



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Status	Statutory
Review Cycle	Annual
Date Reviewed and Published	September 2025
Date of next review	Autumn 2026
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs. J Pearson
Deputy DSL	Ms. C Williams
Designated Safeguarding Governor	Mrs P Harkness
Policy Writer	Mrs. J Pearson

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Safe School, Safe Staff
3. Responsibilities
4. Supporting Children
5. Confidentiality
6. Supporting Staff
7. Allegations against staff (incl. Low Level Concerns procedure)
8. Whistle-blowing
9. Physical Intervention
10. Anti-Bullying
11. Equality
12. Prevention
13. Early Help
14. Health & Safety
15. Specific Safeguarding Issues
16. Child-on-Child Abuse
17. Pupils potentially at greater risk of harm
18. Use of the school premises for non-school activities
19. Extracurricular activities and clubs
20. Safer Recruitment
21. Single Central Record (SCR)
22. Monitoring and Evaluation

Appendix A: Child Protection Procedures

- Action To Be Taken Where There Are Issues Of Concern
- How and What to Record
- Information Sharing and Data Protection
- Contextual Safeguarding
- New Staff or Volunteers
- New Children at the School

moved into Appendix A from Appendix D

Appendix B: Recognising Signs of Child Abuse

1. Local Circumstances
2. General signs of abuse and risk factors
3. Physical Abuse
4. Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse, cyberbullying, bullying)
5. Sexual Abuse including Child Sexual Exploitation
6. Child-on-child abuse
7. Neglect
8. Forced marriage
9. Female genital mutilation
10. Radicalisation
11. Some cases of Private Fostering
12. Children missing education
13. Bullying including cyber bullying
14. Domestic Violence
15. Fabricated or Induced Illness
16. Honour based abuse (HBA)
17. Gangs and youth violence
18. Hate Crime
19. Sexting – sharing of sexual imagery by young people via mobiles or over the internet
20. Child criminal exploitation and county lines
21. E-Safety
22. Upskirting
23. Mental Health
24. Child Abduction and community safety incidents
25. Children and the Court System
26. Children with family members in prison
27. Cyber crime
28. Homelessness
29. Modern Slavery
30. Serious Violence
31. Virginty testing and hymenoplasty

Appendix C: Child Protection Policy – Record of Concern Form

Appendix D: Partial School Closure Arrangements

- Reporting Arrangements
- Identifying Vulnerability
- Holiday Arrangements
- Attendance
- Risk Online
- Allegations or Concerns About Staff

1. Introduction

“Loving to learn; Learning to love like Jesus.”

St Monica’s Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical, mental and emotional welfare of every pupil, both inside and outside of the school premises. We implement a whole-school preventative approach to managing safeguarding concerns, ensuring that the wellbeing of pupils is at the forefront of all action taken.

This policy sets out a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. It will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that members of the governing board, the headteacher and staff understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, are alert to the signs of child abuse, and know to refer concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Teaching pupils how to keep safe and recognise behaviour that is unacceptable.
- Identifying and making provision for any pupil that has been subject to, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Creating a culture of safer recruitment by adopting procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children.
- Ensuring that the headteacher and any new staff and volunteers are only appointed when all the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.

The DSL is Mrs Jessica Pearson. In the absence of the DSL, child protection matters will be dealt with by the deputy DSL, Ms Clare Williams.

For the purposes of this policy, “safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children” is defined as:

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

1.1

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by:

- the Children Acts 1989 and 2005;
- the Education Act 2002,
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- the Equality Act 2010,
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The Education (School Teachers’ Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022

and in line with government publications, including:

Statutory guidance -

- Home Office (2023) 'Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales'
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government (2023) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people susceptible to radicalisation'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2023) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage'
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'

Non-statutory guidance -

- Revised Safeguarding Statutory Guidance 2 'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families' 2000,
- the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015.
- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'
- DfE (2024) 'Information sharing'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2024) 'Recruit teachers from overseas'
- DfE (2024) 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges'
- Department of Health and Social Care (2024) 'Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance'

and relates to everyone under the age of 18.

1.2

The whole school and Governing Body takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements within our school to identify, assess, and support those children who are suffering harm. This duty is enshrined in The Teachers' Standards 2013 which states that teachers have a duty to safeguard children's well-being and maintain public trust in the teaching profession.

1.3

The school's Safeguarding practices are developed in the recognition that the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) requires respect and protection of an individual's human rights when they make individual decisions about them:

- Article 3: the right to freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (an absolute right)
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life (a qualified right) includes a duty to protect individuals' physical and psychological integrity

- Article 14: requires that all of the rights and freedoms set out in the Act must be protected and applied without discrimination, and
- Protocol 1, Article 2: protects the right to education.

1.4

We recognise that all adults, including after school club providers, Link Club staff, temporary staff, volunteers and Governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the child's welfare is our paramount concern. We are aware of the need to be vigilant and maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".

1.5

All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

1.6

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident, and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties, believing they will be effectively listened to.
- To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse (Reference Appendix A)
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, especially health services, the Police and Social Care.
- To ensure that all staff working within our school, who have substantial access to children, have been checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications, and a satisfactory DBS check (according to guidance) and a single central record is kept for audit. The Single central record (SCR) will record prohibition checks, ID on arrival and supply confirmations.

1.7

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school documentation:

- Attendance Policy
- Safe Recruitment and Vetting Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Code of Behaviour For Visitors
- Relationships and Health Education Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- PSRHE Policy and schemes of work
- E-Safety Policy
- Escalation Policy
- Intimate Care Policy

- Physical Intervention Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- LA policy on Domestic Abuse Sept 19
- Educational Visits Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Acceptable Use of IT - staff and pupils.

1.8

The posters displayed around school state our duty to protect children and adults and whistle blow if we are concerned.

2. Safe School, Safe Staff

2.1

We will ensure that all members of the school and Governing Body understand and fulfil their responsibilities, namely to ensure that:

- There is a Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy together with a Code of Conduct (which applies to all adults in the school).
- The school will contact the parents on the first day of absence for any child not in school for whom there has been no explanation forthcoming. The school will make every possible effort to ensure that it holds more than one emergency contact per child.
- The school operates safer recruitment procedures by ensuring that at least one person on every recruitment panel has completed on-line Safer Recruitment Training (renewed every five years).
- Staff and Governors are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of concerns (Appendix A)
- The school has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers and
- Will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- The school will make a referral to the DBS and Secretary of State if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns, or would have been dismissed had they not resigned.
- The school will make a referral to the DBS should we cease to use the services of a volunteer as a result of a substantiated allegation.
- A senior leader, Mrs. Jessica Pearson, is appointed as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) with safeguarding responsibility. A deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Miss. Clare Williams, is trained to the same standard as the lead DSL.
- The DSL undertakes regular training - both interagency training and through Warrington Safeguarding Partnership.
- All other staff and Governors have annual Safeguarding training updated as appropriate.
- Any weaknesses in Safeguarding children (policy and procedure) are remedied immediately.
- The Chair of Governors is nominated to liaise with the LA on Child Protection issues in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against the Head Teacher.
- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed annually and that the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available on the school website and available on request.
- The Governing Body considers how children may be taught about safeguarding. This may be part of a broad and balanced curriculum covering relevant issues through Personal, Social, Relationship and Health Education (PSRHE). This may also include commissioning the services of other agencies e.g. NSPCC, to educate children.
- All members of staff and volunteers are provided with Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Whistle Blowing Policy at induction. These will also be re-issued to all staff each September.

- All members of staff are trained in and receive regular updates in e-safety and reporting concerns.
- All members of staff are aware of the key types of abuse and how these may be recognised - (Appendix B) – though we recognise that this information may not be completely comprehensive.
- All members of staff are made aware of their duty of escalating action to safeguard a child if they are not satisfied with the action being taken by the school.
- All members of staff, volunteers, and Governors know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse through the procedures outlined in this policy and if in doubt will seek advice from Children’s Social Care.
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures through publication of the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy on the school website and reference to it in our School Prospectus.
- Community users organising activities for children are aware of the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding guidelines and procedures, and this is included as a condition in the lease.

2.2

Our policy and procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated at least annually.

2.3

The photos and names of the designated members of staff for Child Protection are clearly advertised in the school along with the availability of the Whistle Blowing Policy and a statement about everyone having a responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding.

3. Responsibilities

3.1

All staff are responsible for safeguarding. All staff have a responsibility to:

- Consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the pupil.
- Maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned.
- Provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn.
- Be prepared to identify pupils who may benefit from early help.
- Be aware of the school’s systems which support safeguarding, including any policies, procedures, information and training provided upon induction.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs.
- Undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training (which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring), during their induction – this will be regularly updated.
- Receive and understand child protection and safeguarding (including online safety) updates, e.g. via email, in the weekly safeguarding section of the morning briefing, and at least annually.
- Follow the school’s guidance on safe use of artificial intelligence (AI), ensuring they do not input pupil or staff personal data into AI tools, that they use AI only where leadership has approved it, and that they remain alert to the safeguarding risks of misinformation, disinformation or harmful content generated by AI, in line with KCSIE 2025.
- All staff have a responsibility to be alert to the safeguarding risks posed by misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories, to challenge these where appropriate, and to report any concerns through the school’s safeguarding procedures, in line with KCSIE 2025.
- Be aware of the local early help process and understand their role in it.
- Be aware of, and understand, the process for making referrals to CSCS, as well as for making statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 and their role in these assessments.
- Make a referral to CSCS and/or the police immediately, if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child.
- Support social workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the DSL.
- Be aware of and understand the procedure to follow in the event that a child confides they are being abused, exploited or neglected.

- Be aware that a pupil may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Promote dialogue and understanding, and ensure all pupils feel listened to and understood.
- Empower pupils and allow them to understand their rights to safety and privacy, and to help them understand what they can do to keep themselves protected from harm.
- Avoid victim-blaming attitudes, and challenge it in a professional way if it occurs.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.
- Speak to the DSL if they are unsure about how to handle safeguarding matters.
- Be aware of safeguarding issues that can put pupils at risk of harm.
- Be aware of behaviours that could potentially be a sign that a pupil may be at risk of harm.

3.2

Teachers, including the headteacher, have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard pupils' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties, as outlined in the 'Teachers' Standards'.
- Personally report any cases to the police where it appears that an act of FGM has been carried out, also referred to as 'known' cases, as soon as possible.

3.3

The governing body has a duty to:

- Take strategic leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that the school complies with its duties under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation.
- Guarantee that the policies, procedures and training opportunities in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- Guarantee that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.
- Confirm that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practices of the LA as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures.
- Understand the local criteria for action and the local protocol for assessment, and ensure these are reflected in the school's policies and procedures.
- Comply with its obligations under section 14B of the Children Act 2004 to supply the local safeguarding arrangements with information to fulfil its functions.
- Ensure that staff working directly with children read at least Part one of KCSIE and engage in safeguarding training annually.
- Ensure that staff who do not work directly with children read either Part one or Annex A of KCSIE.
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities in regard to safeguarding children.
- Ensure a senior board level lead takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a member of staff from the SLT to the role of DSL as an explicit part of the role-holder's job description.
- Appoint one or more deputy DSLs to provide support to the DSL, and ensure that they are trained to the same standard as the DSL and that the role is explicit in their job descriptions.
- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding; this includes ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Ensure systems are in place for children to confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will

be treated seriously, and they can safely express their views and give feedback; these systems will be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible.

- Ensure that staff have due regard to relevant data protection principles that allow them to share and withhold personal information.
- Ensure that a member of the governing body is nominated to liaise with the LA and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the headteacher or another governor.
- Guarantee that there are effective and appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Ensure all relevant persons are aware of the school's local safeguarding arrangements, including the governing body itself, the SLT and DSL.
- Make sure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including protection against dangers online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Adhere to statutory responsibilities by conducting pre-employment checks on staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained to support pupils to be themselves at school, e.g. if they are LGBTQ+.
- Ensure the school has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems in pupils, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Guarantee that volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- Make sure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training updates, e.g. emails, as required, but at least annually.
- Ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training upon their induction and that this training is updated regularly.
- Certify that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Confirm that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the DBS and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), where appropriate, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- Guarantee that there are procedures in place to handle pupils' allegations against other pupils.
- Ensure that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as policies pertaining to the behaviour of pupils and staff.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including those in relation to child-on-child abuse.
- Guarantee that there are systems in place for pupils to express their views and give feedback.
- Establish an early help procedure and ensure all staff understand the procedure and their role in it.
- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of LAC and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training.
- Ensure that the designated teacher works with the Virtual School Head to discuss how the pupil premium funding can best be used to support Looked After Children (LAC). The VSH role now extends to children in kinship care (KCSIE 25).
- Introduce mechanisms to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities.
- Make sure that staff members have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep LAC safe, particularly with regard to the pupil's legal status, contact details and care arrangements.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who become absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and prevent the risk of their disappearance in future.
- Ensure that all members of the governing board have been subject to an enhanced DBS check.
- Create a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the

Public Sector Equality Duty), the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

3.4

The headteacher has a duty to:

- Ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing board, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by staff.
- Provide staff with the appropriate policies and information upon induction.

3.5

The DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) has a duty to:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- Ensure there is an annual review of school's filtering and monitoring processes.
- Discuss safeguarding concerns, either in person or at least by phone if out of school.
- Refer a child if there are concerns about possible abuse, to the Local Authority, and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. All referrals and telephone calls should be logged on CPOMS following concerns/discussions with either social care, WSP, MARAC, police or any other agency related to the well-being of the child.
- Make referrals to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern.
- Make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service and the Teaching Regulation Agency where a person is dismissed or left due to risk / harm to a child.
- Make referrals to the Police where a crime has been committed.
- Liaise with the "case manager" and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
- Keep up to date written records of concerns about a child in CPOMS, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral, noting dates, times, telephone numbers and the names of those involved in any discussions with a brief outline of the issues discussed, and ensuring that these are accessible only to those who need to see them.
- Keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of safeguarding concerns, decisions made, and whether or not referrals have been made, and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.
- Ensure that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records in the Head Teacher's office. Any archived materials should be retained in the school archive until the child's 25th birthday, and are copied on to the child's next school or college with a receipt obtained.
- Ensure that an indication of the existence of the additional file mentioned above is marked on the pupil records.
- Liaise with other agencies and professionals. In particular, by responding to any requests / advice from the Warrington Safeguarding Partnership (social services, health services, police and other invited agencies.)
- Ensure that either they or another staff member attend case conferences, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contribute to assessments, and provide a report which has been shared with the parent.
- Ensure that any pupil currently with a child protection plan who is absent in the educational setting without explanation is referred to their key worker's Social Care Team on the same day.
- Organise child protection induction and update training annually for all school staff.
- Providing a termly report within the Head Teacher's Report to Governors detailing any changes to the policy and procedures, training undertaken by the DSL and by all staff and Governors, number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children on the child protection register (anonymised).

- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Promote educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing (particularly children with SEND), or have experienced, and identify the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement at school or college, and work with teachers to address these needs.
- Ensuring that wherever possible more than one emergency contact number is maintained for every child.

3.6

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

There is a designated teacher for looked after children whose responsibility it is to promote the educational achievement of any looked after children. For the academic year 2023-2024, there are no looked after children, but should any such children join the school, the designated teacher role would be held by Ms Clare Williams who has DSL training. The designated teacher will follow the guidance contained in the DfE document, *'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children' - Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities* (February 2018). In particular, the school will contribute to the Personal Education Plan (PEP) and Care Plan, will seek to ensure that there are no barriers to achievement and full participation in the life of the school, and will use a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and contact with a named adult to ensure that looked after children's mental and emotional health is monitored and supported. The VSH role now extends to children in kinship care (KCSIE 25).

3.7

Safeguarding Governor

The Governor responsible for safeguarding will:

- Support the safeguarding team in reviewing practice and policy and report to the People Committee on such reviews.
- Check that the Single Central Record is up to date annually.
- Ensure, during checks, that the SCR records prohibition checks, ID on arrival, supply confirmations.
- Check that the school internet filters and monitoring system takes account of the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty, UK Safer Internet Centre's published guidance as to what "appropriate" filtering and monitoring might look like: UK Safer Internet Centre: appropriate filtering and monitoring, and South West Grid for Learning's (swgfl.org.uk) tool to check whether a school or college's filtering provider is signed up to relevant lists (CSA content, Sexual Content, Terrorist content Your Internet Connection Blocks Child Abuse & Terrorist Content).

4. Supporting Children

4.1

In our decision making and planning we will consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

4.2

We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.

4.3

We recognise that the school may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

4.4

We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

4.5

Our school will support all children by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness, through the curriculum as well as our relationships, whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school.
- Promote a culture of listening to children through building trusted relationships which facilitate communication and taking account of their wishes and feelings.
- Being aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is copied under confidential cover to the child's new setting and ensuring the school medical records are forwarded as a matter of priority.
- Identifying children and families who would benefit from Early Help; assessing their need and seek to provide targeted early help services. In engaging with a family in Early Help, the school will be mindful of the need to improve a family's own capability to solve problems for themselves, and will always evaluate any support to demonstrate the impact it is having on the outcomes for the child.

4.6

If a child has health needs which means that they cannot attend school, we will advise the LA and follow the guidance in the DfE document: 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs' Statutory guidance for local authorities January 2013, noting that provision should be made as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.

5. Confidentiality

5.1

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.

5.2

The Head Teacher/DSL will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only excepting that educational outcomes should be promoted by sharing information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children are experiencing to ensure that teachers understand the additional challenges the children face, and the support and adjustments that they could make to best support these pupils.

5.3

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

5.4

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

5.5

We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with social care and/or WSP (Warrington Safeguarding Partnership).

5.6

School staff have been advised that the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. In particular, staff have been provided with training that advises them that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data – without consent where there is a good reason to do so.

6. Supporting Staff

6.1

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

6.2

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL and to seek further support as appropriate.

7. Allegations against staff [Comment: Add Low-level Concerns procedure here]

7.1

All school staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

7.2

All Staff should be aware of the school's Behaviour and Anti- Bullying Policy.

7.3

Guidance about conduct and safe practice, including safe use of mobile phones by staff and volunteers are contained in the Code of Conduct.

7.4

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, or information is received which suggests that a person may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the allegation or aware of the information, will immediately inform the Head Teacher .

7.5

The Head Teacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and follow school policy. The Local Authority Designated Officer is Beki Byron 443102 / 442079 **[Comment: Replace named contacts with role-based LA safeguarding hub reference]**

7.6

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Head Teacher, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Governors, Mrs. Louise Barker, who will consult as in 7.5 above, without notifying the Head Teacher first.

7.7

The school will follow the Local Authority policy adopted by the Governing Body for managing allegations against staff. Under no circumstances will we send a child home, pending such an investigation, unless this advice is given exceptionally following consultation with the LADO.

7.8

Suspension of the member of staff, excluding the Head Teacher, against whom an allegation has been made, needs careful consideration; the Head Teacher will seek the advice of the LADO and Human Resources in making this decision.

7.9

In the event of an allegation against the Head Teacher, the decision to suspend will be made by the Chair of Governors with advice as in 7.8 above.

7.10

The same procedure that applies to school staff will apply in managing an allegation against a community user, external consultant, or supply staff. In the latter case, the agency would be informed of the school's procedures and invited to take part.

7.11

Where allegations are not found to meet the threshold of a LADO or police referral, they should be dealt with according to the school code of conduct and staff discipline policy.

7.12

In line with *KCSIE 2025* Part 4, the school maintains a culture of openness and transparency in which all staff are expected to share any concern about the behaviour of an adult working in or on behalf of the school, even if it does not meet the threshold of harm or a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

A *low-level concern* is any behaviour by an adult towards a child that may be inconsistent with the staff Code of Conduct, does not meet the harm threshold, but nevertheless causes a sense of unease or may indicate a lapse in professional judgement. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Being over-friendly with pupils;
- Having favourites;
- Using inappropriate language;
- Engaging in one-to-one situations with a pupil in a way that could be misinterpreted;

- Failing to maintain appropriate boundaries, including online.

Procedure:

- All low-level concerns must be reported promptly to the Headteacher (or to the Chair of Governors if the concern relates to the Headteacher).
- The Headteacher will record the concern securely, review it, and take proportionate action (e.g. advice, reminder of conduct expectations, supervision, additional training, or HR involvement if required).
- Records of low-level concerns will be retained securely and reviewed for any patterns that might indicate a more serious issue.
- Where a pattern of concerning, inappropriate or unsafe behaviour is identified, the Headteacher will consult the LADO to determine whether the threshold for referral has been met.

This procedure protects pupils and staff alike, ensuring that all concerns are addressed appropriately and in a timely manner.

8. Whistle-blowing

8.1

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

8.2

All staff are made aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. This is published and publicly posted around the school in key areas. Should they feel these concerns are not being taken seriously within school, after they have invoked the Whistle Blowing Policy, they should speak to LADO.

8.3

Whistle-blowing regarding the Head Teacher should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body whose contact details are readily available to staff.

9. Physical Intervention

9.1

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

9.2

Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.

9.3

Staff who work regularly with a child where there is a likelihood to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained.

9.4

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that touch is appropriate in the context of working with children, and all staff have been given guidance within the Code of Conduct to ensure they are clear about their professional boundaries.

10. Anti-Bullying

Our school policy on anti-bullying is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. This includes all forms e.g. cyber, racist, homophobic and gender related bullying. We keep a record of known bullying incidents. All staff are aware that children with SEND and / or differences/perceived differences are more susceptible to being bullied / victims of child abuse. Our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy clearly sets out the steps to be taken and recorded.

11. Equality

Our Equality Policy is set out separately. We acknowledge that the failure to deal with issues related to race, religion, gender, sexuality or disability may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. We keep a record of such incidents.

12. Prevention

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Include regular consultation with children e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying events, asking children to report whether they have had happy/sad lunchtimes/playtimes, having Feeling Walls and Worry Boxes and engaging in Circle Time.
- Provide a PSRHE curriculum which will cover safeguarding and self-protection, anti-bullying work, e-safety, safe use of mobile technologies and social networks, road safety, pedestrian and cycle training and high school transition activities.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.

13. Early help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. The school will be proactive in ensuring that every pupil is able to access full-time education to aid their development and protect them from harm whilst utilising the unique position of having regular daily contact with pupils to identify concerns as early as possible.

Any pupil may benefit from early help, but in particular, staff will be alert to the potential need for early help for pupils who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs.
- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan.
- Are suffering from mental ill health.
- Are young carers.
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.

- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home.
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation.
- Are at risk of being radicalised.
- Have family members in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse.
- Are misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Are at risk of HBA, such as FGM or forced marriage.
- Are privately fostered.
- Have experienced multiple suspensions and are at risk of, or have been, permanently excluded from school, alternative provision or a PRU. For pupils in this category, school retains safeguarding responsibility.

The school will not limit its support to pupils affected by the above and will be mindful of a variety of additional circumstances in which pupils may benefit from early help, for example, if they are:

- Bereaved.
- Viewing problematic or inappropriate online content or developing inappropriate relationships online.
- Have recently returned home to their family from care.
- Missing education, or are persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education.

Staff will be mindful of all signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and use their professional curiosity to raise concerns to the DSL.

The DSL will take the lead where early help is appropriate. This includes liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. The local early help process will be followed as required.

Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases will be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to CSCS for assessment for statutory services if the pupil's situation is not improving or is worsening.

14. Health & Safety

Our Health & Safety Policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the school environment, and for example in relation to internet use, and when away from the school and when undertaking school trips and visits.

15. Specific Safeguarding Issues

There are certain specific safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm – staff will be aware of these issues.

Appendix B of this policy sets out details about specific safeguarding issues that pupils may experience and outlines specific actions that would be taken in relation to individual issues.

16. Child-on-Child Abuse

For the purposes of this policy, **“child-on-child abuse”** is defined as abuse between children. St Monica's has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse.

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported,

this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. All staff will speak to the DSL if they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

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

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

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

All staff will understand the importance of their role in taking child-on-child abuse seriously. They will understand the role they have to play in preventing child on child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it. If any member of staff has concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, these concerns must be discussed with the DSL immediately, recording details on CPOMS, following guidance and actions given by the DSL including involving parents where appropriate.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Pupils will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.

17. Pupils potentially at greater risk of harm

17.1 St Monica’s recognises that some groups of pupils can face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline, and understands that further barriers may exist when determining abuse and neglect in these groups of pupils. Additional considerations for managing safeguarding concerns and incidents amongst these groups are outlined below.

17.2 Pupils who need social workers

- Pupils may need social workers due to safeguarding or welfare needs. These needs can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm and educational disadvantage.
- As a matter of routine, the DSL will hold and use information from the LA about whether a pupil has a social worker in order to make decisions in the best interests of the pupil’s safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.
- Where a pupil needs a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to unauthorised absence, and promoting welfare, e.g. considering the provision, pastoral or academic support.

17.3 Home-educated children

- Parents may choose elective home education (EHE) for their children. In some cases, EHE can mean that children are less visible to the services needed to safeguard and support them.
- In line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the school will inform the LA of all deletions from the admissions register when a pupil is taken off roll.
- Where a parent has expressed their intention to remove a pupil from school for EHE, the school, in collaboration with the LA and other key professionals, will coordinate a meeting with the parent, where possible, before the final decision has been made, particularly if the pupil has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

17.4 Looked after and Previously Looked after children (LAC & PLAC, and children in kinship care)

Children most commonly become looked after because of abuse and/or neglect. Because of this, they can be at potentially greater risk in relation to safeguarding. PLAC, also known as care leavers, can also remain vulnerable after leaving care.

The governing body will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and PLAC safe. This includes ensuring that the appropriate staff have the information they need, such as:

- Looked after legal status, i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order.
- Contact arrangements with parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the pupil.

The DSL will be provided with the necessary details of pupils' social workers and the Virtual School Head, and, for PLAC, personal advisers.

Further details of safeguarding procedures for LAC and PLAC are outlined in the school's LAC Policy.

17.5 Pupils with SEND

When managing safeguarding in relation to pupils with SEND, staff will be aware of the following:

- Certain indicators of abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, may relate to the pupil's disability without further exploration; however, it should never be assumed that a pupil's indicators relate only to their disability
- Pupils with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers may exist, as well as difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

When reporting concerns or making referrals for pupils with SEND, the above factors will always be taken into consideration. When managing a safeguarding issue relating to a pupil with SEND, the DSL will liaise with the school's SENCO, as well as the pupil's parents where appropriate, to ensure that the pupil's needs are met effectively.

17.6 LGBTQ+ pupils

The fact that a pupil may be LGBTQ+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm; however, staff will be aware that LGBTQ+ pupils can be targeted by other individuals. Staff will also be aware that, in some cases, a pupil who is perceived by others to be LGBTQ+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as pupils who identify as LGBTQ+.

Staff will also be aware that the risks to these pupils can be compounded when they do not have a trusted adult with whom they can speak openly with. Staff will endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced by these pupils and provide a safe space for them to speak out and share any concerns they have.

17.7 Pupils requiring mental health support

All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a pupil has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

18. Use of the school premises for non-school activities

Where the governing body hires or rents out school facilities or the school premises to organisations or individuals, e.g. for providers to run community or extracurricular activities, it will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to keep pupils safe. The school will refer to the DfE's guidance on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings in these circumstances.

Where the governing body provides the activities under the direct supervision or management of school staff, child protection arrangements will apply. Where activities are provided separately by another body, this may not be the case; therefore, the governing body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. The governing body will also ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The governing body will ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement, i.e. a lease or hire agreement, as a condition of use and occupation of the premises, and specify that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

19. Extracurricular activities and clubs

External bodies that host extracurricular activities and clubs at the school, e.g. charities or companies, will work in collaboration with the school to effectively safeguard pupils and adhere to local safeguarding arrangements.

Staff and volunteers running extracurricular activities and clubs are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of pupils. Paid and volunteer staff understand how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to CSCS or the police, if necessary.

All national governing bodies of sport that receive funding from either Sport England or UK Sport must aim to meet the Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport.

20. Safer recruitment

The school's full policy and procedures for safer recruitment are outlined in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

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

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

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

The governing board will conduct the appropriate pre-employment checks for all prospective employees, including internal candidates and candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK.

The appropriate DBS and suitability checks will be carried out for all governors, volunteers, and contractors.

Staff suitability

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

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

All staff members are required to sign the Staff Disqualification Declaration Form confirming that they are not disqualified from working in a schooling environment. A disqualified person will not be permitted to continue working at the school, unless they apply for and are granted a waiver from Ofsted. The school will provide support with this process.

Ongoing suitability

Following appointment, consideration will be given to staff and volunteers' ongoing suitability – to prevent the opportunity for harm to children or placing children at risk.

Referral to the DBS

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

21. Single central record (SCR)

The school keeps an SCR which records all staff, including agency and third-party supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes, who work at the school.

The following information is recorded on the SCR:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- A check of professional qualifications, where required
- A check to determine the individual's right to work in the UK
- Additional checks for those who have lived or worked outside of the UK

For agency and third-party supply staff, the school will also record whether written confirmation from the employment business supplying the member of staff has been received which indicates that all the necessary checks have been conducted (i.e. all the same checks the school would perform on any individual working in the school or who will be providing education on the school's behalf, including through online delivery) and the date that confirmation was received.

If any checks have been conducted for volunteers, this will also be recorded on the SCR. If risk assessments are conducted to assess whether a volunteer should be subject to an enhanced DBS check, the risk assessment will be recorded.

Written confirmation that supply agencies have completed all relevant checks will also be included.

The school is free to record any other information it deems relevant.

The details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work at the school.

22. Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be monitored and evaluated by:

- An annual audit from an LA safeguarding officer
- Governing Body visits to the school
- SLT 'drop ins' and discussions with children and staff
- Pupil surveys and questionnaires
- Scrutiny of Attendance data
- Scrutiny of a range of risk assessments
- Scrutiny of Governing Body minutes
- Logs of bullying/racist/behaviour incidents and reports to the Governing Body through the Head Teacher's Report to Governors
- Review of parental concerns and parent questionnaires
- Reflection on the school practice in the light of research and serious case reviews to learn and in particular to avoid:
 - 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;
 - not sharing information;
 - sharing information too slowly; and
 - a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action

Appendices

A - Child Protection Procedures

B – Types of Abuse

C – School's Record of Concern Form

D – Partial School Closure Safeguarding Arrangements

APPENDIX A: Child Protection Procedures

St Monica's is committed to the protection of children and as such all persons have a duty to be aware of the need to protect children. These procedures set out the steps to be taken where there is concern about a child.

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs. J Pearson

In her absence – Deputy DSL – Ms. C Williams

Safeguarding & Child Protection Governor – Mrs P Harkness

Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (and children in kinship care) – Ms C Williams

ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHERE THERE ARE ISSUES OF CONCERN

Child Protection is the responsibility of **all** staff. We do not know who a child will choose to confide in and so all staff must be aware of the procedures and adhere to them.

If a child discloses an incident or says something or you see something which causes you concern:

1. Listen to what the child has to say – being cautious not to ask leading questions or use vocabulary which the child has not used – this could compromise any future legal action.
2. Do not appear shocked or judgemental.
3. Do not promise the child confidentiality – you cannot keep such information confidential. Rather reassure the child that you will be speaking to someone about their concerns / the incident in order to help them.
4. Discuss the incident immediately with the designated child protection lead or, in her absence, her deputy. You have a duty to do this in order to fulfil your obligations under Child Protection legislation.
5. Make notes of the incident which are as detailed as possible on CPOMS and set an alert to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy (staff and Admin).
6. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then follow their duties.
7. If the allegation is against the Head Teacher, then staff should speak to the Chair of Governors.
8. All phone calls relating to Child Protection and Safeguarding concerns should be recorded with date, time, names of persons contacted and brief notes of conversations directly onto the child's log on CPOMS and the DSLs alerted to the log. MDAs & Site staff are to continue to use the written Record of Concern forms and hand in to the DSL or deputy DSL. These forms are kept in the Staffroom

NB: In the case of FGM, there is a mandatory duty of teachers to report this directly to the police, and not to leave this to the DSL.

NB: Useful information video with a recap on what to do when responding to a disclosure can be found on Schoot CPD platform; Safeguarding Level 1&2 course, section 3 - Responding.

HOW AND WHAT TO RECORD

Teaching, Support Staff, Admin and SLT must record details of a disclosure, concern, or behaviour incident onto **CPOMS** using their individual school account. Midday supervisors, and Site staff are to use the school Record of Concern sheets (in Staffroom) and hand them to DSL.

- A written record should be made as soon as possible after an event or conversation, so the facts and details are still fresh in your mind.
- A record should clearly separate fact from opinion.
- You need to record exactly what you've seen, heard and done, rather than allowing your feelings or interpretation of events to cloud your writing.
- A record should use simple, concise and unemotional language.
- Information sharing is a crucial part of successfully safeguarding a child, but a record should still only be shared with relevant individuals and agencies.
- Staff should be aware that all notes made may be read by parents or used as the basis of reports to the Local Authority, social care, the police or the courts.

A written record needs to include the name, age, gender, ethnicity, and any physical or mental health conditions the child has. It also needs to include your name and details (this will be done for you if you use CPOMS).

You then need to note down the **date, time and location** for the following, including the facts of each:

- When you first recognised, or were told about the abuse (including who told you)
- Who the alleged perpetrator or perpetrators are
- Any witnesses that were present when the concern was raised
- What the child's behaviour was like at the time, including what they said (note down the exact words they used if you can)
- Any physical injuries that have been identified, if any
- What safeguarding actions have been taken by you or others during and after the event
- Any other discussions that were had with the child, their family, carers or other staff members
- Any referrals that were made to other agencies, such as community workers, support workers or the emergency services
- If you reported the case to the police, note down the case reference number, and any decisions that were made and the reasons for those decisions.
- If handwriting a form, it must be signed and dated. This is done for you if using CPOMS.
- If handwriting, hand in the form to the DSL immediately. If using CPOMS, set an alert for the DSLs to read.

NB: Useful information video with a recap on how to record a disclosure/concern can be found on Schoot CPD platform; Safeguarding Level 1&2 course, section 4 - How to record.

Staff should be aware that if they do not feel their report has been treated seriously then they may also report the matter further under the Whistle Blowing Policy or make a direct referral to social care:

Report any safeguarding concerns about a child or young person to children's safeguarding and social work teams during office hours on 01925 443322, press option one followed by option one.

Outside of office hours call us on 01925 443322 and press option 2 to go through to our out of hours service. If you believe a crime has been committed, contact the police on 101

The outcomes of a record of concern will be one of the following, and the DSL will respond to you to let you know either actions or appropriate follow up information:

- Pastoral support offered
- Early Help support offered
- Statutory services referral

Information Sharing and Data Protection

Staff should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety of children.

Contextual Safeguarding

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which means that assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare. Children's social care assessments should consider such factors so it is important that schools and colleges provide as much information as possible as part of the referral process. This will allow any assessment to consider all the available evidence and the full context of any abuse.

New Staff or Volunteers

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL or a deputy. They must read the school child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the whistleblowing policy and the code of conduct. The DSL or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure. As soon as possible they will be asked to undertake the accredited Safeguarding training as provided on the School CPD platform.

If staff or volunteers are transferring in from other registered education or childcare settings for a temporary period to support the care of children, we will seek evidence from their setting that:

- the member of staff has completed relevant safeguarding training in line with other similar staff or volunteers,
- they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and
- where the role involves regulated activity and the appropriate DBS check has been undertaken by that setting we will undertake a written risk assessment to determine whether a new DBS would

need to be undertaken. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

- Risk Assessments for volunteers:
- Volunteers may not be left unsupervised with children until suitable checks have been undertaken. People supervising volunteers must be themselves in regulated activity, able to provide regular, day to day supervision and reasonable in all circumstances to protect the children.
- The school will undertake a written risk assessment on the specific role of each volunteer to decide whether to obtain an enhanced DBS check (with barred list information) for all staff and volunteers new to working in regulated activity in line with DBS guidance.
- When undertaking ID checks on documents for the DBS it is reasonable to initially check these documents online through a live video link and to accept scanned images of documents for the purpose of applying for the check. The actual documents will then be checked against the scanned images when the employee or volunteer arrives for their first day.
- The school will update the Single Central Record of all staff and volunteers working in the school, including those from other settings. This will include the risk assessment around the DBS. A record will be kept by Admin or SLT of who is working in the school each day.

New Children at the School

Where children join our school from other settings we will require confirmation from the DSL whether they have a Safeguarding File or SEN statement/EHCP. This file must be provided securely **before** the child begins at our school and a call made from our DSL or a deputy to the placing school's DSL to discuss how best to keep the child safe wherever possible. Information provided must include contact details for any appointed social worker and where relevant for the Virtual School Head. Safeguarding information about children placed in our school will be recorded on our safeguarding system, will be securely copied to the placing school DSL and will be securely returned to the placing school on completion of the child's placement with us so there is a continuous safeguarding record for the child.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment in respect of any new information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know about the information. This will be recorded on our safeguarding recording system.

Low-Level Concerns – What You Need to Know (KCSIE 2025)

What is it?

- Any worry about a colleague's behaviour that feels "not quite right" but isn't serious harm.
- Examples: being over-friendly with pupils, using poor language, breaking boundaries, private messages, ignoring safeguarding rules.

What do I do?

- **Report it straight away** to the Headteacher.
- If the concern is about the Head, tell the Chair of Governors.
- Don't keep it to yourself – better to share and it be nothing, than miss a warning sign.

What happens next?

- The Head records and reviews the concern.
- Small issues may mean a reminder, support or extra training.
- Patterns of repeated low-level concerns may lead to HR involvement or referral to the LADO.

Why does it matter?

- Keeps pupils safe.
- Protects colleagues from unfounded allegations.
- Builds a culture of openness and trust.

APPENDIX B: Types of Abuse

- 1. Local Circumstances**
- 2. General signs of abuse and risk factors**
- 3. Physical Abuse**
- 4. Emotional Abuse (including Domestic Abuse, cyberbullying, bullying)**
- 5. Sexual Abuse including Child Sexual Exploitation**
- 6. Child-on-Child Abuse**
- 7. Neglect**
- 8. Forced marriage**
- 9. Female genital mutilation**
- 10. Radicalisation**
- 11. Some cases of Private Fostering**
- 12. Children missing education**
- 13. Bullying including cyber bullying**
- 14. Domestic Violence**
- 15. Fabricated or Induced Illness**
- 16. Honour based abuse (HBA)**
- 17. Gangs and youth violence**
- 18. Hate Crime**
- 19. Sexting – sharing of sexual imagery by young people via mobiles or over the internet**
- 20. Child criminal exploitation and county lines**
- 21. E-Safety**
- 22. Upskirting**
- 23. Mental Health**

1. Local Circumstances

The school undertakes to be informed and vigilant in looking for all types of abuse, but we are particularly aware of the following issues that have in the recent past been of particular concern at this school:

1.1 Domestic Abuse –

In working with children who have witnessed domestic abuse we consider the following issues when planning our support:

- Identifying and responding to signs of distress.
- Helping pupils to talk about and make sense of their experiences.
- The impact of domestic violence on parenting and how parents can be supported.
- The needs of young people in refuges and temporary accommodation.
- Liaising with specialist domestic violence services eg the NSPCC DART programme (Domestic Abuse, Recovering Together).

1.2 SEND children –

With a higher than average number of children in receipt of Educational and Health Care Plans, we are particularly aware of the vulnerability of SEND children to neglect and abuse, and so we consider the following issues when planning our support:

- The potential for symptoms and signs to be misinterpreted as aspects of the child's primary health need rather than as signs of abuse.
- The need to plan ahead to protect the dignity of children who need intimate care, or who have seizures and lose bowel and bladder control.
- The possibility that the siblings of a SEND child will suffer neglect or increased stress.
- The need to ensure that SEND children have the vocabulary and conceptual understanding to help them know what is OK / not OK; and to be able to explain what may have happened to them.

1.3 Social Media Bullying and CSE -

Having had a recent case of a stranger grooming a child via their mobile phone we are aware of the need to protect our children, and so we consider the following issues:

- To provide parents with information about how to monitor their children's online activity and the minimum ages for a range of social media platforms.
- We repeat e safety lessons just before a long break to remind the children of how to stay safe at a time when they are particularly vulnerable.
- We offer group and individual support to children distressed as a result of social media bullying. We teach the children what social media bullying is, and encourage them to develop empathy and awareness of the difference between receiving a message face to face and by phone.

1.4 Dual Registered Children -

With children who are dual registered with another school, we are aware of the need to communicate closely with the other school to ensure that there is clarity about where the children are at all times, and when the family move areas we need to let each other know who is currently responsible for making safeguarding phone calls regarding non-attendance. CME Officer Dave Sampson is a source of support for concerns about children who are travelling; he can be contacted on 01925 442261.

2. General Signs of Abuse and Risk Factors

2.1

All staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and will understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. Staff will also be aware that pupils can be affected by seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of abuse.

All staff will understand that abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific definition or one label alone. Staff will understand that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap one another; therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL.

All staff, especially the DSL and deputy DSLs, will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that pupils can at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms). All staff will be aware of the appropriate action to take following a pupil being identified as at potential risk of abuse and, in all cases, will speak to the DSL if they are unsure.

All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, including online abuse, cyberbullying, and the sharing of indecent images.

2.2 The following non-specific signs may indicate something is wrong:

- Significant change in behaviour
- Extreme anger or sadness
- Aggressive and attention seeking behaviour
- Suspicious bruises with unsatisfactory explanations
- Lack of self-esteem
- Self-injury
- Depression
- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour

2.1 Risk Indicators - The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Must be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead person, manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague
- May require consultation with and / or referral to Children's Services
- The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred. Where a child has any of the following indications, we recognise that they have increased vulnerability to abuse. Where the school knows of such circumstance they will be included in the Vulnerable Children's List, and monitored through Safeguarding Supervision Meetings:
 - is disabled and has specific additional needs
 - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
 - is a young carer
 - is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
 - is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
 - is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
 - is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
 - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
 - is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves has returned home to their family from care
 - is a privately fostered child

2.2 In an abusive relationship the child may appear frightened of the parent/s; act in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development (though full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups).

The parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health promotion services and treatment of the child's episodic illnesses
- Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about/to the child and may fail to provide attention or praise (high criticism/low warmth environment)
- Be absent or misusing substances
- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits
- Be involved in domestic abuse

2.3 Staff should be aware of the potential risk to children when individuals, previously known or suspected to have abused children, move into the household.

3. Physical Abuse

3.1 The following are often regarded as indicators of concern:

- An explanation which is inconsistent with an injury
- Several different explanations provided for an injury
- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment
- The parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury
- Parents are absent without good reason when their child is presented for treatment
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries (which may represent a "cry for help" and if ignored could lead to a more serious injury)
- Family use of different doctors and A&E departments
- Reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries

3.2 Bruising - Children can have accidental bruising, but the following must be considered as non-accidental unless there is evidence or an adequate explanation provided:

- Any bruising to a pre-crawling or pre-walking baby
- Bruising in or around the mouth, particularly in small babies which may indicate force feeding
- Two simultaneous bruised eyes, without bruising to the forehead, (rarely accidental, though a single bruised eye can be accidental or abusive)
- Repeated or multiple bruising on the head or on sites unlikely to be injured accidentally
- Variation in colour possibly indicating injuries caused at different times
- The outline of an object used e.g. belt marks, hand prints or a hair brush
- Bruising or tears around, or behind, the earlobe/s indicating injury by pulling or twisting
- Bruising around the face
- Grasp marks on small children
- Bruising on the arms, buttocks and thighs may be an indicator of sexual abuse

3.3 Bite Marks - Bite marks can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped. Those over 3 cm in diameter are more likely to have been caused by an adult or older child. A medical opinion should be sought where there is any doubt over the origin of the bite.

3.4 Burns and Scalds - It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns and scalds, and will always require experienced medical opinion. Any burn with a clear outline may be suspicious e.g.:

- Circular burns from cigarettes (but may be friction burns if along the bony protuberance of the spine)
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electrical fire elements
- Burns of uniform depth over a large area
- Scalds that have a line indicating immersion or poured liquid (a child getting into hot water is his/her own accord will struggle to get out and cause splash marks)
- Old scars indicating previous burns/scalds which did not have appropriate treatment or adequate explanation
- Scalds to the buttocks of a small child, particularly in the absence of burns to the feet, are indicative of dipping into a hot liquid or bath.

3.5 Fractures - Fractures may cause pain, swelling and discolouration over a bone or joint. Non-mobile children rarely sustain fractures. There are grounds for concern if:

- The history provided is vague, non-existent or inconsistent with the fracture type
- There are associated old fractures
- Medical attention is sought after a period of delay when the fracture has caused symptoms such as swelling, pain or loss of movement
- There is an unexplained fracture in the first year of life

3.6 Scars - A large number of scars or scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, may suggest abuse.

4. Emotional Abuse -

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse. The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse. The following may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Developmental delay
- Indiscriminate attachment or failure to attach
- Aggressive behaviour towards others
- Scapegoated within the family
- Frozen watchfulness, particularly in pre-school children

- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a “loner” – difficulty relating to others

5. Sexual Abuse -

Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. This is particularly difficult for a child to talk about and full account should be taken of the cultural sensitivities of any individual child/family. Some children may not be aware that they are experiencing sexual abuse and may see the actions of the adult as “normal”. This may involve forcing or enticing a child to take part and it may or may not involve penetration. It can include involvement in looking at, or the production of sexual images. Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioural.

5.1 Some behavioural indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Inappropriate sexualised conduct
- Sexually explicit behaviour, play or conversation, inappropriate to the child’s age
- Continual and inappropriate or excessive masturbation
- Self-harm (including eating disorder), self mutilation and suicide attempts
- Involvement in prostitution or indiscriminate choice of sexual partners
- An anxious unwillingness to remove clothes e.g. for sports events (but this may be related to cultural norms or physical difficulties)

5.2 Some physical indicators associated with this form of abuse are:

- Pain or itching of genital area
- Blood on underclothes
- Pregnancy in a younger girl where the identity of the father is not disclosed
- Physical symptoms such as injuries to the genital or anal area, bruising to buttocks, abdomen and thighs,
- sexually transmitted disease,
- persistent urine infection,
- presence of semen on vagina, anus, external genitalia or clothing

5.3 Sexual Abuse by Young People / Child-on-Child abuse -

The boundary between what is abusive and what is part of normal childhood or youthful experimentation can be blurred. The determination of whether behaviour is developmental, inappropriate or abusive will hinge around the related concepts of true consent, power imbalance and exploitation. This may include children and young people who exhibit a range of sexually problematic behaviours such as indecent exposure, obscene telephone calls, and girls being sexually touched.

5.3.2

Developmental Sexual Activity encompasses those actions that are to be expected from children and young people as they move from infancy through to an adult understanding of their physical, emotional and behavioural relationships with each other. Such sexual activity is essentially information gathering and experience testing. It is characterised by mutuality and the seeking of consent. See *‘Brook: Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool’*.

5.3.3

Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour can be inappropriate socially, inappropriate to development, or both. In considering whether behaviour fits into this category, it is important to consider what negative effects it has on any of the parties involved and what concerns it raises about a child or young person. It should be

recognised that some actions may be motivated by information seeking, but still cause significant upset, confusion, worry, physical damage, etc. It may also be that the behaviour is “acting out” which may derive from other sexual situations to which the child or young person has been exposed. If an act appears to have been inappropriate, there may be a need for some form of behaviour management or intervention. For some children, educative inputs may be enough to address the behaviour. Abusive sexual activity includes any behaviour involving coercion, threats, aggression together with secrecy, or where one participant relies on an unequal power base.

5.3.4

Assessment - In order to more fully determine the nature of the incident the following factors should be given consideration. The presence of exploitation in terms of:

- Equality – consider differentials of physical, cognitive and emotional development, power and control and authority, passive and assertive tendencies
- Consent – agreement including all the following:
- Understanding what is proposed based on age, maturity, development level, functioning and experience
- Knowledge of society’s standards for what is being proposed
- Awareness of potential consequences and alternatives
- Assumption that agreements or disagreements will be respected equally
- Voluntary decision
- Mental competence
- Coercion – the young perpetrator who abuses may use techniques like bribing, manipulation and emotional threats of secondary gains and losses that is loss of love, friendship, etc. Some may use physical force, brutality or the threat of these regardless of victim resistance.

In evaluating sexual behaviour of children and young people, the above information should be used only as a guide. Advice should always be sought as we are not trained to make judgements.

5.3.5

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools can occur between children of any age and sex. The school is committed to being alert to the possibility of sexual violence and / or sexual harassment happening at St. Monica’s. Where it is found, the school will ensure 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 will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Staff are aware that some groups are potentially more at risk eg girls, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and LGBT children. Staff will:

- challenge inappropriate behaviours;
- make it clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and,
- challenge physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts.
- Encourage children to approach a trusted adult who will provide a safe space to share concerns.
- Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Where incidents occur, they will be risk assessed and actions taken to safeguard all children. Support will be put in place for victims and perpetrators following all guidance.

5.4 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

5.4.1 A definition of sexual exploitation: *'Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.'*
National Working Group

5.4.2 The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive but it does highlight common signs which can assist professionals in identifying children or young people – boys as well as girls - who may be victims of sexual exploitation:

- underage sexual activity
- inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour, sexually risky behaviour,
- repeat sexually transmitted infections
- in girls, repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile
- having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- changes in the way they dress
- going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends seen at known places of concern
- moving around the country, appearing in new towns or cities, not knowing where they are
- getting in/out of different cars driven by unknown adults
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- contact with known perpetrators
- involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- hanging out with groups of older people, or anti-social groups, or with other vulnerable peers
- associating with other young people involved in sexual exploitation
- recruiting other young people to exploitative situations
- truancy, exclusion, disengagement with school, opting out of education altogether
- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality (chaotic, aggressive, sexual)
- mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- drug or alcohol misuse
- getting involved in crime
- police involvement, police records
- involved in gangs, gang fights, gang membership
- injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault.

5.4.3 What to do if there are concerns about CSE

- Refer to the Warrington CSE Referral Pathway [Welcome to the Warrington Safeguarding Partnership Online...](#)
- Whenever a practitioner has concerns that a child or young person is being sexually exploited, or is

at risk of sexual exploitation, they should contact Children's Social Care and follow the **Referrals Procedure**.

- This screening tool should be used by all professionals working with children aged 10+. Professionals may also decide it is appropriate to use the tool to screen younger children as nationally children as young as 8 years old have been found to be abused in this way. This screening tool will help you focus on the specific indicators of sexual exploitation and determine whether further investigations are needed. The tool could be used in supervision, in discussions with parents and carers, with other professionals and with the child.
- Michelle Heritage sits on the panel of the MCSETO group, so concerns relating to Child Sexual Exploitation should be directed to her on 01925 442928.

6. Child-on-Child Abuse

It is recognised that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported. The school further recognises that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, but that all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

6.1 Scope

The issues of Child on Child sexual abuse is dealt with in section 5.3. However, Child-on-Child Abuse can also encompass

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking,
- biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment. The school will follow the guidance in Part five of the KCSIE guidance and the Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges when responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude
- images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery): the school will follow the guidance in the DfE Searching Screening and Confiscation advice for schools and the UKCIS Education Group Sharing Nudes and Semi-nudes when deciding how to respond to an incident of nudes and semi-nudes being shared;
- 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
- Upskirting (which is a criminal offence), 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;
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

6.2 Procedures for Responding to a Case

- Good supervision, well known methods of sharing concerns (worry boxes and approachable staff), and regular pupil surveys will be used to minimise the risk of Child-on-Child Abuse.
- Allegations of peer on peer abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with by a DSL trained member of the Safeguarding Team. The record will note who is involved, who dealt with the issue, whether parents were informed, what school did to protect and support all children involved, and what the victim's / parent's response was to how it was handled by school.

- The children will be supported by a range of responses depending on the severity of the case. This could include:
- restorative conversations in line with the Behaviour Policy
- supported reconciliation between parties (if appropriate)
- adapted arrangements for playtime, increased supervision, classroom design taking tensions into account
- counselling offered

7. Neglect -

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting.

7.1 Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet the basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care
- A child seen to be listless, apathetic and unresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- Failure of child to grow within normal expected pattern, with accompanying weight loss
- Child thrives away from home environment
- Child frequently absent from school
- Child left with adults who are intoxicated or violent
- Child abandoned or left alone for excessive periods

7.2 To help identify neglect, practitioners can use the Graded Care Profile Neglect tool.

8. Forced Marriage -

There is a clear difference between a 'forced marriage' and an 'arranged marriage'. Arranged marriages have worked well in society for many years. An arranged marriage is when families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

A forced marriage is when one or both parties do not consent to the marriage, and people are forced into marriage against their will. Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights. Both physical and emotional abuse may be used to coerce people into marriage.

In law both parties to a marriage must validly consent to the marriage, the minimum age a person is able to consent to a marriage is 18 (The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022). A Forced Marriage Protection Order can be obtained from a Family Court in order to protect victims, both adults and children from a potential forced marriage or people who are already in a forced marriage.

The Anti – Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (2014) makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry. This includes:

- Taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place)
- Marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they're pressured or not)
- Breaching a Force Marriage Protection Order is also a criminal offence.

Young people, especially girls, who are forced to marry, or those who fear they may be forced to marry, are frequently withdrawn from education, restricting their educational and personal development. They may feel unable to go against the wishes of their parents and consequently may suffer emotionally, often leading to depression and self – harm. These factors can contribute to impaired social development, limited career and educational opportunities, financial dependence and lifestyle restrictions.

Staff may become aware of a pupil because they appear anxious, depressed and emotionally withdrawn with low self – esteem. They may have mental health issues and display behaviours such as self – harming,

self – cutting or anorexia. Sometimes they may come to the attention of the police having been discovered shoplifting or taking drugs or alcohol. Often pupil's symptoms can be exacerbated in the periods leading up to the holiday season. Staff need to be particularly vigilant in that period.

It may be the case that a pupil may present with a sudden decline in their attendance, performance, aspirations or motivation. Some female pupils may feel studying at school is pointless if they are going to be forced to marry and therefore be unable to continue with their education.

8.1 The 'One Chance' rule. All professionals working with suspected or actual victims of forced marriage and honour – based violence need to be aware of the 'one chance' rule. That is, they may only have one opportunity to speak to a victim or potential victim and may possibly only have one chance to save a life. As a result, all professionals working within statutory agencies need to be aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they are faced with forced marriage cases. If the victim is allowed to leave without the appropriate support and advice being offered, that one chance might be wasted.

8.2 Potential Warning Signs or Indicators that a Child is at Risk of Forced Marriage

- Absence and persistent absence
- Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin
- Fear about forthcoming school holidays
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school
- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality
- Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility
- Not being allowed to attend extra-curricular activities

8.3 What to do if you have concerns - Forced marriage is an offence and if this is also happening to a child under the age of 18 it is considered to be child abuse. If you suspect that a child may be forced to marry, then you must share your concerns with the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) who will make appropriate contact with Children's Social Care or the Police. The Forced Marriage Unit can also be contacted for advice and help in making the referral.

9. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) -

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women. It is illegal in most countries including the UK. It is essential that staff are aware of FGM practices and the need to look for signs, symptoms and other indicators of FGM.

9.1 What is FGM? It involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. 4 types of procedure:

- Type 1 Clitoridectomy – partial/total removal of clitoris
- Type 2 Excision – partial/total removal of clitoris and labia minora
- Type 3 Infibulation entrance to vagina is narrowed by repositioning the inner/outer labia
- Type 4 all other procedures that may include: pricking, piercing, incising, cauterising and scraping the genital area.

9.2 Why is it carried out? Belief that:

- FGM brings status/respect to the girl – social acceptance for marriage
- Preserves a girl's virginity
- Part of being a woman / rite of passage
- Upholds family honour
- Cleanses and purifies the girl
- Gives a sense of belonging to the community

- Fulfils a religious requirement
 - Perpetuates a custom/tradition
 - Helps girls be clean / hygienic
 - Is cosmetically desirable
 - Mistakenly believed to make childbirth easier
- 9.3 Circumstances and occurrences that may point to FGM happening:
- Child talking about getting ready for a special ceremony
 - Family taking a long trip abroad
 - Child's family being from one of the 'at risk' communities for FGM (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea as well as non-African communities including Yemeni, Afghani, Kurdistan, Indonesia and Pakistan)
 - Knowledge that the child's sibling has undergone FGM
 - Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or to prepare for marriage
- 9.4 Signs that may indicate a child has undergone FGM:
- Prolonged absence from school and other activities
 - Behaviour change on return from a holiday abroad, such as being withdrawn and appearing subdued
 - Bladder or menstrual problems
 - Finding it difficult to sit still and looking uncomfortable
 - Complaining about pain between the legs
 - Mentioning something somebody did to them that they are not allowed to talk about
 - Secretive behaviour, including isolating themselves from the group
 - Reluctance to take part in physical activity
 - Repeated urinal tract infection
 - Disclosure
- 9.5 Long-term consequences
- chronic vaginal and pelvic infections
 - abnormal periods
 - difficulty passing urine, and persistent urine infections
 - kidney impairment and possible kidney failure
 - damage to the reproductive system, including infertility
 - cysts and the formation of scar tissue
 - complications in pregnancy and newborn deaths
 - pain during sex and lack of pleasurable sensation
 - psychological damage, including low libido, depression and anxiety
 - flashbacks during pregnancy and childbirth
 - need for later surgery to open the lower vagina for sexual intercourse and childbirth
- 9.6 Managing the risk for pupils who are identified as vulnerable to or at risk of FGM. Schools should contact Children's Services and the police without delay and listen to the child alone. Schools should NEVER delay sharing information; attempt to mediate with the family or the community; or inform the parents they have made a referral without the consent of police and Children's Services. Remember: The parents may believe they are doing the right thing by their child and informing them may put the child at risk because they may act to silence her or bring forward their plans to take her abroad or undertake FGM.
- 9.7 NSPCC FGM Helpline: 0800 028 3550 Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk
- 9.8 ***Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers.***
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/573782/FGM_Mandatory_Reporting_-_procedural_information_nov16_FINAL.pdf

10. Radicalisation and Violent Extremism

Definitions

10.1.1 Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and or extremism leading to terrorism.

10.1.2 Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy (2010) as: Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

10.1.3 Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as the demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs;
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts;
- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or
- Foster hatred which might lead to inter – community violence in the UK.

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

10.3 Pupils may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors – it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that school staff are able to recognise those vulnerabilities.

10.4 Indicators of Vulnerability include: (The following list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.)

- Identity Crisis – the pupil is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society;
- Personal Crisis – the pupil may be experiencing family tensions; a sense of isolation; and low self-esteem; they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging;
- Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions; and events affecting the pupil’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy;
- Unmet Aspirations – the pupil may have perceptions of injustice; a feeling failure; rejection of civic life;
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration;
- Special Educational Need – the pupil may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

10.5 More critical risk factors could include

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

crisis.

10.6 What action should be taken if there are concerns?

- Pass concerns to the DSL who will act as the single point of contact (SPOC)
- The DSL will make contact with the PREVENT Officer, Doug Ryan (01606 364871) Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) Team.
- Your **Local Authority Single Point of Contact for radicalisation/extremism and the government's counter-terrorism programme PREVENT is Steven Gillham**. If you have any concerns around this topic or want advice or support, please contact Steven on 01925 442928.

11. Private Fostering -

Children under 16 (or 18 if disabled) are classed as privately fostered when they are cared for on a full-time basis by adults, who are not their parents or a close relative (brother, sister, aunt, uncle, or grandparents by birth or marriage) for a period of 28 days or more.

Schools have a responsibility to notify the Local Authority of any private fostering arrangements they become aware of so that they can make sure they are well cared for in a safe and suitable home.

The school would use the private fostering checklist available from the national private fostering web site should it suspect a case of private fostering.

12. Children Missing Education -

Local authorities have a duty to track and monitor any school aged child that is missing education or is deemed a pupil out of school. Warrington Borough Council monitors every child that is missing education (CME) or out of school through the pupil out of school meeting (POOSM). The POOSM is held once per month and it is chaired by the Education Safeguarding Team. If children are found to be missing education or out of school the chair of the meeting is immediately informed by the participating agency and the child is placed on the POOSM list so that the child can be tracked and actions can be taken in a multi-agency capacity. Actions from meetings are formalised and documented and the Education Safeguarding Team reviews these actions monthly so that they are completed for the benefit of the child. The meeting is overseen by Simon Lennox, the head teacher of the Virtual School.

12.1 A pupil out of school is any child that is on roll at a school or the pupil referral unit or any other educational establishment but is not attending school due to a number of reasons, eg:

- The child cannot attend school for medical reasons and their attendance is below 50% and they are supported by a home tutor.
- The child is on roll at the pupil referral unit and is not attending
- The child is categorised as electively home educated (EHE). They are new on the EHE register, but have not yet been seen since de-registering from school or becoming known to the LA by the EHE Officer
- The child is permanently excluded from mainstream school and is waiting being discussed at the pupil placement panel

12.2 The POOSM meeting is attended by the following agencies:

- Education Safeguarding Team
- Attendance Team
- Inclusion Team
- Youth Offending Team
- CAMHS
- Careers for Young People
- Pupil Referral Unit
- Admissions Team
- NHS
- Family Pathfinders
- Elective Home Education Quality Consultant
- Virtual School Support Officer

12.3 Please contact CME Officer Dave Samson on 01925 442261 if you have any concerns about a child who is not attending school.

12.4 Pupils who go missing from school site during the school day. Careful supervision makes it unlikely that pupils could go missing from the school site during the school day. Should, however, a child be found to be missing at register time, a search would be undertaken, parents and the police contacted.

12.5 Where a family indicate that they are intending to Electively Home Educate a child, the school will inform the LA and invite any key professionals and the parents to a meeting to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has special educational needs or a disability, and/or has a social worker, and/or is otherwise vulnerable.

13. Bullying including Cyber Bullying

See anti bullying policy

14. Domestic Violence -

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. See NSPCC website for further advice. The WBC policy on Domestic Abuse June 2021 covers guidance for managing employees who are either the victims or perpetrators of domestic abuse and will be followed where appropriate.

14.1 Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs.

14.2 Operation Encompass have set up a helpline to assist school staff with supporting children who may be experiencing domestic abuse. Funded by the Home Office, the helpline will be available weekdays from 8am to 11am throughout term-time and will provide callers with the opportunity to access guidance, information and support from educational psychologists.

14.3 For more information and resources, please visit the Operation Encompass website.

15. Fabricated or Induced Illness -

Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer, usually the child's biological mother, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child. FII covers a wide range of symptoms and behaviours involving parents seeking healthcare for a child. This ranges from extreme neglect (failing to seek medical care) to induced illness. Behaviours in FII include a mother or other carer who:

- persuades healthcare professionals that their child is ill when they're perfectly health
- exaggerates or lies about their child's symptoms
- manipulates test results to suggest the presence of illness – for example, by putting glucose in urine samples to suggest the child has diabetes
- deliberately induces symptoms of illness – for example, by poisoning her child with unnecessary medication or other substances

Suspected cases should be reported to the DSL and the parent / carer should not be directly approached without taking advice.

16. Honour Based Abuse (HBA) - encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving “honour” often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA. Actions If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care.

17. Gangs and Youth Violence - Children and young people involved with, or on the edges of, gangs might be victims of violence or they might be pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited or put into dangerous situations. For lots of young people, being part of a gang makes them feel part of a family so they might not want to leave. Even if they do, leaving or attempting to leave can be a really scary idea. They might be frightened about what will happen to them, their friends or their family if they leave. For further information, see the NSPCC website.

18. Hate Crimes

Recent figures from UK police forces show 5,349 hate crimes were recorded against under 18s with a racial, religious or faith-based element. The NSPCC’s ‘Understand Me’ campaign challenges xenophobia and prejudice and empowers young people to speak out and seek help.

19. Sexting

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops – any device that allows you to share media and messages. Sexting can be seen as harmless, but creating or sharing explicit images of a child is illegal, even if the person doing it is a child. See NSPCC website for further advice, and refer to ‘Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents and safeguarding young people’ August 2016. School staff should not view or forward illegal images of a child.

The school will ensure that staff are aware to treat the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as “sexting” or youth-produced sexual images) as a safeguarding concern.

Staff will receive appropriate training regarding child sexual development and will understand the difference between sexual behaviour that is considered normal and expected for the age of the pupil, and sexual behaviour that is inappropriate and harmful. Staff will receive appropriate training around how to deal with instances of sharing nudes and semi-nudes in the school community, including understanding motivations, assessing risks posed to pupils depicted in the images, and how and when to report instances of this behaviour.

Staff will be aware that creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of children is a criminal offence, regardless of whether the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed by the individual depicted; however, staff will ensure that pupils are not unnecessarily criminalised.

Staff will also be made aware that the laws imposed on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes applies to digitally manipulated and AI-generated imagery.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of an incidence of sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes, they will refer this to the DSL as soon as possible. The DSL will work to support the affected pupils and inform them of the reporting routes to remove a nude or semi-nude that has been shared online or to prevent an image from being shared online.

The school's full response to incidents of consensual and non-consensual sharing of indecent images and videos can be found in the Youth-produced Sexual Imagery Policy, including the appropriate reporting routes for both staff and pupils.

20. Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines

Child Criminal Exploitation is defined as a form of abuse, either one off or a series of incidents over time, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power, due to factors such as age, gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status etc., to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity. It can involve force and / or enticement-based methods of compliance and can involve violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited online or in person and even when activity appears to be consensual. 'County Lines' refers to gangs exporting illegal drugs into an importing area(s) using 'deal lines' (mobiles etc) and coercing children or vulnerable people to act as couriers. Typically, there is exchange involved: gifts, money, promises, status. There is a power imbalance between the gang members and the children or vulnerable people. Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, being found out of area and being in possession of money or goods without explanation. A referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered.

21. E Safety

Please see separate policy and Acceptable Use documents for information about how the children access the internet whilst in school, and the use of Mobile Technology and Online Filtering and Monitoring.

22. Upskirting

This involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks for the purpose of sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence following the passing of the Voyeurism (Offences) Act which came into force on 12 April 2019.

23. Mental Health

The school acknowledges that the definition of safeguarding includes preventing impairment of children's mental health or development.

21.1 School staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

21.2 The school is not in a position to diagnose mental health issues but we acknowledge that we are well placed to identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be at risk of developing or experiencing mental health issues.

21.3 School approaches to behaviour take account of how Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can have a lasting effect upon children's mental health, behaviour and education.

21.4 The school has engaged with a service providing advice to staff where there are concerns regarding a child's mental health. Staff should report their concerns to the DSL who will refer them to the Mental Health Champion, Mrs. Adams, via the Safeguarding Supervision meeting.

24. Child Abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. To reduce risks related to child abduction, the school has a secure site, visitor control systems and

ensures all relevant staff are aware of any circumstances where a child should not be picked up by a named individual.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. If school is alerted to such individuals, parents are informed.

The PSRHE scheme of work offers children advice on staying safe in the community with an emphasis 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.

25. Children and the Court System

If any pupils were required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed, the school would follow the advice in the guide referenced KCSIE 23 Pg. 144.

The school would work flexibly with families and social care to manage child contact arrangements and would inform parents of the Ministry of Justice online child arrangements information tool which has clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service if appropriate. KCSIE 23 Pg. 144.

26. Children with family members in prison

Where school becomes aware of any child whose parents has been sent to prison the DSL would include the children on the Vulnerable Children's Register, monitor and offer extra support if needed, follow the advice provided by The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children

27. Cyber crime

If a pupil inadvertently or deliberately becomes involved in Cyber crime - (unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), 'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting', making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence - the designated safeguarding lead will consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. Cyber Choices, 'NPCC- When to call the Police' and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK.

28. Homelessness

Should a child be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, the designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) would follow the referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Such referrals would go alongside a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

29. Modern Slavery

Should there be any indication that a family is affected by modern slavery – eg human trafficking, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, sexual exploitation, forced criminality, the removal of organs – the school would seek further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism on GOV.UK

30. Serious Violence

Should school have reason to consider that a child is at risk from or is involved in serious violent crime – e.g. because they associate with older friends, have unexplained injuries, have been excluded and are unsupervised, have been involved in offending – the DSL will consult community police for advice. It is noted that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence.

31. Virginity testing and hymenoplasty

Under the Health and Care Act 2022, it is illegal to carry out, offer or aid and abet virginity testing or hymenoplasty in any part of the UK. It is also illegal for UK nationals and residents to do these things outside the UK.

Virginity testing - Also known as hymen, '2-finger' or vaginal examination, this is defined as any examination (with or without contact) of the female genitalia intended to establish if vaginal intercourse has taken place. This is irrespective of whether consent has been given. Vaginal examination has no established scientific merit or clinical indication.

Hymenoplasty - A procedure which can involve a number of different techniques, but typically involving stitching or surgery, undertaken to reconstruct a hymen with the intent that the person bleeds the next time they have vaginal intercourse. Hymenoplasty is different to procedures that may be performed for clinical reasons, e.g. surgery to address discomfort or menstrual complications.

Virginity testing and hymenoplasty are forms of violence against women and girls and are part of the cycle of HBA, and can be precursors to child or forced marriage and other forms of family and/or community coercive behaviours, including physical and emotional control. Victims are pressurised into undergoing these procedures, often by family members or their intended husbands' family to fulfil the requirement that a woman remains 'pure' before marriage. Those who 'fail' to meet this requirement are likely to suffer further abuse, including emotional and physical abuse, disownment and even honour killings.

The procedures are degrading and intrusive, and can result in extreme psychological trauma, provoking conditions such as anxiety, depression and PTSD, as well as physical harm and medical complications. Staff will be alert to the possible presence of stress, anxiety and other psychological or behavioural signs, and mental health support should be made available where appropriate.

Victims face barriers in coming forward, e.g. they may not know that the abuse was abnormal or wrong at the time, and may feel shameful, having been taught that speaking out against family and/or the community is wrong, or being scared about the repercussions of speaking out. The school will educate pupils about the harms of these practices and dispel myths, e.g. the belief that virginity determines the worth of a woman, and establish an environment where pupils feel safe enough to make a disclosure.

Pupils aged 13 and older are considered to be most at risk, but it can affect those as young as 8, and anyone with female genitalia can be a victim regardless of age, gender identity, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, disability or socioeconomic status. All staff will be aware of the following indicators that a pupil is at risk of or has been subjected to a virginity test and/or hymenoplasty:

- A pupil is known to have requested either procedure or asks for help
- Family members disclose that the pupil has already undergone the practices
- Pain and discomfort after the procedures, e.g. difficulty in walking or sitting for a long period of time which was not a problem previously
- Concern from family members that the pupil is in a relationship, or plans for them to be married
- A close relative has been threatened with either procedure or has already been subjected to one
- A pupil has already experienced or is at risk of other forms of HBA
- A pupil is already known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A pupil discloses other concerns that could be an indication of abuse, e.g. they may state that they do not feel safe at home, that family members will not let them out the house and/or that family members are controlling
- A pupil displays signs of trauma and an increase in emotional and psychological needs, e.g. withdrawal, anxiety, depression, or significant change in behaviour
- A pupil appears fearful of their family or a particular family member
- Unexplained absence from school, potentially to go abroad
- Changes in behaviour, e.g. a deterioration in schoolwork, attendance, or attainment.

The above list is not exhaustive, but if any of these indicators are identified, staff members will immediately raise concerns with the DSL. An assessment of the risk they face will be undertaken. If there is believed to be immediate danger, the police will be contacted without delay.

The school will not involve families and community members in cases involving virginity testing and hymenoplasty, including trying to mediate with family or using a community member as an interpreter, as

this may increase the risk of harm to the pupil, including expediting arrangements for the procedure.

Appendix C: Child Protection Policy – Record of Concern Form

Member of staff reporting concerns:	Date of incident:
Child (ren) involved:	Person completing Report:

Description of incident (please include context; times; location witnesses etc.):

Details

Signed: _____ Member of staff making report

Signed: _____ (Head) Date: _____

Follow Up

Further school action carried out as result of report: YES/ NO (please attach any notes)

Further school action carried out by _____ Signed: _____

Outcome

Discussed with parents: YES/ NO

Referral made YES/ NO

Referred on to _____ Signed off (Yes/ No)

Member of staff making report informed of decision YES/ NO

Further Training / debriefing considered?

Signed (DSPCP): _____ Date: _____

Note: This record must be handed to the DSPCP to be retained securely in school.

Appendix D: Partial School Closure Arrangements

This annex sets out the adjustments to be made if the school has to put a partial closure in place. It is to be read in conjunction with the Covid 19 Risk Assessment and local and national guidance.

St Monica's would aim to remain open for all pupils of key workers who require their children to attend school, and to all those children with an EHC plan. We also continually identify vulnerable children and identify those at risk.

Reporting Arrangements

The school arrangements would continue in line with our child protection policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Jessica Pearson, 01925 267609, stmonicas_primary_head@sch.warrington.gov.uk**

The Deputy DSL is Clare Williams **01925 267609, clare.williams@stmonicasprimaryschool.co.uk**

Staffing arrangement must ensure that the DSL or a deputy is always on site while the school is open. In the unusual circumstance this is not possible, the DSL or Deputy DSL will be contactable and the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will email all staff by 9am to advise they are acting in an on-site safeguarding role together with contact details for the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedure and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in school or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authority. The arrangements for contacting children's services are:

The Warrington MAG team: 01925 443322, or outside of office hours: 01925444400

Should a child in the school's view be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will immediately follow the safeguarding children partnership escalation procedure, available here: <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/mars>

Identifying Vulnerability

A scoping exercise will be undertaken to identify the most vulnerable children. Our safeguarding team will continue to meet on a weekly basis to discuss our most vulnerable pupils and respond with all necessary actions.

Arrangements – e.g. weekly phone calls, invitation to attend school - will be put in place in respect of the following groups:

- Looked After Children
- Previously Looked After Children
- Children in kinship care
- Children subject to a child protection plan
- Children who have, or have previously had, a social worker
- Children with an EHCP – pupils provided with differentiated work and access to necessary equipment.

- Children on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker
- Other children the school considers vulnerable. More children may be added to this group in response to concerns raised with the DSL. These children can be offered care at school if required.

Each of these children will have an individual plan which will be shared with other agencies involved in their care, including where appropriate their social worker and the Virtual School Head for Looked After and previously Looked After Children (and now includes children in kinship care).

In addition, the following groups will have specific arrangements around contact and support from the school.

- Children of key workers who may attend school – school will remain open from 8.45 – 15.30 for children of key workers to attend school.
- Children at home – class teachers will provide online work for pupils to complete and will make contact with children on a regular basis.

The plans in respect of each child in these groups should state how often they are to be reviewed.

Staff will keep a register of contact with children on a weekly basis. Should no contact be had with a child over the course of a week, this should be reported to the DSL who will risk assess the situation in the Safeguarding Supervision meeting with colleagues and consider whether to undertake a home visit, or to contact social services. Contact could be any of the following: attendance at school, attendance at a live online learning session, submission of work.

Holiday Arrangements during school closure

St Monica's will remain open during the holidays to accommodate children of key workers, children with an EHCP and those children identified as vulnerable where no other appropriate care can be provided, where an agreement is in place nationally and locally.

Attendance during school closure

The school will follow the attendance guidance issued by government. Where a child is expected and does not arrive the school will follow our attendance procedure and make contact with the family. If contact is not possible by 9:30am the DSL must be informed. The DSL will attempt a range of methods to contact the parent (Skype, FaceTime, through a relative etc.) but if necessary arrange a home visit by the school or another appropriate agency. Where required and following public health guidance, a risk assessment will be undertaken to manage the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to the child. The risk of COVID-19 **does not override** the duty on the school to ensure children and young people are safe.

The school will also follow the attendance procedure if contact proves impossible with children at home.

Staff will be aware of increased risk

The pressures on children and their families at such a time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both children and their parents and carers, informing the DSL about any concerns.

Children should be advised that they can ask for help via the Google Classroom platform should they need to.

Child-on-child abuse

We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between young people, especially in the context of a school closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of child-on-child abuse, including those between young people who are not currently attending our provision. Extra care should be taken where groups have mixed age, developmental stages, are attending other schools as an interim measure and similar. When making contact with these families our staff will ask about relationships between learners. We also address the issue of child-on-child abuse in our remote learning curriculum. Each class teacher will cover specific e-safety lessons in the build-up to the distance learning. Class teachers are also open to emails from parents to quickly address any developing issues.

Risk Online

Young people will be using the internet more during a period of school partial closure. The school may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other risks online and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- The school continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place
- Our governing body will review arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate
- The school has taken on board guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning and guidance for safer working practice from the Safer Recruitment Consortium. We have reviewed the code of conduct and information sharing policy accordingly. The school is regularly adding e safety messages to online work and the website front page blog.
- Staff have discussed the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the school's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families.
- Staff have read the safeguarding considerations for live streaming prior to delivering any live streamed sessions
- Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the school, Childline, the UK Safer Internet Centre and CEOP.
- Parents and carers have received information about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children have asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents will be offered the following links:
 - Net-aware - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
 - Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
 - UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers

Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre.

Allegations or Concerns about Staff

With such different arrangements young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned. (See also section 7 and new information on Low-Level Concerns).

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged:

01925 442079 or lado@warrington.gov.uk

If necessary, the school will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS any adult who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with paragraphs 255 - 273 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.