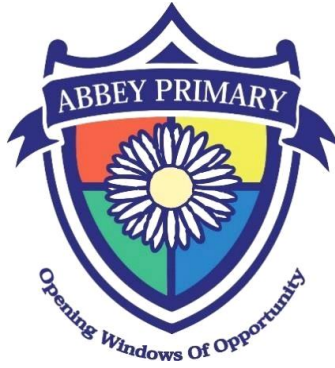




ABBEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Vision 2030

Curriculum

Our ambitious curriculum is relevant, inclusive and knowledge-rich.

Our curriculum focuses on building strong foundations across all subjects, especially in early reading and language.

Through purposeful practice, our curriculum connects learning across subjects and deepens understanding.

Oracy is woven through the curriculum so that every child has a voice and the confidence to use it.

We maximise opportunities for practical learning throughout the curriculum to further inspire our children and ensure they apply their learning in meaningful ways.

Teaching and Learning

At Abbey, we nurture a love of learning.

We open windows of opportunity by creating memorable moments.

Engaging teaching and high expectations enable our children to develop as curious, collaborative, and independent learners.

Through a rich experience of spoken language, our children develop as critical thinkers and effective communicators.

Purposeful use of technology enhances learning for all and ensures we develop digitally literate individuals who can adapt to an evolving world

WELLBEING

Our school is built around a strong commitment to wellbeing where everyone feels safe, valued and able to thrive.

Through trusting relationships, an inclusive approach and a nurturing environment, we foster a strong sense of self and belonging.

Enriching opportunities empower everyone to develop the confidence, resilience and communication skills necessary to prepare them for the future.

Our school is a welcoming community built on positive collaboration and mutual respect. We celebrate and connect with our diverse community in order to strengthen our partnerships and ensure everyone belongs.

Contents

Important contacts	3
1. Aims.....	4
2. Legislation and statutory guidance.....	4
3. Definitions.....	5
4. Equality statement.....	6
5. Roles and responsibilities	7
6. Confidentiality	12
7. Recognising abuse and taking action.....	13
8. Online Safety and the use of mobile technology	26
9. Notifying parents.....	28
10. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.....	29
11. Pupils with a social worker	29
12. Looked-after and previously looked-after children	30
13. Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning	33
14. Complaints and concerns about school safeguarding policies	33
15. Record-keeping	34
16. Training	34
17. Monitoring arrangements	36
18. Links with other policies	36
Appendix 1: types of abuse	37
Appendix 2: safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures	38
Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff	42
Appendix 4: local risks.....	48
Appendix 5: definitions of specific safeguarding issues.....	48

Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Angela Watt awatt@abbey.sutton.sch.uk Amy Delgado (2 year old provision) adelgado@abbey.sutton.sch.uk	020 8254 0862
Deputy DSL	Andrea Stirling-Williams, Orlagh McCarthy-Wade, Amy Royle, Lucy Wright, Michelle Harman, Donna Wilson	020 8254 0862
Local Authority Education Safeguarding Manager	Hayley Cameron	
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Sima Hirani	020 8770 4776
Safeguarding Governor	Henry Cohen (Lead) Sumita Dutta (Deputy)	020 8254 0862
Channel helpline		020 7340 7264
Children's First Contact Service Sutton	cfcs@sutton.gov.uk	0208 770 6001 or (Out of Hours: 0208 770 5000)
MASH Merton	mash@merton.gov.uk	020 8545 4226 or 020 8545 4227 (Out of hours: 020 8770 5000)
MASH Croydon		0208 545 4226 (Out of Hours: 0208 726 6400)
NSPCC	help@nspcc.org.uk	Over 18s 0808 800 5000 Under 18s 0800 1111
Police		101
Sutton Police Station		0208 649 0890 0208 721 2829

OFSTED		0300 123 4666
Sutton Virtual Head	Kate Leyshon kate.leyshon@cognus.org.uk	07515 137 705

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2026\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), which places a duty on academies and independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children.
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM.
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children.
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children.
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools' duties under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.

- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations") and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children.
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory](#) framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The [Education Inspection Framework](#)

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

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

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

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

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Appendix 1 explains the different types of abuse.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Appendix 1 defines neglect in more detail.

Making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes refers to the creation, sending or posting of nude-semi-nude images by young people under the age of 18. The term 'images' includes all visual content such as photographs, videos and livestreams. Images may be taken by the child themselves (sometimes referred to as 'self-generated imagery') or taken or created by another person. They may also be digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including what are sometimes described as 'deepfakes' or 'deep nudes'.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- Integrated care boards (previously known as clinical commissioning groups) for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

4. Equality statement

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

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions (see section 10);
- Are young carers;
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality;
- Have English as an additional language;
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence;
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation;
- Are asylum seekers;
- Are at risk due to either their own, or a family member's mental health needs;
- Are looked after or previously looked after.
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

5. Roles and responsibilities

At Abbey Primary School, we are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the 3 safeguarding partners. Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

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

- Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Planned programme of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), which is inclusive and delivered regularly, tackling issues such as:
 - Healthy and respectful relationships
 - Boundaries and consent
 - Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
 - Body confidence and self-esteem
 - How to recognise an abusive relationship (including coercive and controlling behaviour)

- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so-called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM and how to access support
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why they're always unacceptable

5.1 All staff

All staff will read and understand Part 1 of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually.

All staff will:

- Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the guidance
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQ+ to speak out and share their concerns

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the Relationships and Behaviour Policy, the Online Safety Policy and the safeguarding response to children who go missing/who are absent from education;
- The family help assessment process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment;
- The process for making referrals to LA children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play;
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals;
- The signs of different types of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including domestic and sexual abuse (including controlling and coercive behaviour, as well as parental conflict that is frequent, intense, and unresolved), as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-

on-child abuse, grooming, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines)

- New and emerging threats, including online harm, grooming, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, radicalisation, and the role of technology and social media in presenting harm
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at school and online
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children
- That a child and their family may be experiencing multiple needs at the same time
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

Section 15 and Appendix 4 of this policy outline in more detail how staff are supported to do this.

5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL's are Angela Watt, Assistant Head Teacher and Amy Delgado, 2-year-old, Senior Nursery Practitioner. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

When school is closed the DSL can be contacted via email.

When the DSL is absent, the deputies will act as cover.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters;
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so;
- Contribute to the assessment of children;
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (LA children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly.
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour

- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school

The DSL will also:

- Keep the headteacher informed of any issues
- Liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with police and local authority children's social care colleagues to prepare the school's policies
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search

The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputies are set out in their job description.

5.3 The Governing Board

The governing board will:

- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront of, and underpin, all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation
- Be aware of its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Appoint a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full governing board. This is always a different person from the DSL
- Ensure all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, and that such training is regularly updated and is in line with advice from the safeguarding partners
- Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, and review their effectiveness. This includes:
 - Making sure that the leadership team and staff are aware of the provisions in place, and that they understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training
 - Reviewing the [DfE's filtering and monitoring standards](#), and discussing with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting these standards

- Make sure:
 - The DSL has the appropriate status and authority to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support
 - Online safety is a running and interrelated theme within the whole-school approach to safeguarding and related policies
 - The DSL has lead authority for safeguarding, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place
 - The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). Appendix 3 of this policy covers this procedure
 - That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised

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

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

The chair of governors will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, where appropriate (see appendix 3).

All governors will read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety.

Section 15 of this policy has information on how governors are supported to fulfil their role.

5.4 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction and understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents when their child joins the school and via the school website;
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent;

- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and update this regularly;
- Acting as the ‘case manager’ in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate (see appendix 3);
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met, where applicable;
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person.
- Overseeing the safe use of technology, and devices like mobile phones and cameras in the setting

5.5 Virtual school heads

- Virtual school heads (VSHs) have a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment and progress of pupils with a social worker.
- VSHs also have a non-statutory responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children in kinship care (children who live with a relative or close family friend).
- They should also identify and engage with key professionals, e.g. DSLs, special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs), social workers, mental health leads and others.

6. Confidentiality

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding;

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;

The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe;

If staff need to share ‘special category personal data’, the DPA 2018 contains ‘safeguarding of children and individuals at risk’ as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk;

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child’s best interests;

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
- The DSL should consider that:
 - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
 - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
 - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment – for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities

The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information;

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL or deputy.

Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record-keeping in section 14, and allegations of abuse against staff in appendix 3.

7. Recognising Abuse and Taking Action

All staff are expected to be able to identify and recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and shall be alert to the potential need for support for a child who:

- Has a disability
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)
- Is a young carer
- Is bereaved
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- 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
- Is suffering from mental ill health
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- Is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education
- Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of, or has been permanently excluded

Staff, volunteers, and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

Please note – in this and subsequent sections, you should take any references to the DSL to mean “the DSL or deputy DSL”.

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

Make a referral to local authority children’s social care and/or the police immediately if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger. Anyone can make a referral.

Tell the DSL (see section 5.2) as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

A referral will be made to Sutton CFCS or Merton MASH, depending on where the child resides.

Refer to The GOV.UK webpage for reporting child abuse to your local council:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

7.2 If a child makes a disclosure to you

If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to you, you should:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions;
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset;
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner;
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret;
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it;
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.

Bear in mind that some children may:

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

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

We will ensure that staff have sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the well-being of children in their care. For example, to keep records in English, liaise with other agencies in English, be able to summon emergency help, and understand instructions, for example about the safety of medicines or food hygiene.

7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM

The Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 4.

Any teacher who discovers, either through disclosure by the victim, or visual evidence, that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18, must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

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

Any member of staff who suspects a pupil is at risk of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out, must speak to the DSL who will contact MASH.

7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Figure 1 illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or take advice from LA children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to LA children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

Family help

If family help is appropriate, the DSL will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in a family help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner.

The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to LA children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

The Blue locality lead is Joy Goodger, contactable at joy.goodger@sutton.gov.uk or 07736338914.

Referral

If it is appropriate to refer the case to LA children's social care or the police, the DSL will make the referral or support you to do so.

If you make a referral directly (see section 7.1), you must tell the DSL as soon as possible.

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

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

School follows the guidance in the Sutton LSCB Multi-Agency Escalation Policy and Procedure 2015.

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Speak to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seek advice from LA children's social care. Make a referral to LA children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' above). Inform the DSL or deputy as soon as practically possible after the referral.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the LA children's social care team.

The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

Reporting a concern

Similar to any other Safeguarding issues, any concerns that a person or their family may be at risk

of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, should be raised with the individual agency safeguarding lead and/or consult with the Prevent practice lead, (if available).

For non-urgent advice from the Sutton Prevent lead please contact: prevent@sutton.gov.uk

Where there are concerns that an adult is at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism concerns, please contact the Prevent Lead for Sutton or make a referral to prevent@sutton.gov.uk
For urgent Prevent matter please report to Anti-Terrorism hotline on 0800 789 321.

7.6 If you have a mental health concern

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

Staff will be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

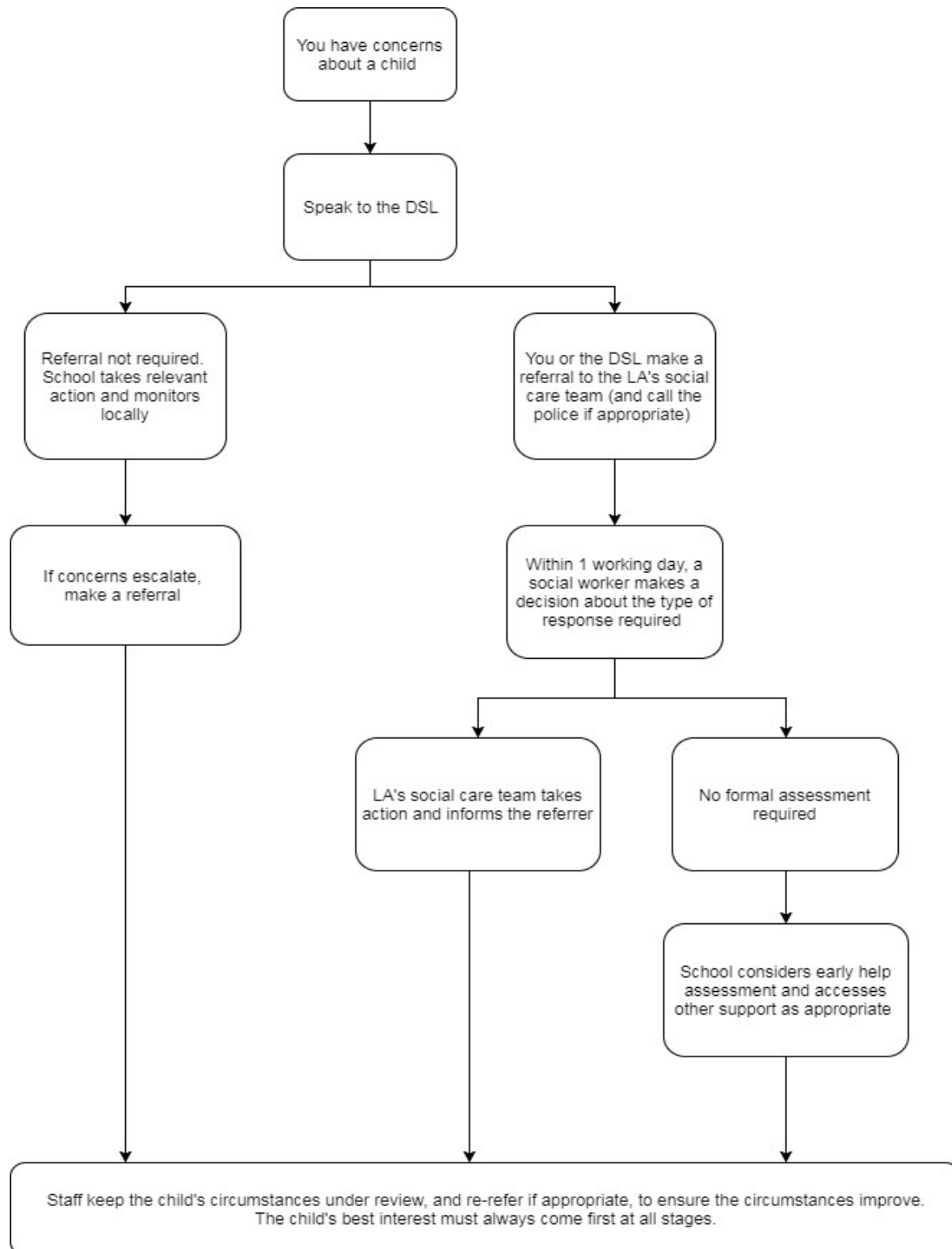
If you have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action by following the steps in section 7.4.

If you have a mental health concern that is not also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action. Advice can be given by CAMHS Single Point of Access.

The Department for Education guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) provides more information.

Figure 1: procedure if you have concerns about a child's welfare (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger)

(Note – if the DSL is unavailable, this should not delay action. See section 7.4 for what to do.)



7.7 Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher or volunteer), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher or volunteer) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the Headteacher. If the concerns/allegations are about the Headteacher, speak to the Chair of Governors.

The Headteacher/Chair of Governors will then follow the procedures set out in appendix 3, if appropriate.

Where you believe there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) to the headteacher, report it directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

If you receive an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using the school premises for running an activity for children, follow our school safeguarding policies and procedures, informing the LADO, as you would with any safeguarding allegation.

Low level concerns

The school can decide whether concerns are initially shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/nominated person or directly with the headteacher/principal. The headteacher should ultimately be informed of all low-level concerns and make the final decision on how to respond. Where appropriate this can be done in consultation with the DSL. Low level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers; and schools and colleges should consult with their LADO if unsure whether low-level concerns shared about a member of staff meet the harm threshold. Where appropriate, the school will inform Ofsted of the allegation and actions taken, within the necessary timescale (see appendix 3 for more detail).

7.8 Allegations of abuse made against other pupils

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up” as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils.

All peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s Relationships and Behaviour policy, but this child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence;
- Could put pupils in the school at risk;
- Is violent;

- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol;
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes);

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil;

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but do not investigate it;
- The DSL will contact the LA children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence;
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed;
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate.

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

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we will:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing-type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems (as described in section 7.10 below)
- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that should be shared with safeguarding partners

- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
 - How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
 - That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in school, it does not mean it is not happening – staff should maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
 - That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
 - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
 - A friend may make a report
 - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
 - A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
 - That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
 - That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy
 - The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it
 - That they should speak to the DSL if they have any concerns
 - That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including for potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side

The DSL will take the lead role in any disciplining of the alleged perpetrator(s). We will provide support at the same time as taking any disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action can be taken while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the police. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident doesn’t (in itself) prevent our school from coming to its own conclusion about what happened and imposing a penalty accordingly. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the police and/or local authority children’s social care to determine this

- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing

7.9 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, including where generated by AI

Your responsibilities when responding to an incident

If you are made aware of an incident involving the sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, including where generated by AI, you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

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

You should explain that you need to report the incident and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

Initial review meeting

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to pupil(s);
- If a referral needs to be made to the police and/or children's social care;
- If it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard the young person (in most cases, imagery should not be viewed);
- What further information is required to decide on the best response;
- Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms (this may be unknown);
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services;
- Any relevant facts about the pupils involved which would influence risk assessment;
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual;
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved (in most cases parents should be involved).

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult; where an adult poses as a child to groom or exploit a child or young person, the incident may first present as a child-on-child incident. See appendix 4 for more information on assessing adult-involved incidents
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs);
- What the DSL knows about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent;
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13;
- The DSL has reason to believe a pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming).

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care.

Understanding sexualised behaviour in children

Children and young people typically display a range of sexualised behaviours as they grow up. However some may display problematic or abusive sexualised behaviour. This is harmful to the children who display it as well as the people it's directed towards.

Further review by the DSL

If, at the initial review stage, a decision has been made not to refer to police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review.

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate) to establish the facts and assess the risks.

If at any point in the process there is a concern that a pupil has been harmed, or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

Informing parents

The DSL will inform parents at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through the St Helier Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

Curriculum coverage

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes as part of our PSHE education and computing programmes. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is;
- How it is most likely to be encountered;
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive;
- Issues of legality;
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation.

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images;
- The receipt of such images.

This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.

Teaching follows best practice in delivering safe and effective education, including:

- Putting safeguarding first
- Approaching from the perspective of the child
- Promoting dialogue and understanding
- Empowering and enabling children and young people
- Never frightening or scare-mongering
- Challenging victim-blaming attitudes

7.10 Dangerous Dogs and Safeguarding Children

When a practitioner from any agency undertakes a home visit and there are children and dogs in the household, the practitioner should consider whether the presence of the dog/s may present any kind of risk to the welfare of the child/ren. If it is the professional judgement of the practitioner that a dog presents a risk to a child, the police and Children's Services should be contacted immediately.

8. Online safety and the user of mobile technology

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

To address this, our school aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Protect and educate the whole school community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole school community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

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

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

To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will:

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
 - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology

- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
 - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
 - Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems. These systems extend to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

This section summarises our approach to online safety and mobile phone use. For full details about our school's policies in these areas, please refer to our online safety policy and mobile phone policies which can be found on our [website](#).

8.1 Artificial intelligence (AI)

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

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

We will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our Relationships and Behaviour Policy and Artificial Intelligence Policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools while they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school. Our school's requirements for filtering and monitoring also apply to the use of AI, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

9. Notifying Parents

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the LA children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with any relevant agencies (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what's being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what's being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) behind any decision(s)

10. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

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

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation than other pupils;
- The potential for pupils with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.
- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school or being unable to understand the consequences of doing so

We can offer extra pastoral support for these pupils if needed. This would be through ELSA sessions.

Any abuse involving pupils with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL (or deputy) and the SENCO.

11. Pupils with a Social Worker

Pupils may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. We recognise that a child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm as well as potentially creating barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children, who are often at greater risk of harm.

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

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

12. Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

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

- Appropriate staff have relevant information about children's looked after legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, and care arrangements;
- The DSL has details of children's social workers and relevant virtual school heads;

We have appointed a designated teacher, who is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children in line with [statutory](#) guidance.

The designated teacher is appropriately trained and has the relevant qualifications and experience to perform the role.

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- Work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to;
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans.

13. Pupils who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning

We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or questioning their gender can be targeted by other children.

We also recognise that pupils who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual or questioning their gender are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL. Add details of the pastoral support you offer these pupils, such as appointing an LGBTQ+ pastoral lead.

When families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning pupils, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. This should be done as early as possible when supporting pre-pubertal children.

When supporting a gender questioning pupil, we will take a cautious approach as there are still unknowns around the impact of social transition, and a pupil may have wider vulnerability, such as complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases, autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

We will also consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with their parents/carers (other than in rare circumstances where involving parents/carers would constitute a significant risk of harm to the pupil). We will also include any clinical advice that is available and consider how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. We will refer to Department for Education guidance when deciding how to proceed.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. We therefore aim to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where pupils can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

14. Complaints and Concerns about School Safeguarding Policies

14.1 Complaints against staff

Complaints against staff that are likely to require a child protection investigation will be handled in accordance with our procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff (see appendix 3).

14.2 Other complaints

Other complaints would be dealt with in line with the Complaints Procedure.

14.3 Whistle-blowing

If staff have any concerns about the school's safeguarding practice, they should raise them with members of the Senior Leadership Team who will conduct an investigation. If staff do not feel comfortable raising concerns directly with SLT, they may contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line by phone (08000280285) or email (help@NSPCC.org.uk).

15. Record-Keeping

We will hold records in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded on My Concern. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Non-confidential records will be easily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.

If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded promptly and securely, and separately from the main pupil file. In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.

Records are kept electronically on My Concern. Any paper copies are locked in a cupboard in the Headteacher's office. Old records for a child that has left school are locked in a cupboard in the photocopy room downstairs. When a child leaves Abbey, child protection papers are put in two envelopes and sent by recorded delivery to the new school.

In addition:

- Appendix 2 sets out our policy on record-keeping, specifically with respect to recruitment and pre-employment checks;
- Appendix 3 sets out our policy on record-keeping with respect to allegations of abuse made against staff.

16. Training

16.1 All staff

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including on whistle-blowing procedures, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities, and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. This training will be regularly updated and will be in line with advice from the 3 safeguarding partners.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

16.2 The DSL and Deputies

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years.

In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).

They, or any other designated Prevent lead, will also undertake more in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies.

16.3 Governors

All governors receive training about safeguarding, to make sure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities. This is to make sure that they:

- Have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their responsibilities, such as providing strategic challenge
- Can be assured that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective and support the school to deliver a robust whole-school approach to safeguarding

As the chair of governors may be required to act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher, they receive training in managing allegations for this purpose.

16.4 Recruitment – interview panels

At least one person conducting any interview for a post at the school will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This will cover, as a minimum, the contents of the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and will be in line with local

safeguarding procedures.

16.5 Staff who have contact with pupils and families

All staff who have contact with children and families will have supervisions which will provide them with support, coaching and training, promote the interests of children and allow for confidential discussions of sensitive issues.

17. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the Governing Board.

Reviewed: **September 2026**

Next Review: **September 2027**

18. Links with other Policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Staff code of conduct
- Complaints
- Health and safety
- Attendance
- Online Safety
- Equality
- Sex and relationship education
- Whistle-blowing
- IT acceptable use
- AI
- Anti-bullying

These appendices are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Appendix 1: types of abuse

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

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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate;
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing;
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 2: Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks – Policy and Procedures

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity;
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months;
- Carry out a Prohibited Check on all staff employed by the Willow Learning Trust;
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities;
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards;
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate;
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher;
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent;
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state;
- We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not

disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought;

- We will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete;
- We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.
- Regulated activity means a person who will be:
 - Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
 - Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
 - Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.

We will not accept a Curriculum Vitae (CV) unless alongside a full application form from anyone applying to work at this school. As part of our background checks we will consider an online search for shortlisted candidates.

Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- The 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left.

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity;
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children.
- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school. For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers and Third-Party Companies

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity;
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity;
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment.
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought
- Monitor the content and purpose of any sessions delivered to pupils.
- Respond to any safeguarding concerns involving external users of the premises in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Governors

All trustees, local governors and members will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under [section 128](#) of the Education and Skills Act 2008). [Section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have retained or been delegated any management responsibilities];
- Identity;
- Right to work in the UK;
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK.

Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we recognise that we continue to be responsible for their safeguarding and we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform. We keep records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. We regularly review the alternative provision placements made. Reviews occur at least half termly to provide assurance that the child

is regularly attending and the placement continues to be safe and meets the child's needs. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement is immediately reviewed, and terminated, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Appendix 3: allegations of abuse made against staff

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher or volunteer, has:

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

It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the school. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned;

- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children;
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children;
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted;
- Temporarily redeploying the individual to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school or other work for the academy trust.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;

Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive;

False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;

Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence);

Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the headteacher (or chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation) – the ‘case manager’ – will take the following steps:

- Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the LA. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children’s social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police).
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children’s social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children’s social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies.
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether

alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children's social care services, as appropriate.

If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details.

If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.

If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children's social care services as appropriate.

Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate. The support could be given from a trade union representative or colleague. The individual facing the allegation or concern will be signposted to the Employee Assistance Programme.

Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice.

Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence).

Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the academy trust will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Additional considerations for supply staff

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as supply staff provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

We will not decide to stop using a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

The Governing Board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation.

We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required.

We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary).

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week.
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days.
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the LADO whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the

police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required. If they think that the individual has engaged in conduct that has harmed (or is likely to harm) a child, or if they think the person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child, they must make a referral to the DBS.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the Headteacher, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the Headteacher, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.

Confidentiality

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared;
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality;
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation;
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises.

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation;
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved;
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above).

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), for the term of the inquiry. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Learning lessons

After any cases, not only where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff;
- The duration of the suspension;
- Whether or not the suspension was justified;
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

Appendix 4: local risks

At Abbey Primary we work closely with the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP) and external safeguarding agencies to rigorously analyse our presenting safeguarding concerns. This in turn helps us to identify relevant concerns in our local area. We use this information to provide training for our staff members so that appropriate and timely support can be provided to our children and their families.

Over the past few years there has been a rise in the number of safeguarding concerns linked to, but not exclusively: domestic abuse, misuse of illegal substances and adult mental health. Alongside this, Neglect and the cost-of-living crisis were identified as local risks alongside parental and child anxiety, mental health, anti-social behaviour, online risks, exploitation, and domestic abuse. This list is not exhaustive of the safeguarding issues prevalent to the school.

Throughout the academic year, all staff will participate in regular safeguarding training which reflects KCSIE 2026 and our local context.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead attends regular Trust Professional Meetings, termly Safeguarding training for DSLs and additional training as required.

Appendix 4: definitions of specific safeguarding issues

Children who are absent from education

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become absent from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect;
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM;
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families;
- Come from the families of service personnel;
- Go missing or run away from home or care;
- Are supervised by the youth justice system;
- Cease to attend a school;
- Come from new migrant families.

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go

missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

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

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education the school has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils and students who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones as well as an awareness of breast-ironing and honour-based abuse (including FGM and forced marriage).
4. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils and students off-roll when they:
 - a. leave school to be home educated
 - b. move away from the school's location
 - c. remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
 - d. are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
 - e. are permanently excluded

Child criminal exploitation

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

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

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always

involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

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

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

Child sexual exploitation

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

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

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. Children or young people who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

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

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

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

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

Child-on-Child Abuse

All staff are aware that children can abuse other children and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. **It can also take place both face-to-face and online, and can occur simultaneously between the two.**

All staff are clear as to the policy and procedures regarding child-on-child abuse and the important role they must play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff understand that even if there are no reports in their school it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).

All Child-on-Child Abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

At our school, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of child-on-child abuse.

- An open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.
- A comprehensive curriculum (PSHE/RSE) that not only encourages children to recognise abuse but provide strategies and support for understanding where/when/how to seek help, advice, and support for dealing with all types of abuse in age-appropriate resources/language (KAPOW - Reception - Year 6). The KAPOW PSHE/RSE scheme is designed to support practitioners with varying teaching styles. This means through monitoring and assessment children are given a consistent level and access to a varied PSHE/RSE curriculum following the statutory and non-statutory objectives. The KAPOW scheme offers continuous support for practitioners delivering the lessons. There are

comprehensive lesson plans, readymade resources to support teaching and learning and opportunities for continued professional development.

- Assemblies are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.
- Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in school.
- We will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.
- Information gathering – children, staff and witnesses will be spoken with as soon as possible to gather relevant information quickly to understand the situation and assess whether there was intent to cause harm.
- Decide on action – if it is believed that any young person is at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to children’s social care. The DSL will then work with children’s social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police.
- Inform parents - as with other concerns of abuse, the school will normally seek to discuss concerns about a pupil with parents. Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil and so if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children’s social care and/or the police before parents are contacted. Where allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made, the school will act in accordance with the guidance set out in Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022).

Domestic abuse

Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

If police are called to an incident of domestic abuse and any children in the household have experienced the incident, the police will inform the key adult in school (usually the DSL) before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This is the procedure where police forces are part of [Operation Encompass](#).

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

Homelessness

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

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

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

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing and flattening.

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

FGM

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

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place;
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out;
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues.
- A girl:
 - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable;
 - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously);
 - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating or Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
 - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
 - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
 - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour

- Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations o Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

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

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider);
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin;
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out;
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues.
- A girl:
 - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM;
 - Having limited level of integration within UK society; o Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman";
 - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period;
 - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM;
 - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion);
 - Being unexpectedly absent from school;
 - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication.

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

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

The DSL will:

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

Preventing radicalisation

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

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Terrorism is an action that:

- Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
- Causes serious damage to property; or
- Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system.

The use or threat of terrorism must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training and make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Radicalisation can occur quickly or over a long period.

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

- Refusal to engage with, or becoming abusive to, peers who are different from themselves;
- Becoming susceptible to conspiracy theories and feelings of persecution;
- Changes in friendship groups and appearance;
- Rejecting activities they used to enjoy;
- Converting to a new religion;
- Isolating themselves from family and friends;
- Talking as if from a scripted speech;
- An unwillingness or inability to discuss their views;
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others;
- Increased levels of anger;
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use;
- Expressions of sympathy for extremist ideologies and groups, or justification of their actions;
- Accessing extremist material online, including on Facebook or Twitter;
- Possessing extremist literature;
- Being in contact with extremist recruiters and joining, or seeking to join, extremist organisations.

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem or be victims of bullying or discrimination. It is important to note that these signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour – staff should have confidence in their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong.

If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in section 7.5 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL.

Staff should always take action if they are worried.

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and to leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter the setting. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign in on the school InVentry System and wear a visitor's lanyard with their photo on. If the visitor is DBS checked, they are required to wear a green lanyard. If the Visitor is not DBS checked, they are required to wear a red lanyard and will be always chaperoned

by a member of school staff. Visitors must sign out on the InVentry system on their departure and return their lanyard.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and:

The organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide prior written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out.

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will endeavor to contact parents or close family members by phone. We will ensure that the child is supervised and feels looked after. If we are unable to contact an adult, social care will be contacted.

Missing pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will check the school building. If a child goes missing on the way home from school, parents and the Police will be contacted.

Children and young people who are missing may be in serious danger and are vulnerable to crime, abuse, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, abduction, radicalisation and missing education.

Disguised Compliance

Disguised compliance involves parents giving the appearance of co-operating with child welfare agencies to avoid raising suspicions and allay concerns. Published case reviews highlight that professionals sometimes delay or avoid interventions due to parental disguised compliance. If professionals believe parents to be displaying disguised compliance they should:

- Begin from a place of 'respectful uncertainty'. This means you take what people say seriously, be they parents, young people or even colleagues, but you then look for other information to correlate or challenge the account. Where there is conflicting evidence from different professionals, the child, others students or local community, or family members, this should give you pause for thought.
- Set some short term, very achievable goals.
- Look carefully at the evidence – examine chronology and previous patterns of concern
- Watch and learn – create opportunities to be with the parent and the student to achieve goals.

Hidden Children

Children of any age can be unknown to agencies like health and social care. For example, when the adults who care for them elect to live off grid or follow alternative lifestyles. Most will be well looked after but, in a tiny minority of circumstances adults can sometimes hide children away from professionals to conceal abuse and/or prevent other issues like trafficking coming to light.

Children and the Court System

There are several occasions when children may be directly or indirectly involved with the court system, and they will often require support through the process. In the UK, there are 3 types of court that children and young people may be involved with: tribunals, the criminal court and the family court (part of the civil court system). However, they are most likely to be involved with the latter two.

Tribunals are also part of the civil court system and, regarding children and young people, hear cases like disputes about EHC plans, Universal Credit and employment issues. The experience of being involved in a court case can differ from one child to the next, regardless of whether they are the victim, the defendant, a witness or are incidentally involved.

- Involvement with the courts can be stressful and lead to poor physical and mental health.
- In both criminal and family courts, the decision rests with someone else, and can lead children and young people to feel they have no control over their future.
- The outcome of the court proceedings could significantly change the child's life, for example, they may have to move home, change school, be taken into care, or face a custodial sentence.
- There may be many unanswered questions that leave the child feeling confused about what is happening to them and what the outcomes may be.
- Court appearances may cause/entrench conflict within families or groups. Arguments between family members may be witnessed by children and young people.
- There may be personal risk involved, for example, they may have been threatened or pressured not to give evidence.
- Some children may be absent from their education setting due to stress-related illness or unable to focus on their work. It may also lead to changes in behaviour and some children may become unusually quiet, while others may become aggressive.

Children With Family Members in Prison

When a parent or close family member has been sent to prison, it can impact children and young people in several ways.

- As mentioned above, to protect children, adults may choose to lie to them, saying that

their family member is 'working away' or 'on holiday'.

- They may isolate themselves due to embarrassment or become isolated and judged by others for an offence they did not commit. Some children and young people feel so ashamed of their situation that they do not tell others about their family member's imprisonment to avoid the risk of being bullied.
- They may lose regular contact or any contact with a person who held a significant role in their life.
- The family income may be affected when a parent or family member is sent to prison.

Professionals can support these children by:

- Supporting children
- Having open conversations
- Building partnerships with parents and carers

National Referral Mechanism (NRM)

The [National Referral Mechanism](#) is the national framework for identifying and referring victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. The Single Competent Authority (SCA) administers it, which is part of the Home Office. If a professional has a reasonable cause to believe that they may have encountered a victim of Modern Slavery, they must notify the Home Office.

Cybercrime

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

Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse

APVA can be defined as:

- Any pattern of intended incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by an adolescent (10 to 18 years old) towards a parent or carer. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, emotional, physical, sexual abuse, financial and economic.

There is currently no legal definition of Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (APVA). It can be seen as a form of domestic abuse but is distinct from intimate partner violence and is also associated with Bullying

When responding to incidents of APVA, the practitioner should always find out the identity of all children in the household or any children who would normally live in the household. The police or other agencies should ensure the children are seen and their safety established whenever

they attend an APVA or domestic abuse incident. Where there are concerns a referral should be made to children's social care in accordance with the [Referral and Assessment Procedure](#).