



Thornbury Primary School Child Protection Practice Document 2026–2027

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Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Emma Mantell

Deputy DSLs: Caroline Coppola and Kelly Potts

Purpose

This document outlines the day-to-day child protection practices expected of all staff, governors, volunteers, contractors, and visitors within the school. It aims to ensure that all children are safeguarded, protected from harm, and supported to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All adults working within the school must maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" and act immediately when they have concerns about a child's welfare.

Principles

The school is committed to:

- Providing a safe, secure, and nurturing environment.
- Ensuring children feel listened to and valued.
- Identifying concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Taking appropriate action to protect children from harm.
- Working in partnership with parents, carers, external agencies, and safeguarding partners.
- Promoting children's physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Maintaining a culture of vigilance.

Categories of Abuse

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues can take many forms, including:

Physical Abuse

Deliberately causing physical harm to a child through hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, or other actions.

Emotional Abuse

Persistent emotional maltreatment affecting a child's emotional development, including humiliation, intimidation, rejection, or exposure to domestic abuse.

Sexual Abuse

Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child understands what is happening.

Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs, including food, shelter, supervision, healthcare, or emotional support.

Additional Safeguarding Concerns

Staff should remain alert to:

- Domestic abuse
- Child criminal exploitation
- Child sexual exploitation
- Online safety concerns
- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Mental health concerns
- Self-harm
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Peer-on-peer abuse
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Substance misuse
- Missing education
- Homelessness
- Forced marriage
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- County lines activity

Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff must:

- Read and understand safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Know the identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs.
- Complete safeguarding training annually.

- Report concerns immediately.
- Record concerns accurately and factually.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Follow the staff code of conduct.
- Challenge unsafe practice.
- Promote children's welfare through daily interactions.

Staff must never assume that another person has reported a concern.

Recognising Signs of Concern

Possible indicators include:

Physical Indicators

- Unexplained bruises or injuries.
- Frequent injuries.
- Poor hygiene.
- Inappropriate clothing.

Behavioural Indicators

- Sudden changes in behaviour.
- Withdrawal or anxiety.
- Aggression.
- Poor attendance.
- Reluctance to go home.
- Sexualised behaviour inappropriate to age.

Emotional Indicators

- Low self-esteem.
- Excessive worry.
- Emotional outbursts.
- Lack of attachment to caregivers.

A single indicator does not always mean a child is being harmed; however, patterns or multiple concerns should always be reported.

Responding to a Disclosure

If a child makes a disclosure:

Do

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully.
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing.
- Take the concern seriously.
- Explain that the information will need to be shared with people who can help.
- Record the exact words used where possible.
- Report immediately to the DSL.

Do Not

- Promise confidentiality.
- Ask leading questions.
- Investigate.
- Show shock or disbelief.
- Contact parents if doing so may place the child at greater risk.
- Delay reporting.

Recording Concerns

Records should:

- Be completed as soon as possible.
- Be factual and objective.
- Include date, time, and location.
- Record the child's exact words where relevant.
- Distinguish between facts, observations, and professional opinion.
- Be signed and dated.

Safeguarding records must be stored securely and separately from educational records.

Reporting Procedures

Immediate Risk

If a child is in immediate danger:

1. Contact emergency services if necessary.
2. Inform the DSL immediately.
3. Record actions taken.

General Safeguarding Concerns

1. Report concern to DSL.
2. Complete safeguarding record.
3. DSL assesses risk.
4. Appropriate action is taken, including referral to children's social care where required.

Professional Curiosity

Staff are expected to:

- Remain professionally inquisitive.
- Explore concerns respectfully.
- Seek clarification when something does not seem right.
- Consider the child's lived experience.
- Escalate concerns where appropriate.

Working with Parents and Carers

The school recognises the importance of strong partnerships with families.

Where appropriate, the school will:

- Share concerns openly and honestly.
- Offer support and guidance.
- Work collaboratively to improve outcomes.

However, parental consent may not be sought where doing so could place a child at increased risk of harm.

Online Safety

The school promotes safe use of technology through:

- Age-appropriate online safety education.
- Monitoring school devices and networks.
- Clear acceptable use agreements.
- Staff vigilance regarding online risks.

Concerns relating to online abuse, inappropriate content, grooming, or exploitation must be reported through safeguarding procedures.

Safer Working Practice

Staff must:

- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Avoid one-to-one situations where visibility is limited.
- Use school communication systems only.
- Follow guidance for physical intervention.
- Report allegations or low-level concerns involving adults.

Any concern regarding an adult working with children must be reported to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors immediately.

Attendance and Welfare

Poor attendance may indicate safeguarding concerns.

The school will:

- Monitor attendance daily.
- Follow up unexplained absences promptly.
- Work with families and external agencies where necessary.
- Escalate concerns regarding children missing education.

Supporting Vulnerable Pupils

Particular attention should be given to:

- Children with SEND.
- Young carers.
- Children looked after.

- Previously looked after children.
- Children experiencing domestic abuse.
- Pupils with social, emotional, or mental health needs.
- Pupils known to social care.

Support plans should be developed where appropriate.

Safeguarding Culture

The school promotes safeguarding through:

- Visible safeguarding leadership.
- Regular staff training.
- Curriculum opportunities that help children stay safe.
- Pupil voice initiatives.
- Strong relationships with families.
- Effective multi-agency working.

Every child should know:

- Who they can talk to.
- How to seek help.
- That they will be listened to.

Monitoring and Review

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Monitor safeguarding concerns and referrals.
- Review safeguarding records.
- Identify emerging patterns and risks.
- Report safeguarding trends to governors.
- Ensure ongoing staff development.

This document will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or local safeguarding procedures change.