children and previously looked after children (See KCSIE 2025, page 52).
- xvi. Private fostering – (See KCSIE 2025 page 89)
- xvii. Sexting/Sharing nude and semi-nude images – See The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) non-statutory guidance on Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (YPSI), entitled ‘Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people’ and our ‘Sharing Nude and Semi-nude Images Policy’

33. Alternative Provision

- 33.1. If the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, they remain responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil. The provider should provide written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on those working at the establishment.

34. Adults Who Supervise Children on Work Experience

- 34.1. When organising work placements, the school will ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures in place to safeguard pupils.
- i. Children staying with Host Families (Homestay) – See pages 89 KCSIE 2025

35. Sharing Safeguarding/Child Protection Information with a New School or College

- 35.1. When a pupil with child protection issues moves school, the DSL should consider whether it is appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a pupil leaving, in addition to the child protection file. The DfE gives the example of information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting a victim of abuse and have the appropriate support in place for the pupil’s arrival.

36. Recognising and Responding to Abuse

36.1. The following signs may or may not be indications that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

36.2. Physical Signs of Abuse:

- i. Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- ii. Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- iii. Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- iv. Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc.
- v. Reluctance to change for or participate in games or swimming.
- vi. Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
- vii. Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation.
- viii. Cuts/scratches/substance abuse.

36.3. Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse:

- i. Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- ii. Any allegations made by a child concerning female genital mutation.
- iii. Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- iv. Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- v. Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- vi. Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- vii. Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams, or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- viii. Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia.

36.4. Emotional Signs of Abuse:

- i. Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also, depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.
- ii. Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
- iii. Obsessions or phobias.
- iv. Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- v. Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- vi. Attention-seeking behaviour.
- vii. Persistent tiredness.

- viii. Running away/stealing/lying.

37. What To Do If You Suspect That Abuse May Have Occurred:

- 37.1. You must report concerns as soon as possible to Mrs. René Esterhuizen, the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSL), who is nominated by the Governors and Trustees to act on their behalf in referring allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. She may also be required by conditions of the School Insurance Policy to immediately inform the Insurance Company. In the absence of the DSL, the matter should be brought to the attention of Mrs. Nadine Van der Merwe (hereafter the "Deputy DSL"). In all instances telephone 0118 988 6464.
- 37.2. If the suspicions in any way involve the DSL or Deputy DSL, then the report should be made to the Safeguarding Governor who should contact the local Designated Officer (DO).
- 37.3. Staff should only involve those who need to be involved when a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- 37.4. Although members of the school are expected to use the procedure stated in step 1, it is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies or seek advice from a reputable safeguarding agency. Please inform the DSL immediately, if you do so. If, however, you feel that the DSL or Deputy DSL have not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is open to you to contact the relevant organisation direct. We hope that by making this statement that we demonstrate the commitment of the school to effective child protection.

38. Allegations of Physical Injury or Neglect

- 38.1. If a child has a physical injury or symptom of neglect, the DSL will:
- Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice in cases of deliberate injury or when concerned about the child's safety. The school in these circumstances should not inform the parents.
 - Where emergency medical attention is necessary it will be sought immediately. The DSL will inform the doctor of any suspicions of abuse.
 - In other circumstances speak with the parent/carer and suggest that medical help/ attention be sought for the child. The doctor (or health visitor) will then initiate further action, if necessary.
 - If appropriate, the parent/carer will be encouraged to seek help from the Local Authority.
 - Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, if appropriate, the DSL will offer to go with them. If they still fail to act, the DSL should, in cases of real concern, contact the local Safeguarding Children Partnership for advice.

39. Allegations of Sexual Abuse

- 39.1. In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the DSL will:

- i. Contact the Police Child Protection Team directly. The DSL will NOT speak to the parent (or anyone else).
- ii. If, for any reason, the DSL is unsure whether to follow the above, then advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be sought and followed.
- iii. Under no circumstances will the DSL attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegation or suspicions of sexual abuse. The role of the DSL is to collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and to provide this information to the DO, whose task it is to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- iv. Whilst allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse will normally be reported to the DSL, the absence of the DSL or Deputy DSL should not delay referral to the DO.
- v. Exceptionally, should there be any disagreement between the person in receipt of the allegation or suspicion and the DSL or Deputy DSL as to the appropriateness of a referral to the LADO, that person retains a responsibility as a member of the public to report serious matters to the LADO, and should do so without hesitation.
- vi. The Governors and Trustees will support the DSL or Deputy DSL in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.

40. How to Respond to A Child Wanting to Talk About Abuse or Neglect

40.1. It is not easy to give precise guidance, but the following may help:

40.2. General Points:

- i. If a child makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, you must always take any such concerns seriously and follow the school's procedures for reporting allegations.
- ii. Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound).
- iii. Keep calm.
- iv. Look at the child directly.
- v. Be honest.
- vi. Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – do not promise confidentiality.
- vii. Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- viii. Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
- ix. Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.

40.3. Helpful things you may say or show:

- i. "I believe you".
- ii. Show acceptance of what the child says.

iii. "Thank you for telling me".

iv. "It's not your fault".

v. "I will help you".

40.4. Do not say:

i. "Why didn't you tell anyone before".

ii. "I can't believe it!"

iii. "Are you sure this is true?"

iv. Never make false promises.

v. Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else".

vi. Do not ask leading questions or 'interrogate'.

40.5. Instead ask questions such as:

i. Who: "Tell me who was there when this happened?"

ii. What: "Can you tell me more about what happened?"

iii. When: "Can you tell me when this happened?"

iv. Where: "Can you describe to me where this happened?"

v. How: "Can you explain to me how this happened?"

40.6. Concluding

i. Again, reassure the child what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens (the DSL might have to consider referring to the Children, Schools and Families department or the Police to prevent a child or young person returning home if the school considers them to be seriously at risk of further abuse)

ii. Contact the person in the school responsible for coordinating child protection concerns or contact the Children, Schools and Families department/Police/NSPCC.

iii. Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.

41. What to Do Once a Child Has Talked to You About Abuse

41.1. The Procedure:

i. Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the child talking to you), writing down exactly what the child said and when she/he said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g., a description of the activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept safely for an indefinite period.

ii. Use the form "Responding to abuse – worker's action sheet".

- iii. Report your discussion as soon as possible to the DSL. If the latter is implicated report to the Deputy DSL. If all are implicated, report to the Safeguarding Governor, who should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- iv. You should not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated in the above point.
- v. Once a child has talked about abuse the DSL should consider whether it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On rare occasions, it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact the DO and/ or Police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.

42. Working with Offenders

- 42.1. The Governors and Trustees in their commitment to the protection of all children will meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep.
- 42.2. Offenders will be expected to sign a contract stipulating boundaries and will involve the person's family and partner who will need to be informed.

43. Helping Victims of Abuse – The Child's Wishes

- 43.1. As a Christian school, we are committed to supporting victims of abuse and encouraging them in their faith.
- 43.2. The school will ensure the child's wishes or feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children through ensuring there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Staff members should not promise confidentiality to the child and always act in the best interests of the child.
- 43.3. If a child – or their parent/carer – makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, the member of staff must always take any such concerns seriously and follow the school's procedures for reporting allegations.

44. Arrangements for Supervision of Group/Children's Activities

- 44.1. Practical Issues:
 - i. A register of children or young people attending the activity should be kept along with a register of helpers.
 - ii. A log of each activity, recording any unusual events with each teacher/assistant recording what they witnessed should be kept.
 - iii. Incidents such as fights and what action the teacher/assistant took should be recorded in the logbook.
 - iv. Accidents and injuries should be recorded in a separate accident book and parents and older children should be asked to sign this.

- v. No person under 16 years of age should be left in charge of any children of any age. Nor should children or young people attending school be left alone at any time.

44.2. Boundaries:

- i. All staff members should treat all children/young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.
- ii. Respect the privacy of children, avoid questionable activity.
- iii. If you invite a child to your home, ensure this is with the knowledge of the headteacher and that a parent is aware.
- iv. Ensure that all transport arrangements have parental approval and are with the knowledge of the leadership.
- v. Only staff members assigned to a group should be allowed into rooms. Other adults should not have free access. Ensure you note anybody else who is there for a specific reason in the logbook.

44.3. One-to-one situations:

- i. Staff working in one-to-one situations with pupils at the setting, including visiting staff from external organisations can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints.
- ii. To safeguard both pupils and adults, a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one-to-one work should always be undertaken. Each assessment should consider the individual needs of each pupil and should be reviewed regularly.
- iii. Arranging to meet with pupils from the school or setting away from the work premises should not be permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from a senior member of staff, the pupil, and their parents/carers.
- iv. Where staff are expected to work one-to-one with a pupil on a virtual platform, clear expectations should be set out for all of those involved that are reflective of the settings safeguarding policies and procedures.
- v. Staff should:
 - a) Work one to one with a child only when absolutely necessary (both in person and online) and with the knowledge and consent of senior leaders and parents/carers.
 - b) Be aware of relevant risk assessments, policies and procedures, including child protection, Acceptable Use Agreement and behaviour management.
 - c) Ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations.
 - d) Avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy of the interpretation of secrecy.
 - e) Always report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry.
 - f) Consider the needs and circumstances of the pupil involved.
 - g) ensure prior to any online learning, there are clear expectations of behaviour and conduct of all parties that have been agreed in advance.

45. Off-Site Visits

- 45.1. Appropriate risk assessments must be in place prior to any off-site visit taking place.
- 45.2. Any overnight visit will explicitly set out sleeping arrangements; the role and responsibility of each adult, whether employed or volunteers; on/off duty arrangements; clear expectations about boundaries and interactions with children/young people; and expectations around smoking/drinking by adult.
- 45.3. Safeguarding concerns or allegations will be responded to following the school safe-guarding procedures. The member of staff in charge of the visit will report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head Teacher/Principal, who will pass to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if appropriate. In an emergency, the staff member in charge will contact the police and/or social care.
- 45.4. Home visits:
 - i. All work with pupils and parents should usually be undertaken in the school. There are however occasions, in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation or job role, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits, e.g., to undertake a welfare visit during school closures.
 - ii. Staff should:
 - a) Agree the purpose for any home visit with the headteacher and ensure that all visits are justified and recorded.
 - b) Have a clear understanding of the actions that should be taken if it is believed that a child or parent is at immediate risk of harm, including when to contact emergency services and/or partner agencies.
 - c) Adhere to agreed risk assessments.
 - d) Avoid unannounced visits wherever possible.
 - e) ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations.
 - f) never enter a home without the parent or carer's consent or when the parent or carer is absent, except in an emergency.
 - g) Always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure.
 - h) ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager.
 - i) Ensure that children are seen in open and observable spaces; for example, living rooms.
 - j) Comply with data protection regulations in relation to any personal information carried or notes made about the child.
 - k) Have access to a mobile telephone and an emergency contact.

46. Policy on Suspicions or Allegations of Child Abuse Involving School Staff

- 46.1. Staff, including volunteers, must be aware that they may be vulnerable to accusations of abuse and must, therefore, be sensitive to a child's reaction to physical contact and react appropriately. During their daily contact with the children, all staff must be aware of the following:
 - i. It is the policy of The Vine Christian School not to kiss the pupils.
 - ii. Staff should not touch a child in such a way or on parts of the body that might be considered indecent.
 - iii. Staff should avoid restraining children, except under certain circumstances when it is unavoidable (See Policy on Restraint).
 - iv. Staff should maintain professional standards of behaviour and appropriate boundaries at all times in relationships between themselves and the pupils, themselves and the parents, and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others. Staff should report any such incident to the headteacher or DSL. This is as relevant in the online world as it is in the classroom; staff engaging with pupils and/or parents online have a responsibility to model safe practice at all times.
 - v. A member of staff, who feels that they may be at risk of being accused of behaving inappropriately, should request the presence of another member of staff.
 - vi. No form of corporal punishment should ever be used, nor its use ever threatened.
- 46.2. When it is necessary to restrain a child to prevent injury to themselves, others, or property, only the minimum force should be used and injury to the child concerned should be avoided. Any arm or hands should never be placed around a child's neck.
- 46.3. If there is an allegation or suspicion of misconduct about a member of staff, the Head Teacher must be informed immediately. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- 46.4. If the allegation or suspicion in any way involves the DSL or Deputy DSL, then the report should be made to the Safeguarding Governor, who should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 0118 974 6141 or email at LADO@wokingham.gov.uk and give as much information as you can.
- 46.5. In line with KCSIE 2025, the school will take responsibility for managing allegations against contractors, volunteers, and supply staff, regardless of employment arrangements. Where appropriate, concerns will be shared with the individual's employer or agency, but the school retains responsibility for following up and ensuring appropriate action is taken.
- 46.6. The school is required to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service as soon as investigations are completed, any person, whether employed, contracted, a volunteer, or a student, whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children.
- 46.7. The address for referrals is DBS customer services, PO Box 3961, Royal Wootton Bassett SN4 4HF - Telephone 03000 200 190. Failure by the school to make such a report could constitute an offence, leading to the school being removed from the DfE's register of Independent Schools

(legislation from The Education (Provision of Information by Independent Schools) (England) Regulations 2003. Compromise Agreements cannot apply in this connection.

- 46.8. The school will also make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- 46.9. Schools and colleges have a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:
- i. the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual.
 - ii. the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and
 - iii. the individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left.
 - iv. A person satisfies the harm test if they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm. It is something a person may do to cause harm or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. (See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs#what-is-the-harm-test>).
 - v. The Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) will also be informed if staff are sacked due to safeguarding issues <https://teacherservices.education.gov.uk/>
- 46.10. Regard must be given to the section 'Allegations of Abuse Made Against Teachers and Other Staff', in the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', which is on file in the school office. This should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including supply staff and volunteers) in a school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age has:
- i. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
 - ii. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
 - iii. Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.
 - iv. Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates he or she may not be suitable to work with children.
 - v. This is due to the principle of transferrable risk where an individual is involved in an incident outside of school which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children. For example, domestic violence at home – even if no children were involved, could a child trigger the same reaction, and thereby be put at risk.

47. Duty to Report Concerns About an Individual's Suitability to Work with Children

- 47.1. There is a duty to report (including self-reporting) any incident in which an adult has or may have behaved in a way that is inconsistent with the organisation's staff code of conduct including inappropriate behaviours inside, outside of work or online.

- 47.2. Staff should recognise their individual responsibility to raise any concerns regarding behaviour or conduct (including low level concerns) that falls short of the principles outlined in this document and the setting's staff Behaviour Policy. It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold (see KCSIE), are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately.
- 47.3. Failure to report or respond to such concerns would constitute a failure in professional responsibilities to safeguard children and promote welfare.
- 47.4. The NSPCC 'what you can do to report abuse' dedicated helpline is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by the school. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 The line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday or email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- 47.5. Therefore this school:
- i. Has clear systems in place for all reporting of adults' behaviour causing concern within our Whistleblowing Policy.
 - ii. Promotes an open and transparent culture where staff feel valued and are confident to report any concerns.
 - iii. Ensures all concerns about adult conduct are heard, received in a sensitive manner, taken seriously, actioned, recorded with clear outcomes.
 - iv. Ensures all concerns that do meet the harm threshold are reported to the LADO within 24 hours.
- 47.6. Therefore staff should:
- i. Escalate their concerns if they believe a child or children are not being protected.
 - ii. Report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern.
 - iii. Report allegations against staff and volunteers to the headteacher or safeguarding governor or where they have concerns about the headteacher's response, report these directly to the DSL.
 - iv. Follow the organisation's whistleblowing procedures as appropriate.
 - v. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer or feels that their genuine concerns are being addressed, they should utilise other whistleblowing channels that are open to them as outlined in KCSIE.

48. Allegations Against Pupils

- 48.1. The school's policies on behaviour, bullying, discipline, and sanctions should be read in conjunction with this policy and will also apply to this situation. Bullying should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A pupil against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from the school during the investigation if it is in the interests of a child who might otherwise be at risk, in the interests of the pupils at large or to allow the investigation to proceed more effectively.

49. Policy for Children Looked After

- 49.1. The school recognises that children looked after / children in care are one of the most vulnerable groups of children so need more frequent observational assessment to meet their needs. All staff will be made aware of anyone in the school who is looked after so that the child can be supported adequately. On admission, it will be established who has parental responsibility so that statutory requirements are met.
- 49.2. The Governing body will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children or previously looked after children safe. Appropriate staff will have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. Information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her will be available for all staff involved, including the designated safeguarding lead having details of the child's social worker.
- 49.3. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, the school will work together with all agencies involved and take prompt action, when necessary, to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.
- 49.4. The school holds a policy for Children Looked After on file.

50. Care Leavers

- 50.1. A care leaver is defined as a person aged 25 or under, who has been looked after by a local authority for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14; and who was looked after by the local authority at school-leaving age or after that date.
- 50.2. If the need arises, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise as necessary with the local authority Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support the care leaver, regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

51. Physical Intervention Policy and Use of Reasonable Force

- 51.1. The school holds a Physical Intervention Policy, which includes the use of reasonable force.

52. Photography and Images

- 52.1. To protect children, we will:
 - i. Seek parental consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications).
 - ii. Only use school equipment.
 - iii. Only take photos and videos of children to celebrate achievement.
 - iv. Use only the child's first name with an image.

- v. Ensure that children are appropriately dressed.
 - vi. Encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.
- 52.2. The school will issue a statement that where parents are taking photographs of children related to school events these are to be for personal use only (these are not to be shared on social media for example).

53. External Visitors/Contributors/Speakers

- 53.1. Visitors with a professional role, such as the school nurse, social worker, educational psychologist, or members of the Police will have had the appropriate vetting checks undertaken by their own organisation. Any professionals visiting the school should provide evidence of their professional role and employment details (an identity badge for example). If felt necessary, the school will contact the relevant organisation to verify the individual's identity.
- 53.2. The school has a separate policy for visiting speakers.

54. Agency Staff

- 54.1. The school will check that any agency staff member attending the school is the same person that the agency has provided the vetting checks for.
- 54.2. If staff supplied by an employment business have lived outside the UK, the employment business must have made additional checks for the appropriate countries, and the school will get written confirmation to that effect from the employment business.

55. Safer Recruitment

- 55.1. The school will follow the procedures as laid out in the school's 'Appointment of Staff and Safer Recruitment Policy'. A summary follows:
- i. Before employing a teacher, the school will take all reasonable steps to establish whether the individual is subject to a teacher prohibition order and, if so, prevent their employment.
 - ii. In accordance with KCSIE 2025, the school may carry out online checks on shortlisted candidates to identify any potential safeguarding concerns. These checks are proportionate and documented as part of the recruitment process.
 - iii. All shortlisted applicants will be informed that online searches may be undertaken as part of due diligence checks. This is to identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview.
 - iv. The school will verify a candidate's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address except where, for exceptional reasons, none is available.
 - v. The school will only accept copies of a curriculum vitae alongside an application form. A curriculum vitae on its own will not provide adequate information.

- vi. Enhanced DBS checks will be undertaken for all staff, including volunteers who are carrying out relevant, unsupervised activities with the students, and all Governors and Trustees.
- vii. When responding to questions from the school about their criminal record, staff do not need to provide details about any protected cautions or protected convictions.
- viii. Those in regulated activity will need an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check. A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children is not in regulated activity.
- ix. A separate barred list check (List 99 check) will be obtained if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available.
- x. A Prohibition from Teaching Check will be completed for everyone engaged in 'teaching work', whether a qualified teacher or not; and recorded on the Single Central Record, to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching, using Teacher Services (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teacher-status-checks-information-for-employers>).
- xi. Even people with QTS, MUST have this prohibition check entered into the Single Central Record. The Teacher Service's system will be used to verify any award of QTS and the completion of an induction/probation.
- xii. All leaders and managers, including Trustees and Governors are now required to have a section 128 Management Check – This will be included on the school's SCR showing that checks have been according to section 128. This will also be done using Teacher Services (as point 7).

Note: Section 128 directions will show on an enhanced DBS check with barred list information, provided that 'children's workforce independent schools' is specified in the parameters of the check.

- xiii. Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools or colleges – see paragraphs 280-285 KCSIE 2025.
- xiv. This includes obtaining (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK.
- xv. In addition, the school will make any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.
- xvi. These checks could include, where available:
 - a) criminal records check for overseas applicants - Home Office guidance can be found on GOV.UK, and for teaching positions.
 - b) Obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach. Applicants can find contact details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the Regulated Professionals database. Applicants can also contact the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications who will signpost them to the appropriate EEA regulatory body.

55.2. Where available, such evidence can be considered together with information obtained through other pre-appointment checks to help assess their suitability. Where this information is not

available the school will seek alternative methods of checking suitability and or undertake a risk assessment that supports informed decision making on whether to proceed with the appointment. Although sanctions and restrictions imposed by another regulating authority do not prevent a person from taking up a teaching position in England, the school will consider the circumstances that led to the restriction or sanction being imposed when considering a candidate's suitability for employment.

- 55.3. Further information can be found in DfE Guidance:
 - i. Recruit teachers from overseas. All steps taken will be well documented.
- 55.4. Applicants will be asked to supply a declaration of their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role.
- 55.5. The applicant's right to work in the UK will be checked and evidence kept on record.
- 55.6. As part of our Safeguarding Policy employment will not be offered without the applicant supplying evidence of a full employment history, including information on any gaps.
- 55.7. As part of the shortlisting process, the school will consider carrying out an online search as part of our due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview. This will have regard to KCSIE Part two – Legislation and the Law for information on data protection and UK GDPR.
- 55.8. Two professional references will be requested, for all staff, including volunteers, which go back 5 years, from senior persons and not just colleagues; character and/or pastoral references will only be requested where appropriate or relevant. Where possible, references will be obtained prior to interviews to allow any concerns to be explored with the referee and discussed with the candidate.
- 55.9. The criteria for NOT appointing children's workers are:
 - i. Previous offences against children
 - ii. If the Governors and Trustees have reservations about an individual's behaviour, lifestyle, attitudes, and spiritual commitment.
 - iii. If the Governors and Trustees have any reasons to doubt a worker's suitability for the job.
- 55.10. All new staff will be expected to read the school Code of Conduct Policy and all policies concerning Child Protection and Safeguarding as part of their Induction Process, including the Behaviour Policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, and the identity of the DSL and Deputy DSL.
- 55.11. All new staff will need to complete a Basic Awareness Course on Safeguarding and Child Protection, renewable every two years.
- 55.12. The school will keep this information on all staff members as to whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which the checks were completed, in a single central record.
- 55.13. Staff are to be informed at interview that the school may review the DBS automatic updates yearly, with prior consent from staff, or ask for a signed declaration regarding any convictions, cautions, reprimands, or warnings which have been recorded on a police central record, (includes 'spent' and

‘unspent’ convictions) or if any information is held locally by police forces that are grounds to be considered relevant, since their last declaration. This includes any information that may be held on the DBS’s children and adults barred list.

55.14. If an applicant’s criminal record check reveals details of past cautions and/or convictions the following procedures will be followed:

- i. If the certificate simply confirms what the applicant has already disclosed, and we have already taken this information into account when making the offer of employment, we will confirm the offer of employment.
- ii. If our decision to recruit an applicant depends upon approval from a senior staff member, we shall ensure that the decision maker has all the relevant information to hand to make a fair and balanced decision. This may include the applicant’s initial disclosure, a disclosure statement, and any other relevant information they may have provided in the interim that may inform a risk assessment.
- iii. If the certificate reveals information that we were not expecting or that the applicant had not previously disclosed, further consideration may be necessary. See the ‘Appointment of Staff and Safer Recruitment Policy’.
- iv. At least one person conducting an interview will have completed safer recruitment training.
- v. Should the school take on Trainee/Student Teachers written confirmation will be obtained from the provider that it has carried out all pre-appointment checks that the school would otherwise be required to perform.

55.15. Disqualification:

- i. Under section 76(3) schools are prohibited from employing a disqualified person in connection with relevant childcare provision in the settings set out in the relevant offences and orders section of the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006, unless the individual in question has been granted a waiver by Ofsted for the role they wish to undertake. An employer commits an offence if they contravene section 76(3), except if they prove that they did not know, and had no reasonable grounds for believing, that the person they employed was disqualified.

55.16. Disqualification by Association

- i. Disqualification by Association applies if a person is living in the same household where another person who is disqualified lives or is employed (disqualification ‘by association’) as specified in regulation 9 of the 2018 regulations. Under the 2018 regulations, schools are no longer required to establish whether a member of staff providing, or employed to work in childcare, is disqualified by association.
- ii. However, there is now an expectation for all staff to inform the school where their relationships and associations, both within and outside of the workplace (including online), may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the school.
- iii. If your circumstances change you must inform the headteacher of the school including informing them of any name changes that have not previously been declared.

56. Safety Matters

- 56.1. An annual safety review will be held to consider all aspects of safety for children and young people.
- 56.2. Trustees and Governors are expected to ensure that safeguarding policies are implemented effectively and reviewed at least annually. They must also ensure the DSL is provided with sufficient time and resources to fulfil their role. Safeguarding is a standing item on all full governing body/Trustee meetings, and the Safeguarding Governor/Trustee receives appropriate safeguarding training.
- 56.3. The school's arrangements to fulfil other safeguarding and welfare responsibilities are as follows:
- i. Ensure high standards of provision and care for children and learners.
 - ii. Actively promote equality and diversity.
 - iii. Tackle bullying and discrimination immediately.
 - iv. Actively promote British values.
 - v. Prevent radicalisation and extremism.
 - vi. Ensure that all persons know how to complain and understand the process for doing so.
 - vii. Ensure that children and learners are protected and feel safe.
 - viii. Challenge any discriminatory behaviour and give help and support to children about how to treat others with respect.
 - ix. Consistently promote positive behaviour.
 - x. Ensure that all children and learners can identify a trusted adult with whom they can communicate about any concerns and know that these adults will listen to them and take their concerns seriously.
 - xi. Ensure that written records are made in a timely way and held securely where adults working with children or learners are concerned about their safety or welfare. Those records will be shared appropriately and, where necessary, with consent.
 - xii. Make clear risk assessments.
 - xiii. Oversee the safe use of technology by ensuring that our policies and procedures are adhered to.
 - xiv. Use an Acceptable Use Agreement.
 - xv. Carefully select and vet staff and volunteers working with children and learners according to statutory requirements.
 - xvi. Check all staff using Enhanced DBS checks.
 - xvii. Ensure that all staff have regular Child Protection and Safeguarding Training.
 - xviii. Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Leads undertake training at two-yearly intervals, and in addition receive an update at least yearly.
 - xix. Ensure that the Deputy DSL is trained to the same standards as the DSL.

- xx. Ensure training allows the DSL to “recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online”.
- xxi. Ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSL have job descriptions, where their roles are explicit, with clear cover arrangements. DSLs will be drawn from the senior leadership team and will be the persons carrying out the day-to-day work of safeguarding and child protection. Their responsibilities will not be delegated to others. See Appendix 1.
- xxii. Keep the Single Central Record up to date.
- xxiii. Regularly review safeguarding policies and procedures to keep all children and learners safe.
- xxiv. Ensure the school holds more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

57. Roles and Responsibilities of The School Designated Safeguarding Lead

- 57.1. The School Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the first point of contact for any member of the school staff who has a concern about the safety and well-being of a student. The DSL and Deputy DSL are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will be the most appropriate individuals to advise on any safeguarding concerns.
- 57.2. The DSL does not need to be a member of the teaching staff but should be a recognised member of the Senior Management Team with the required status and authority to carry out the requirements of the role. Their appointment will be decided by the governing board or proprietor.
- 57.3. Depending on the size and requirements of the school a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead should be available. The Deputy is the first point of contact in the absence of the DSL to avoid any unnecessary delays in responding to a student’s needs.
- 57.4. The DSL and Deputy DSL are required to undertake child protection training every two years and should supplement this training by attending workshops where available, at least annually. This training should also help the DSL and Deputy DSL recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online.
- 57.5. Requirements:
 - i. To have the skills and ability to identify signs of abuse.
 - ii. To know how to refer concerns to the appropriate investigating agencies.
 - iii. Maintain detailed and accurate written records of child protection concerns and ensure they are kept securely.
 - iv. Offer support, advice and give a level of expertise to all members of the school staff team.
 - v. Ensure that all staff have access to and understand the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

- vi. To be able to provide basic awareness/child protection training as part of the induction for all new staff in the school and be part of any other relevant training.
 - vii. Be responsible with the Head Teacher for the annual review and update of the School Safeguarding Policy and the presentation of this to the Governing Body.
 - viii. Ensure that a copy of the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available for any parents who request to see it.
 - ix. Ensure that the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors and Trustees are updated on a regular basis about all issues and child protection investigations.
 - x. Ensure that relevant safeguarding files are copied and forwarded appropriately when a child/young person transfers to another school.
 - xi. Be part of the team who review and monitor any causes of concern relating to students which are raised in school.
- 57.6. Role and Responsibilities:
- i. Taken from Annex C KCSIE 2025.
- 57.7. Manage referrals – The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to refer cases:
- i. of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children’s social care as required.
 - ii. support staff who make referrals to local authority children’s social care.
 - iii. to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required.
 - iv. support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
 - v. where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
 - vi. where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required. NSPCC – When to call the police should help understand when to consider calling the police and what to expect when working with the police.
- 57.8. Work with others – The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to:
- i. Act as a source of support, advice, and expertise for all staff.
 - ii. act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners.
 - iii. liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019;
 - iv. as required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four) and the local authority designated officer(s)(LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
 - v. liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO’s), or the named person with oversight for SEN in a college and Senior Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding

whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies; so that children's needs are considered holistically.

- vi. Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- vii. Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- viii. Work with the headteacher and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college. This includes:
- ix. Ensuring that the school or college knows who its cohorts of children are who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- x. Support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their full potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

58. Information sharing and managing the child protection file

- 58.1. The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date. Information sharing should be kept confidential and stored securely, it is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.
- 58.2. Records should include:
 - i. A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
 - ii. Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
 - iii. A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- 58.3. They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice as set out in Part one and Part two of KCSIE guidance.
- 58.4. Where children leave the school or college (including in year transfers) the designated safeguarding lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as designated safeguarding leads and special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCO's) or the named person with oversight for SEND in colleges, are aware as required.
- 58.5. Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes. In addition to the child protection file, the designated safeguarding lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new

school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

59. Raise Awareness

59.1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should:

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

60. Training, Knowledge, and Skills

60.1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide designated safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their role, how to identify, understand, and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures, and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- i. understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements.
- ii. have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- iii. understand the importance of the role the designated safeguarding lead has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- iv. understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health, and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.
- v. are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers.
- vi. understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations, and practitioners.
- vii. understand and support the school or college with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and can provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- viii. can understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college.
- ix. can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online.
- x. obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- xi. encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.
- xii. In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

61. Providing Support to Staff

- 61.1. Training should support the designated safeguarding lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:
- i. ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes.
 - ii. support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.
 - iii. maintain a record of the cohort of children who have or have had a social worker, understand their academic progress and attainment, and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; and
 - iv. use the NSPCC guidance When to Call the Police to help determine when to involve police authorities and understand what to expect during those interactions.
 - v. be familiar with the Statutory Guidance – Pace Code C 2019 and ensure that children have and Appropriate Adult when required during police procedures.

62. Understanding the Views of Children

- 62.1. It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, designated safeguarding leads should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:
- i. encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.
 - ii. understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.
 - iii. understand that children may be reluctant to approach adults and take steps to foster relationships built on trust and communication, enabling disclosure.

63. Holding and Sharing Information

- 63.1. The critical importance of recording, holding, using, and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts one, two and five of KCSIE 2025 and therefore, the designated safeguarding lead should be equipped to:
- i. understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations, and practitioners.
 - ii. understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
 - iii. be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.