

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

17 October 2026

About This Document

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History

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1. Introduction

1.1. This document has been reviewed with reference to the documents Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023), The Prevent duty: practical guidance for designated safeguarding leads (DfE, September 2026) 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 providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (updated May 2024), together with any information-sharing guidance in force, and section 3 of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, where applicable.

iii.

1.3. This policy is written in line with our:

i. Appointment of Staff and Safer Recruitment Policy.

ii. Online Safety Policy

iii. Sharing of Nudes and Semi-Nude Policy.

iv. Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy.

v. Whistleblowing Policy.

vi. Behaviour Policy.

vii. Anti-bullying Policy.

viii. Children Missing Education 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 school will promote an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture in which racism and other forms of discriminatory behaviours are recognised, challenged and addressed as part of its safeguarding responsibilities.

2.3. The terms 'child' and 'children' includes everyone under the age of 18.

2.4. 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).

2.5. The Governors and Trustees will ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are distributed, adopted, implemented and monitored.

2.6. During term time, the DSL or a Deputy DSL will always be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Generally, the DSL or Deputy DSL should be available in person, although in exceptional circumstances availability by telephone or other appropriate means may be acceptable.

2.7. Robust cover arrangements will be in place for periods when the DSL is unavailable due to illness, leave or other circumstances, to ensure that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored and acted upon without delay. Any Deputy DSL providing cover will be trained to the same standard as the DSL.

2.8. The school will also ensure that adequate and appropriate safeguarding cover arrangements are in place for any school activities taking place outside the normal school hours or during the school holidays.

2.9. 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, health services and other relevant agencies when managing referrals, as well as working closely with the Headteacher.

2.10. Our Deputy Safeguarding Leads role is to provide support to the Lead and be available if the Lead is unavailable. The school will maintain robust cover arrangements for periods when the DSL is unavailable so that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored and acted upon without delay.

2.11. Our Chair of Governors and Trustees is Mr Bob Wheeler. His role in Safeguarding is to take the lead in dealing with allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher.

2.12. Our Safeguarding Governor and Trustee is Mr David Walker. His role in Safeguarding is to take leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements.

2.13. 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.

2.14. The Teacher Standards 2012 states that teachers, including Headteachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

2.15. 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.

2.16. All staff must read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full. School and college leaders and those staff who work directly with children should also read Annex A Further information. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and any deputies should be familiar with Annex B, Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The school has systems in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their roles and responsibilities.

2.17. 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.

2.18. 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 misuse, unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education, serious violence, criminal exploitation (including county lines), modern slavery, radicalisation and consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including images generated using artificial intelligence, 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.

2.19. 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.

2.20. 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 are in a position to 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 2026.

2.21. All staff members have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. They should be alert to children who may need additional help or who may be at risk of harm, report concerns promptly and take appropriate action in accordance with this policy. The DSL will maintain and review relevant safeguarding information and ensure that appropriate information is shared with staff on a need-to-know basis so that children can be safeguarded and supported effectively, including through Early Help, Family Help and statutory services where appropriate.

3. Safeguarding Records and Retention

3.1. Safeguarding records will be retained until the child's 25th birthday. Where a child protection file relates to child sexual abuse, it will be retained until the child's 75th birthday, in accordance with current DfE guidance. Records will be stored securely and disposed of securely at the end of the applicable retention period.

3.2. **Support Before Statutory Intervention**

i. All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from help and support before concerns escalate. This includes universal services and community-based Early Help and where needs require a coordinated response, Family Help. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 brings together targeted early help and section 17 support within Family Help to provide a more seamless offer for children and families.

ii. All staff should be aware of local arrangements for community-based Early Help and Family Help, including thresholds, referral routes and the local protocol for assessment, and understand their role in providing or supporting help.

iii. Where family help is appropriate, a family help assessment plan should coordinate support around the child and family in accordance with local arrangements. A lead practitioner will coordinate the plan, working with a multi-disciplinary team as appropriate. School staff may be asked to contribute to the assessment or plan and, where suitably qualified, may act as lead practitioner. Cases will be kept under review and concerns escalated to local authority children's social care where necessary.

iv. Providing help and support early is more effective in promoting children's welfare than reacting later. Staff should understand that Family Help can include targeted early help and support for children in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, while section 47 enquiries apply where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

v. Any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention, but all school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for additional support for a child who:

a) Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs.

b) Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan).

c) Has mental health needs.

d) Is a young carer.

e) Is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves.

f) Is showing early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours, or signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.

g) Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care.

h) Has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of being permanently excluded, or is in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit.

i) Is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery or trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation.

j) Is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism.

k) Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.

l) Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.

m) Is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves.

n) Is at risk of honour or faith-based abuse, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

o) Is a privately fostered child.

3.3. In addition to working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, staff members should be aware that they might be asked to support social workers and other practitioners in making decisions about individual children.

3.4. 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.

3.5. Staff members should be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and modern slavery, 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 to the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

3.6. Staff, particularly the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies, should consider risks of extra-familial harm, including sexual abuse and exploitation, teenage relationship abuse (including physical, sexual and emotional abuse and stalking), financial exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

3.7. 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.

3.8. 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.

3.9. 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.

3.10. Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect and child sexual or criminal exploitation. Staff should follow the school's procedures for persistent absence and children missing education, act promptly to identify underlying safeguarding risks and help prevent absent pupils becoming children missing education.

3.11. 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 concerns directly. Where a child and family would benefit from co-ordinated support, the school will work with relevant agencies through the local Family Help arrangements, assessment plan. Where statutory intervention is required, referrals will be made in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and local procedures.

3.12. A safeguarding concern is any worry about a child's welfare, safety or well-being. Staff should not wait until there is reasonable cause to suspect significant harm before reporting a concern. A concern should be acted on immediately in accordance with this policy; where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a referral must be made to local authority children's social care and, where appropriate, the police.

3.13. All staff should recognise that children may experience prejudice-based harm, including racism, faith-based prejudice and other forms of discrimination. Such experiences may affect a child's welfare, wellbeing, mental health and willingness to seek help. Staff should be alert to the signs and impact of prejudice-based harm and ensure that concerns are considered within safeguarding practice where appropriate.

3.14. 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.

3.15. Research and local national child safeguarding practice 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.

3.16. More information about universal services, community-based Early Help, Family Help and statutory intervention is set out in Part One of KCSIE 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

3.17. In all cases, if staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL.

i. Operation Encompass

a) Operation Encompass includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children. The school recognises the statutory duty on police forces to notify education

settings where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child is a victim of domestic abuse. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that Operation Encompass notifications are received securely, recorded appropriately and used to provide timely safeguarding and pastoral support. An Operation Encompass notification does not replace normal safeguarding procedures or referral to local authority children's social care where required.

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

4.1. 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.

4.2. 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.

4.3. The online tool Report Child Abuse to Your Local Council directs to the relevant local authority children's social care contact number.

5. Safer Working Practices

5.1. 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. Records should include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern; details of how the concern was followed up and resolved; and a note of any action taken, decisions reached, the reasons for those decisions and the outcome.

vii. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from the headteacher if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.

viii. Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, and sexual orientation.

ix. 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.

x. 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).

xi. Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed.

xii. 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.

xiii. Where a child leaves the school, the DSL will ensure that the child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible. For an in-year transfer, this should be within five days, or within the first five days of the start of a new term. The child protection file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt will be obtained. The DSL will also consider whether it is appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of the child leaving to enable appropriate safeguarding support to be in place.

5.2. Staff should make themselves familiar with the following school documents and policies:

i. Staff Handbook

ii. Staff Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy

iii. Appointment of Staff and Safer Recruitment Policy,

iv. Staff Code of Conduct Policy

v. Grievance Procedure Policy

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 Policy

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. Children Missing Education 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 and Sex Education Policy

xxxii. Online Safety Policy

xxxiii. Please refer to our Online Safety Policy.

xxxiv. KCSIE 2026 Annex A contains further information and sources of support on online safety for schools and parents. The school will also consider the safeguarding implications of generative artificial intelligence. In line with KCSIE 2026 and current DfE guidance, the school will be a mobile phone-free environment by default during the school day, with any exceptions determined by the Headteacher and set out in the school's mobile phone arrangements.

xxxv. The effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements will be reviewed at least once every academic year by the senior leadership team member responsible for filtering and monitoring, with support from the DSL and IT support. Checks will cover internet-connected devices in relevant locations and a record will be kept of the checks.

6. Key Training Areas

6.1. Timescale for training:

Induction Training (mandatory)	Before starting at the school All staff must be aware of systems within their setting which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction.
Whole staff safeguarding and child protection	At induction and regularly updated thereafter. All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety, as required and at least annually.
Designated Safeguarding Lead Training (statutory)	At least every 2 years. The DSL will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals, and at least annually. Deputy DSL's will be trained to the same standard as the DSL.
Safer Recruitment Training (statutory)	Appropriate safer recruitment training for those involved in recruitment, refreshed as necessary to ensure knowledge remains current.
Prevent Duty Training (statutory)	Prevent Duty Training – Whole Staff: Appropriate Prevent training at induction and refreshed as appropriate. Advanced Prevent Training – DSL/Deputy DSL: Advanced Prevent training covering extremist ideologies, Prevent referrals and Channel processes, refreshed at least every two years in line with current DfE best practice guidance.
Governor and Trustee safeguarding training	Appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction and updated regularly.
FGM Awareness Training – Whole Staff	At induction and refreshed as appropriate.
Child Sexual Exploitation Training – Whole Staff	At induction and refreshed as appropriate.
Online Safety Training – Whole Staff	At induction and regularly updated, with updates at least annually as part of safeguarding and child protection updates.
Mental Health Awareness Training - Whole Staff	At induction and refreshed as appropriate.

7. Important Contact Details

7.1. Safeguarding incidents could happen anywhere, and staff should be alert to possible concerns being raised in this school.

7.2. Safeguarding concerns or allegations about a member of staff, including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers or contractors, should be referred to the Headteacher, who will consider whether onward referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is required. Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold should be handled in accordance with the school's Low-Level Concerns Policy.

7.3. Where a concern or allegation is about the Headteacher, it should be referred to the Chair of Governors and trustees. Where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor, or there is a conflict of interest, the concern should be reported directly to the LADO.

7.4. 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. Maria Sullivan-Jakubiszyn – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection

iii. Mr. David Walker – Safeguarding Governor

iv. Mrs. René Esterhuizen - The Head Teacher and Safer Recruitment Officer

7.5. All staff members may raise concerns directly with Children's Social Care services.

7.6. 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.

7.7. 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.

8. Timescales

8.1. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately, follow this policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm, a referral to local authority children's social care and, if appropriate, the police should be made immediately in accordance with the local referral process.

8.2. Within one working day of a referral, local authority children's social care should acknowledge receipt to the referrer and decide the next steps and type of response required. The referrer should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

8.3. If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, staff should do everything they can to support that assessment, supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) as required.

8.4. If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, the referrer should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure concerns are addressed and the child's situation improves.

9. Child Protection Policy

9.1. 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").

9.2. 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.

10. The Prevent Duty

10.1. 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.

10.2. The Prevent duty should be seen as part of the school's wider safeguarding obligations. Designated Safeguarding Leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023), which came into force on 31 December 2023, including its education section. The school will maintain an appropriate understanding of local and national risk, complete and review a proportionate Prevent risk assessment, provide role-appropriate training, work in partnership with relevant agencies, and ensure appropriate IT and filtering arrangements are in place.

10.3. Prevent as a Safeguarding Responsibility

i. Radicalisation is a safeguarding concern and will be addressed through the school's established safeguarding procedures. Prevent forms part of the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities, although it has a distinct referral process where a person may be susceptible to being drawn into terrorism.

ii. There is no single profile of a child who may be susceptible to radicalisation and no single indicator demonstrates that radicalisation is taking place. Concerns will be considered using professional judgment, the available evidence and the wider context.

10.4. Responding to Prevent Concerns

i. Any member of staff who identifies a potential concern about radicalisation should report it to the DSL or Deputy DSL at the earliest opportunity. The concern will be considered proportionately and in its wider safeguarding context.

ii. The DSL will gather relevant information, consider whether the concern represents an isolated incident or a developing pattern, review relevant safeguarding information and consider any online or offline influences, vulnerabilities and protective factors. Where appropriate, the DSL may speak with the child and their parent or carer and seek advice from relevant safeguarding or Prevent professionals.

iii. All concerns, information considered, advice sought, decisions and actions will be recorded, including the reasons a decision not to make a Prevent referral.

iv. Where, following consideration of the concern, there are concerns that a child may be susceptible to radicalisation or at risk of becoming involved in terrorism, the DSL should consider whether a Prevent referral is appropriate, seeking advice from relevant safeguarding or Prevent professionals where necessary.

v. Staff should be alert to concerning changes in a child's behaviour, interests, language, relationships or online activity. No single behaviour or vulnerability demonstrates radicalisation. Concerns should be considered in context, and staff should focus on patterns, changes over time and the wider circumstances of the child.

10.5. Channel:

i. Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme that provides support at an early stage to people who are susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be considered through the Channel process, where a multi-agency panel assesses the circumstances and considers appropriate support. A representative from the school may be asked to contribute to the process. Engagement with Channel support is voluntary.

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.

10.6. Statutory guidance on Channel is available in the current Channel duty guidance: protecting people susceptible to radicalisation (updated October 2025).

10.7. For additional support see Annex A of KCSIE 2026.

10.8. 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.

10.9. 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.

The current Government Prevent strategy and supporting guidance can be viewed on GOV.UK.

10.10. The school will have regard to Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023), as updated, and any subsequent statutory guidance in force.

11. The Role of the Curriculum

11.1. 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.

11.2. 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.

11.3. 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.

11.4. 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.

11.5. 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, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment, derogatory behaviour

and other forms of physical violence and conflict. 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 Relationships Education, RSE and PSHE 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.

11.6. 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.

11.7. 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.

11.8. The following is taken from Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings 2022:

i. 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.

12. Significant Harm

12.1. 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.

13. Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

13.1. The following definitions of child abuse are taken from the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026'.

13.2. 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 know 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 by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child-to-parent or care giver abuse.

13.3. 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.

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

13.5. Sexual Abuse:
Involves forcing, causing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. The activities may involve physical contact, such as acts of penetration whether with part of a person's body or an object (for example rape or assault by penetration) and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and

touching over clothing. Sexual abuse 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 as well as offline, 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. Children can be sexually abused within the family, and institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not. 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. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity, and specific offences make clear that sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence, regardless of whether they agreed to that activity.

13.6. 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.

13.7. Additional information on these safeguarding issues and information on other safeguarding issues is included in Annex A of KCSIE 2026.

14. Specific Safeguarding Issues

14.1. Children with special educational needs and disabilities or physical health issues:

14.2. 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 disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.

iv. Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.

v. The need for intimate care or the possibility that the child is isolated from others.

vi. Greater dependence on adults for care, which may increase vulnerability.

vii. Difficulties with cognitive understanding, including distinguishing fact from fiction in online content or understanding the consequences of repeating online content or behaviours.

14.3. The school will consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place.

14.4. Further information can be found in the SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 and Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions.

14.5. 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.

14.6. 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.

15. Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

15.1. 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.

15.2. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearly or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

15.3. 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.

15.4. 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

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

16.1. 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.

16.2. 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.

16.3. 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. Child criminal exploitation can be committed or facilitated by an individual or an organised network or gang and may constitute modern slavery. Children may identify as part of the group exploiting them, and victims may be criminalised for actions taken under coercion.

16.4. 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.

16.5. 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;

ii. associate with other children involved in exploitation;

iii. suffer from changes in emotional well-being;

iv. misuse drugs and alcohol;

v. go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and

vi. regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

16.6. Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

16.7. 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.

16.8. 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.

16.9. Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance: Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners

16.10. 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 2026 (Annex A).

17. County Lines

17.1. 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.

17.2. 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.

17.3. 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.

17.4. 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.

17.5. Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

18. Children and the Court System

18.1. 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 aged 5-11 years and 12-17 years.

18.2. 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.

18.3. 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.

19. Children Missing Education

19.1. 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' or faith - 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 education procedures.

19.2. The school has a Children Missing Education policy written in accordance with Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools, updated September 2025, and will follow the responsibilities and procedures set out in that guidance.

19.3. The school has in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.

19.4. Where a pupil is being withdrawn from the school and the destination or continuing education arrangements are unclear, the school will seek the information required from parents or carers promptly and follow the current statutory registration and children missing education procedures.

19.5. Where the school has reason to believe that a child may be missing education, or the child's whereabouts or education cannot be established, it will act promptly and work with the local authority. The school will not wait for a fixed period where safeguarding or welfare concerns require earlier action.

19.6. The school will maintain the admission register and make notifications to the local authority in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the current Children Missing Education statutory guidance. Records will be updated when relevant information is received.

20. Children with Family Members in Prison

20.1. Children with a parent or carer in custody, or who are otherwise affected by parental offending, may need additional support because of the impact on their wellbeing, family circumstances and education. Staff should use current government and specialist support resources, including the Prisoners' Families Helpline where appropriate.

21. Child-on Child Abuse

21.1. All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children and that this can happen both inside and outside school or college and online. Staff should understand their role in preventing child-on-child abuse as well as responding to it and should be clear about the school's policy and procedures.

21.2. All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in the school it does not mean child-on-child abuse is not happening. Concerns about child-on-child abuse, whether thought to have taken place on or off-site, should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). Staff should also be alert to times when children may be at highest risk around the school day.

21.3. It is essential that all staff challenge inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Downplaying behaviour as 'just banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys' can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, misogyny or misandry, and an unsafe environment in which abuse is normalised.

21.4. For some, but not all, forms of child-on-child abuse it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator and is preventable; timely, evidence-based support can help prevent escalation.

21.5. 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.

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

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

ii. Discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse and other prejudice-based incidents.

iii. Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')

iv. Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm, including serious physical assault and harm or the threat of harm with a weapon (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).

v. Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include and online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).

vi. Sexual harassment, including sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse and may include misogyny or misandry.

vii. 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.

viii. Consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including those generated or digitally altered using artificial intelligence.

ix. 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

x. 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)

22. Actions the school will take.

22.1. 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 Safety Policy

iii. Attendance Policy.

iv. Relationships Education Policy/Relationships and Sex Education Policy

22.2. 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.

23. Action on Serious Concerns

23.1. 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.

23.2. The school will ensure systems for children to report child-on-child abuse are well promoted, easy to understand and accessible. Allegations will be recorded, investigated and dealt with, and clear support will be provided for victims, alleged perpetrators and any other children affected.

23.3. 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).

23.4. 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.

23.5. Any suspicion or allegation that a child has been sexually abused by another child or may pose a risk of sexual abuse to another child or adult, should be referred immediately to the DSL. The DSL will consider the need for referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police in accordance with KCSIE 2026 Part Five and local safeguarding procedures. Staff may make a referral directly where necessary but should inform the DSL as soon as possible.

23.6. Child-on-child safeguarding concerns are not routinely referred to the LADO, whose role concerns allegations about adults who work or volunteer with children. The DSL will use local safeguarding partnership procedures and, where appropriate, consult children's social care or the police.

23.7. Particular 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, making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes 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 are 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?

23.8. 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.

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

24.1. See KCSIE 2026 Part 5: Child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence, including harmful sexual behaviour.

24.2. 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.

24.3. 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.

24.4. 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.

24.5. Harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence can exist on a progressive continuum and may overlap. They can occur online and face to face and are never acceptable. Early intervention in inappropriate or harmful behaviour can help prevent escalation to more serious abuse.

24.6. 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.

24.7. 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.

24.8. Ultimately, it is essential that **all** victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

25. Sexual Violence

25.1. 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).

v. Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent can be withdrawn at any time and must apply each time sexual activity occurs. A child under 13 can never consent to sexual activity; the age of consent is 16. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) should generally lead the school's response where consent, coercion, exploitation or a power imbalance is a concern. See KCSIE 2026 part 5.

25.2. 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.

25.3. 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; and

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 making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including images generated or digitally altered using artificial intelligence. All such incidents require a safeguarding response, whether consensual or non-consensual. 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.

26. Female Genital Mutilation

26.1. 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.

26.2. Teachers have a specific legal duty in relation to female genital mutilation (FGM). If, in the course of their work, a teacher discovers through disclosure by the child or visual evidence that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18, the teacher must personally report this to the police. Unless there is good reason not to, the teacher should also discuss the case with the DSL or Deputy DSL and involve local authority children's social care as appropriate. The mandatory reporting duty does not apply to suspected or at-risk cases, which should be managed under the school's normal safeguarding procedures.

26.3. The school will access the following documents if ever the need arises for such information, as referred to in Annex A of KCSIE 2026:

i. 'FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers' KCSIE 2026 Annex A

ii. 'Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation'

iii. 'FGM Resource Pack'

iv. 'FGM Fact Sheet'

27. Mental Health

27.1. All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns, including self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They can also indicate that a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

27.2. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to diagnose a mental health problem. Education staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify changes or warning signs, including significant changes in behaviour, ongoing difficulty sleeping, withdrawing from social situations, no longer wanting to do things they usually enjoy, or physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

27.3. 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.

27.4. If staff have a concern about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern, they should follow this Child Protection Policy and speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy. If a child is in danger, staff should call 999 or arrange for the child to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/career or other suitable person. If urgent mental health help is needed but it is not an emergency, staff can use NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

i. See KCSIE 2026 Part One and Part Two, for advice and guidance on children requiring mental health support.

28. Serious Violence

28.1. Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern and may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with or using weapons, peer conflict, bullying or criminal exploitation. Staff must report concerns about a child carrying a weapon, or expressing an intention to do so, to the DSL or deputy. The DSL will assess the risk to the child and others and take appropriate action, including safety and support planning and, where appropriate, action to de-escalate peer conflict. Staff should be alert to children who may be at risk of, or involved in, serious violence, recognising that those involved in committing violence may themselves be victims. Particular attention should be given to children with disrupted education or a history of offending, and appropriate early support should be provided where concerns emerge.

28.2. The school will consider whether there are particular locations and times in or around the school day where the risk of serious violence or peer conflict may be higher and take appropriate preventative action.

29. Preventing 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. Although 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 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 be in need of 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. Honour or faith-based abuse (Including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

30.1. Honour or faith-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family and/or community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing. Such abuse can involve a wider network of family or community pressure and multiple perpetrators. All forms of HBA are abuse, regardless of motivation, and staff should be alert to children who may be at risk or who may already have suffered HBA. Concerns should be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL and managed through local safeguarding procedures, including liaison with police and local authority children's social care where appropriate.

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 – see KCSIE 2026 Annex A

ii. Forced marriage – forcing a person into marriage without their full and free consent is a crime. Since February 2023, its is also an offence to carry out conduct intended to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even where violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. This includes non-binding and unofficial marriages. See KCSIE 2026 Annex A and current Forced Marriage Unit guidance.

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, if and when needed, using the NSPCC and GOV.UK websites. Additional advice and support are also listed in Annex A of KCSIE 2026.

i. Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism – see KCSIE 2026 Annex A

Modern slavery and trafficking are forms of child abuse. Where a child may be a victim, normal child protection procedures must be followed and the relevant agency should consider referral into the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), the UK's framework for identifying and supporting potential victims of exploitation and modern slavery.

ii. Cybercrime – see KCSIE 2026 Annex A and our Online Safety Policy

Staff should be alert to children becoming involved in cyber-dependent crime, including hacking or other unauthorised access to computer systems. Children may become involved without fully understanding the legal implications. Where concerns arise, the DSL or deputy should consider whether referral to the National Crime Agency's Cyber Choices programme is appropriate, alongside any other safeguarding response required.

iii. Domestic Abuse – inc. 'teenage relationship abuse' see KCSIE 2026 Annex A

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.org.uk

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 2026 Part Two

vii. Young carers – the school will be alert to the needs of young carers, recognising that caring responsibilities can affect attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. Early identification is important so that appropriate school, local authority, health or other support can be put in place.

viii. Children with medical conditions – an incident involving the management of a child's medical condition does not automatically require a safeguarding referral. A referral should be considered where the circumstances indicate that the child may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation because of their medical condition, for example where relevant medical information is withheld from the school or a child is repeatedly sent to school without essential medication, placing them at risk.

ix. Elective home education (EHE) – where a parent or carer intends to withdraw a child from school for home education, the school will follow current registration requirements and, where possible, work with the local authority and other relevant professionals before the final decision is made. This is particularly important where the child has SEND, has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.

x. Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual – being lesbian, gay or bisexual is not in itself a safeguarding risk. However, children who are, or are perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual

can be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. The school will act promptly to prevent and respond to such bullying and provide appropriate support.

xi. Children who are questioning their gender – the school will respond to any request relating to social transition in accordance with KCSIE 2026, safeguarding law and equality and human rights law. The school will not initiate social transition. Decisions will be made carefully, documented and reviewed, with the DSL involved and parents or carers involved as set out in KCSIE 2026. Relevant staff will have the accurate information they need to safeguard the child and others. The school will maintain the required sex-based arrangements for toilets, changing rooms and, where applicable for safety, single-sex sport.

xii. Sport – where sport is organised on a single-sex basis because physical strength, stamina or physique makes this necessary for safety or fairness, the school will follow the Equality Act 2010 and KCSIE 2026. Where single-sex sport is required for safety, there will be no exceptions. Other requests concerning participation will be considered in accordance with KCSIE 2026 and the child's best interests, while also considering the safety and fairness of participation for other children.

xiii. Use of school premises for non-school activities – where school premises or facilities are hired or rented to another organisation or individual, the school will seek assurance that appropriate safeguarding and child protection arrangements are in place. Safeguarding requirements will be included in any hire, lease or transfer-of-control agreement and failure to comply may result in termination of the arrangement.

xiv. Where a safeguarding concern or allegation relates to an incident when an organisation or individual is using the premises to run activities for children, the school will follow its safeguarding procedures, including informing the LADO where appropriate.

xv. Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans) – see KCSIE 2026 Part Two

xvi. Drugs.

xvii. Fabricated or induced illness.

xviii. Faith based abuse.

xix. Forced marriage.

xx. Gangs and youth violence.

xxi. Hate – see Educate Against Hate and Appendix I of our Anti-Bullying Policy.

xxii. 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 2026 Annex A.

a) Where the school receives notification from the local housing authority that a child has been placed in temporary accommodation, the DSL will use this information to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and support their educational outcomes. Such a

notification does not replace existing safeguarding duties or any required referral to local authority children's social care.

xxiii. Looked after children and previously looked after children – see KCSIE 2026 Part Two

xxiv. Private fostering – see KCSIE 2026 Annex A

xxv. Making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes – see the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance, 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people', and our Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes Policy. This includes images generated or digitally altered using artificial intelligence. All incidents require a safeguarding response, whether consensual or non-consensual.

33. Alternative Provision

33.1. If the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school remains ultimately responsible for safeguarding that pupil. The school will carry out safeguarding checks and its own due diligence to ensure the provision is appropriate for the child's individual needs, keep records of the address of the provider and any subcontracted or satellite sites, and review the placement at least half termly to assure itself that the child is attending regularly, remains safe and the placement continues to meet the child's needs. Any safeguarding concerns will trigger an immediate review and, where necessary, termination of the placement unless or until concerns are satisfactorily addressed.

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 and will apply the current regulated activity and safer recruitment requirements in KCSIE 2026.

i. Children staying with Host Families (Homestay) – see KCSIE 2026 Part Three 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 mutilation.

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 Have Concerns About a Child

37.1. Staff must report concerns as soon as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (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 9886464.

37.2. If the concern relates to the conduct of the DSL or Deputy DSL towards a child, it must be treated as an allegation about an adult working with children and reported in accordance with the school's procedures for allegations against staff. Where the allegation concerns the Headteacher, it should be reported to the Chair of Governors and Trustees.. Where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor, or there is a conflict of interest, the matter should be reported directly to the LADO.

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 there are concerns that a child may be experiencing neglect, the DSL or Deputy DSL will consider the information available and take appropriate safeguarding action without delay.

38.2. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm a referral will be made immediately to local authority children's social care and, where appropriate, the police, in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.

38.3. Where emergency medical attention is required, this will be sought immediately. Medical professionals will be informed of any relevant safeguarding concerns.

38.4. Parents or carers should normally be informed of concerns and referrals unless doing so would place the child at increased risk of harm, prejudice an investigation, or otherwise be contrary to the child's welfare. Where there is uncertainty, advice should be sought from local authority children's social care or the police before informing parents or carers.

i. The school will not investigate suspected abuse itself. Staff should record and report concerns accurately and promptly and cooperate fully with any assessment or investigation undertaken by statutory agencies

39. Allegations of or Suspicions of Sexual Abuse

39.1. Any allegation, disclosure or suspicion that a child may have been sexually abused must be taken seriously and reported immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

39.2. The DSL will consider the information available and, where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, make an immediate referral to local authority children's social care. The police will also be contacted where appropriate and in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.

39.3. If a child is in immediate danger or there is an immediate risk of serious harm, the police and/or local authority children's social care must be contacted without delay. Any member of staff may make a referral directly where necessary, although the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

39.4. The school will not investigate allegations of sexual abuse. Staff should listen carefully to the child, avoid asking leading or unnecessary questions, make an accurate record of what has been said and report the matter promptly.

39.5. Parents or carers should normally be informed unless doing so would place the child at increased risk, prejudice a police or social care investigation, or otherwise be contrary to the child's welfare. Where necessary, the DSL should agree with local authority children's social care and/or the police when and how parents or carers should be informed.

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 should consider whether advice or action from local authority children's social care and/or the police is needed before the child returns home where there is a risk of further harm.

ii. Contact the DSL or Deputy DSL in accordance with this policy. Where necessary, contact local authority children's social care and/or the police. Staff may also seek advice from an appropriate safeguarding service such as the 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 taking to you), writing down exactly what the child said and when they said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (for example, a description of the activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all original handwritten notes, even if subsequently typed. Original notes should be retained securely as part of the child's safeguarding record and kept in accordance with the school's safeguarding record-retention arrangements.

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

iii. Report your discussion as soon as possible to the DSL or Deputy DSL. If the concern relates to the conduct of a member of staff, including the DSL or Deputy DSL, follow the school's procedure for safeguarding concerns or allegations about staff and report it to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher, report it to the Chair of Governors and Trustees or proprietor. Where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor, or there is a conflict of interest, report the matter directly to the 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 the child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. Where there is a risk of further harm, the DSL should seek immediate advice from local authority children's social care and/or the police and follow their directions about safety arrangements.

42. Working with Offenders

42.1. Where the school becomes aware that an adult connected with the school presents a potential safeguarding risk to children, the school will undertake an individual safeguarding risk assessment and follow advice from relevant agencies. Any boundaries, supervision arrangements or restrictions will be proportionate to the assessed risk, recorded and reviewed.

42.2. The school will not apply a blanket requirement to inform an individual's family or partner. Information will be shared only where there is a lawful safeguarding reason to do so and in accordance with advice from local authority children's social care, police, probation or other relevant agencies.

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 distress 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 in accordance with the school safeguarding procedures. The member of staff in charge of the visit will report concerns about a child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher, with referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police where appropriate. Concerns or allegations about an adult working or volunteering with children will be handled under the school's staff allegations procedure and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate. In an emergency, the staff member in charge will contact the police and/or local authority children's 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, expect 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 Headteacher must be informed immediately. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

46.4. Where a concern or allegation is about the Headteacher, it should be referred to the Chair of Governors and Trustees or proprietor, who should liaise with the LADO as appropriate. Where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor, or there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter internally, it should be reported to directly to the LADO.

46.5. In line with KCSIE 2026, the school will take responsibility for managing safeguarding concerns or allegations involving staff, including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors, regardless of employment arrangements. Where a third-party organisation is involved, the school and that organisation share safeguarding responsibilities and will work together to ensure concerns

are handled appropriately. Where appropriate, concerns will be shared with the individual's employer or agency, but the school will retain oversight of the safeguarding process and liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

46.6. The school will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where it removes an individual from regulated activity, or would have removed the individual had they not left, and believes that the individual has engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults, satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults, and/or been cautioned or convicted of a relevant offence.

i. 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).

ii. The school will also consider whether a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) is required where a teacher is dismissed or would have been dismissed for serious misconduct. Current referral information is available through GOV.UK.

46.7. 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 or 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 Whistleblowing Advice Line is available as an alternative route for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns about child protection failures internally, or who have concerns about the way a safeguarding concern is being handled by the school. Staff can call 0800 028 0285. The line is available from 8:00am-8:00pm Monday to Friday and 9:00am-6:00pm at weekends, 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 concerns that meet the harm threshold are reported to the LADO without delay and in accordance with local LADO procedures.

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. Where the allegation concerns the Headteacher, report it to the Chair of Governors and Trustees or proprietor. Where the Headteacher is also the sole proprietor, or there is a conflict of interest, report the matter directly to the LADO.

iv. Follow the school'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 Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

49.1. The school recognised that looked-after children and previously looked-after children can be particularly vulnerable and that the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect.

49.2. The Governing body and Trustees will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep looked-after and previously looked-after children safe.

49.3. Appropriate staff will have access, on a need-to-know basis, to the information necessary to safeguard and support a looked-after child. This will include information about the child's looked-after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the local authority looking after the child.

49.4. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have details of the child's social worker.

49.5. When dealing with looked-after and previously looked-after children, the school will work with the relevant agencies and take prompt action where necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of these children.

49.6. The school will engage with relevant professionals where appropriate.

49.7. The school holds a Policy for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children on file.

50. Care Leavers

50.1. Local authorities have ongoing responsibilities towards young people who cease to be looked after and become care leavers, including keeping in touch, assessing their needs and appointing a Personal Adviser who develops a pathway plan with the young person.

50.2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will hold the details of the local authority Personal Adviser appointed to guide and support a care leaver and will liaise with the Personal Adviser as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the young person.

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 and reflects the Department for Education guidance Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools, effective from 1 April 2026. Any use of force or restrictive intervention will be reasonable, proportionate, necessary and in the child's best interests, with particular consideration given to children with SEND or other vulnerabilities. The school will also consider its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

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. For supply teachers, trainee teachers and all contracted staff, the school will work with the relevant agency, provider or employer and will not assume that the third part alone is responsible for safeguarding action.

54.3. 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 2026 Part Three, the school may carry out online checks on shortlisted candidates to identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online and

which the school may wish to explore with the applicant. These checks will be 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 as required for staff and volunteers. Following the removal of the supervision exemption from regulated activity, a volunteer in a school or college whose role involves teaching, training, instructing or supervising children frequently, on more than three days in a 30-day period, or overnight, is in regulated activity and requires an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. The appropriate checks will also be completed for Governors and Trustees.

vii. A person in regulated activity requires an enhanced DBS certificate with children's barred list information. A volunteer who is not in regulated activity must never be left unsupervised where no appropriate checks have been obtained. The school will complete and record a written risk assessment when deciding what checks are appropriate for volunteers who are not in regulated activity.

viii. A standalone children's barred list check will be obtained if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available.

ix. 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, using the Department for Education's Check a teacher's record service.

x. The Department for Education's Check a teacher's record service will also be used, where applicable, to verify qualified teacher status and other relevant teaching records.

xi. All leaders and managers, including Governors and Trustees, will have any section 128 check required for their role recorded on the Single Central Record. The school will use the Department for Education's current Check a teacher's record service where applicable.
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.

xii. Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools or colleges, together with any additional checks the school considers appropriate so that relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. See KCSIE 2026 Part Three. Criminal records checks for overseas applicants – Home Office guidance can be found on GOV.UK, and for teaching positions.

xiii. 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. Health or disability questions will only be asked where permitted by the Equality Act 2010, including where necessary to establish whether an applicant can carry out a function intrinsic to the role, to consider reasonable adjustments, or after a conditional offer of employment has been made.

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. References will be obtained in accordance with KCSIE 2026, preferably before interview. The school will not accept open references or rely on applicants to obtain their own references. References should include the candidate's current employer and be completed by a senior person with appropriate authority; where the applicant is not currently employed, the school will verify the most recent relevant period of employment. Where the applicant is not currently working with children, the school will also seek a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children, where applicable. References will be verified directly, electronic references will be checked as originating form a legitimate source, discrepancies or vague information will be followed up and any concerns resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

55.8. The criteria for NOT appointing children's workers are:

i. Where the person is barred or prohibited from the relevant work.

ii. Where, following completion of the required checks and lawful consideration of all relevant information, the school concludes that the person is unsuitable for the post or to work with children

55.9. 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.

55.10. All new staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety and the school's filtering and monitoring arrangements, at induction. Training will be regularly

updated, and all staff will receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required and at least annually.

55.11. 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.

55.12. Where the school uses the DBS Update Service, status checks will only be carried out with the individual's consent and after confirming that the original certificate matches the individual and is at the appropriate level for the role Any self-declaration of criminal-record information will be limited to information that the school is legally entitled to request and consider under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order and current DBS filtering rules. Protected or filtered convictions and cautions will not be requested or taken into account.

55.13. 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. Where the school takes on trainee or pupil teachers, it will establish who is responsible for carrying out the required checks and obtain written confirmation from the provider where the provider has carried out the pre-appointment checks. Safeguarding concerns or allegations involving trainee teachers will be handled in accordance with KCSIE 2026 Part Four.

vi. The school will follow the current DBS and barred list requirements in KCSIE 2026 Part Three; the previous supervision-exemption flowchart is no longer applicable.

55.14. 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.

55.15. Disqualification by Association

i. Disqualification by association does not apply to staff working in school settings The school will therefore not ask staff or applicants to provide information about the criminal history of people living or working in their household for the purposed of establishing disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006.

ii. Staff are, however, expected to inform the Headteacher where any relationship or association, within or outside the workplace, including online, may have implications for the safeguarding of children at the school.

iii. Staff must also inform the Headteacher of any relevant change in their own circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children, and of any change of name that has 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 will ensure there are robust arrangements for DSL cover during absence, including an appropriate confidential mechanism for concerns to be received, monitored and acted upon without delay.

56.4. The school will review its filtering and monitoring arrangements at least annually and retain a record of checks. It will also consider safeguarding risks relating to generative artificial intelligence and other smart technology and will maintain a mobile-free environment by default during the school day, with exceptions only where appropriate and authorised under the school's mobile phone arrangements.

56.5. 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. Information will be shared appropriately, lawfully and proportionately for safeguarding purposes. Consent is not required where there is a lawful basis to share information without consent in order to safeguard a child; concerns about data protection must not prevent necessary safeguarding information from being shared.

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 Policy

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, where reasonably possible.

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. The following DSL responsibilities are based on Annex B of KCSIE 2026.

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. Understand local Prevent referral pathways and arrangements; maintain appropriate links with local safeguarding, Prevent and relevant local authority partners; oversee Prevent-related concerns, referrals and outcomes; and ensure that staff understand how to identify, report and respond to concerns relating to radicalisation.

iv. Liaise with the Headteacher to inform them 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 PACE Code C 2023.

v. 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.

vi. 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.

vii. Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.

viii. Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.

ix. 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:

x. 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.

xi. 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

iv. A rationale for decisions made, including the rationale for making or not making a referral to another agency such as children's social care, the police or the Prevent programme.

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. Raising 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. Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), PSHE and Safeguarding

60.1. Relationships Education is statutory for pupils receiving education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is statutory for pupils receiving secondary education. Independent schools are also required to provide Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education in accordance with the Independent School Standards. These areas of the curriculum an important part of the school's whole-school safeguarding approach and are particularly important in equipping pupils to:

i. Recognise and report abuse, exploitation, coercion, or grooming.

ii. Understand concepts such as consent, boundaries, and respectful behaviour.

iii. Stay safe online and in peer-to-peer interactions.

iv. Build resilience against radicalisation and peer pressure.

60.2. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should work closely with Relationships Education, RSE and PSHE curriculum leads to ensure safeguarding themes are embedded effectively and age-appropriately. Relationships Education, RSE and PSHE should be reviewed regularly to reflect emerging safeguarding concerns.

60.3. DSLs should also ensure staff are aware of how these areas of the curriculum contribute to safeguarding and can identify concerns arising through discussions or disclosures during lessons.

60.4. Parents should be consulted and engaged transparently regarding Relationships Education and RSE provision, and the school's programme and related policies must have regard to the revised Department for Education statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, which applies from 1 September 2026, insofar as it applies to independent schools.

61. Training, Knowledge, and Skills

61.1. 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 Family Help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action, local Family Help arrangements and local authority children's social care referral procedures.

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 with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations, and practitioners.

vii. understand and support the school 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.

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.

62. Providing Support to Staff

62.1. 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 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 PACE Code C 2023 and ensure that children have an Appropriate Adult when required during police procedures.

63. Understanding the Views of Children

63.1. 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.

64. Holding and Sharing Information

64.1. The critical importance of recording, holding, using, and sharing information effectively is set out in Parts One, Two and Five of KCSIE 2026 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) and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025; and

iii. be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.