St George's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2026-2027

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Safeguarding Team Contacts at St Georges Catholic Voluntary Academy

Role:	Name:
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs Helen Arthur (Head of school)
Deputies DSL(s)	Miss Sarah Pitkeathly (Acting Deputy Headteacher) Miss Emma Smith (Learning Mentor) Mrs Deborah Drewett (Nursery Manager)
Named safeguarding governor	Mrs Yvonne Wozniak
Chair of Governors	Mr Stefan Scicinski
School online safety lead	Ms Eileen O'Sullivan
Designated teacher for Children in Care and children previously in care (CiC)	Miss Sarah Pitkeathly
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School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Framework

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. Keeping Children Safe in Education

1. Ethos statement

We recognise the moral and statutory responsibility placed on all staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment in which children can learn, underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, are able to raise concerns and believe they are being listened to, and that appropriate action will be taken to keep them safe.

2. Introduction

The governing body[1] recognises the need to ensure that it complies with its duties under legislation and this policy has regard to statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), Working Together to Safeguard Children and locally agreed inter-agency procedures put in place by Harrow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP).

This policy will be reviewed annually, as a minimum, and will be made available publicly via the school website or on request.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing the 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

This policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers, supply staff, trainee teachers, contractors and the wider school community. It forms part of the child protection and safeguarding arrangements for our school and is one of a suite of policies and procedures which encompass the safeguarding responsibilities of the school. In particular, this policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct (including Acceptable Use of ICT), Safer Recruitment Policy, Online Safety Policy, Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy,

[1] In maintained schools the governing body is responsible for ensuring their functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with section 175 of the Education Act 2002, for pupil referral units it is the management committee, in independent schools, including academies and free schools, and 16-19 academies, this duty sits with the proprietor (in the case of academies the proprietor will be the academy trust). References to the governing body throughout this policy framework includes management committees.

school's guidance on low-level concerns[2], Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and procedures, and Part Five of KCSiE, copies of which will be provided to all staff on induction.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide staff with a framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and young people, and ensure that all staff understand and meet their statutory responsibilities;
- Ensure consistent good practice across the school.

The governing body expects that all staff will have read and understand this child protection and safeguarding policy and their responsibility to implement it. **All staff must**, as a minimum, have read and understand Part One of KCSiE and those **who work directly** with children should also read Annex A. Governors/the proprietor will ensure that they and senior leaders have read and understand Parts One and Two of KCSiE. There may some staff whom the governing body/proprietor require they read additional sections[3].

The governing body will ensure that arrangements are in place for all staff members to receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. The governing body/proprietor will ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online) at induction which is regularly updated.

Compliance with the policy will be monitored by the Head of School, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and named safeguarding governor/proprietor.

3. Statutory framework

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (as amended) in the case of maintained schools and pupil referral units[4], Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (as amended) and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 for independent schools (including academies and free schools), the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015, and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (as amended) for post 16 education providers, place a statutory duty on governing bodies and proprietors to have policies and procedures in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who are pupils of the school which must have regard to any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

In accordance with statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children, local safeguarding arrangements must be established for every local authority area by the three

[2] Guidance on Low-Level Concerns may be a stand alone policy or included within another policy e.g. Staff Code of Conduct

[3] The governing body/proprietor may decide that for some roles should read additional parts of the guidance e.g. colleagues involved in safer recruitment administration including the maintenance of the single central record should also read Part Three of KCSiE.

[4] Section 175, Education Act 2002 – for management committees of pupil referral units, this is by virtue of regulation 3 and paragraph 19A of Schedule 1 to the Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2007

safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Police and Integrated Care Boards). All three partners have equal and joint duty for a range of roles and statutory functions including developing local safeguarding policy and procedures and scrutinising local arrangements. In Harrow, all schools have been named by the Harrow Safeguarding Children Partnership HSCP as relevant agencies, this means staff in schools must work in accordance with the multi-agency procedures developed by the HSCP which can be found on at Harrow Safeguarding Partnership

4. Key roles and responsibilities

Governing Body

The governing body has a strategic leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements and must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. The governing body has a legal responsibility to make sure that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place, which have regard to statutory guidance, in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children and young people's welfare. The governing body will also ensure that the policy is made available to parents and carers by publishing this on the school website or in writing if requested.

The governing body will ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the school and ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development, and that all systems, processes and policies are transparent, clear and easy to understand and operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

The governing body will ensure that where there is a safeguarding concern school leaders will make sure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems will be in place that are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report any form of abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

The governing body will ensure that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children and that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in place.

The governing body will ensure that, as a minimum, the following policies are in place to enable appropriate action to be taken to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people as appropriate:

- child-on-child abuse
- online safety,

- behaviour, including measures to prevent bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, misogyny/misandry)
- special educational needs and disability
- supporting pupils in school with medical conditions
- staff code of conduct/behaviour policy (which should also include the procedures that will be followed to address low-level concerns and allegations made against staff, and acceptable use of IT, including the use of mobile devices and communications, including the use of social media.)
- procedure for responding to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.
- safer recruitment

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that staff and volunteers are properly vetted to make sure they are safe to work with the pupils who attend our school and that the school has procedures for appropriately managing safeguarding allegations made against, or low level concerns involving, members of staff (including the Head of School, supply and trainee teachers, contractors, and volunteer helpers).

The governing body will ensure that there is a named governor for safeguarding, a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is a senior member of the leadership team and has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, and a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after, or previously looked after, and will ensure that these people have the appropriate training.

The governing body will have regard to their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Code of Practice.[5]

The governing body will inform London Borough of Harrow Council and the HSCP annually about the discharge of their safeguarding duties by completing the safeguarding self-assessment audit.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) *(2026-27 Head of School is also DSL)*

The DSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety including and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems in place). This will be made explicit in the role-holder's job description. (The broad areas of responsibility and activities related to the role of the DSL are set out in Annex B of KCSiE).

The DSL will have the appropriate status, authority, time, funding, training, resources and support they need to carry out the duties of the post effectively.

[5] Set out in paragraphs 90-93 of KCSiE

The DSL and any alternate DSLs will provide advice and support to staff in school and will liaise with the local authority and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.

During term time, the DSL and/or an alternate should always be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The DSL will make arrangements for adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term time activities. To ensure continuity of safeguarding responsibilities, schools should implement robust cover arrangements for periods when the DSL lead is unavailable due to illness, leave, or other circumstances. This could, for example, include a confidential shared mailbox or equivalent system to ensure that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored, and acted upon without delay

The DSL will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills to carry out the role and is expected to update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals to allow them to keep up with developments relevant to their role.

Head of School

The Head of School will ensure that the policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and that sufficient resources, time and training are provided to enable staff members to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities and contribute effectively to a whole school approach to safeguarding.

The Head of School will be responsible for ensuring a culture of safety and ongoing vigilance that fosters the belief that 'it could happen here'.

All staff

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

All staff must read and ensure they understand at least Part One of KCSiE directly with children and those staff who work directly with children must read should also read Annex A.

All staff must ensure they are familiar with the systems within school which support safeguarding, including the child protection and safeguarding policy, the code of conduct/staff behaviour policy, the behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education, and the role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies). These will be explained to all staff on induction.

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff should maintain a belief that 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare they must act on them immediately.

All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, neglected or exploited, and/or is otherwise at risk of involvement in criminal activity, such as knife crime, or involved in county lines drug dealing.

All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 that may follow a referral, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

All staff should be aware of, and understand their role within community-based Early Help Family Support https://www.harrow.gov.uk/childrens-social-care/family-hubs/2 for all services, at both a Local Authority and school level:

- including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to Early Help Family Support and services provided at: Hillview, central hub
- targeted early help level (under sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004)
- statutory services delivered under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need, including how this applies for disabled children)
- the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 (reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm)
- Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 (care and supervision orders)
- Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (duty to accommodate a child) and clear procedures and processes for cases relating to:
- the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children
- children managed within the youth secure estate
- disabled children

This includes providing support as soon as a problem emerges, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals in order to support early identification and assessment, focussing on providing interventions to avoid escalation of worries and needs (see Section 12: Information Sharing). In some cases, staff, as qualified lead practitioners (i.e. not a social worker) may be asked to act as the lead professional in undertaking a

family help assessment. before statutory intervention can continue to lead work with families up to and including section

Any child may benefit from Early Family help support, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for Early Help for a child who:

- is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (SEN) (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves
- has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- 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 alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of 'honour'- or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage.
- is a privately fostered child

Knowing what to look out for is vital to the early identification of abuse, neglect and exploitation and specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL (or deputy). If in exceptional circumstances the DSL (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the DSL as soon as is practically possible. Details of the school's safeguarding team are on the front this policy.

5. Induction & Training

The governing body will ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety, which amongst other things includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable role and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) which is regularly updated and in line with advice from the HSCP. In addition, all staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and up to date knowledge of emerging and evolving safeguarding issues to safeguard children effectively.

All new staff members will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. This will include training on the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, online safety, the code of conduct/staff behaviour policy, low-levels concerns guidance, the behaviour policy, the safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, and the role of the designated safeguarding lead. Copies of the school's policies, procedures and Part One of KCSiE will be provided to **all** new staff at induction and Annex A to all those **who work directly** with children

The governing body will ensure that safeguarding training for staff, including online safety training, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning.

The Head of School will ensure that an accurate record of safeguarding training undertaken by all staff is maintained and updated regularly.

In considering safeguarding training arrangements the governing body/proprietor will also have regard to the Teachers' Standards which set out the expectation that all teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe educational environment, and require teachers to have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils.

6. Recognising concerns - signs and indicators of abuse.

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Staff should be aware that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of school, inside and outside of home and online. Staff should exercise **professional curiosity** and know what to look for as this is vital for the early identification of abuse or neglect.

All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

All staff should consider whether children might be at risk of abuse of exploitation in situations outside their families – harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, stalking, financial exploitation, criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and recognise that children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of nudes or semi-nudes" including where generated by AI, especially around chat groups, and the

sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

In all cases, if staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL.
Options will then include:
• managing any support for the child internally via the school or college's own pastoral support processes, including considering where doing so does not place the child at additional risk, whether the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should inform parents or carers to further support the child's wellbeing,
• undertaking a family help assessment, or
• making a referral to statutory services for example as the child could be in need, is in need or is suffering, or likely to suffer harm

Indicators of abuse and neglect

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

The following indicators listed under the categories of abuse are not an exhaustive list:

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

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), verbal abuse (e.g., criticism, belittling, name-calling), misogyny/misandry

causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving 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 non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (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. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child-on-child abuse) in education and all staff should be aware of it and of the school's policy and procedures for dealing with it. (See section 7: Specific safeguarding issues)

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy 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); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

(Source Keeping Children Safe in Education)

7. Specific safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues often overlap and can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as of drug taking and/or alcohol abuse, unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education, serious violence (including that linked to county lines) and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images, including where generated by AI, and/or videos can be signs that children are at risk. Other safeguarding issues all staff should be aware of include:

Child-on-child abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. All staff should also be aware child on child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both victim and alleged perpetrator, it is preventable and it may involve serious physical harm or threats involving weapons.

All staff should understand, that even if there no reports in school it does not mean it's not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to the DSL (or deputy) and record these using the school safeguarding system (CPOMS).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, misogyny/misandry)
- 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)
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and or videos including where generated by AI[6]
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

All staff should be clear about the school's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

Early Help Family Support

In line with managing internally, the school or college may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early Help Family Support is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. Providing Early Help Family Support is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early Help Family Support can be particularly useful to address non-

[6] UKCIS guidance: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice for education settings.

*1 Shore Space

violent Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and their deputies) know what the local Early Help Family Support Support is and how and where to access support.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. *2

This may constitute modern slavery, and further information is available in the Modern Slavery statutory guidance. In accordance with this guidance, a relevant child protection and modern slavery referral should be completed where a potential victim of CCE or CSE is identified.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines (where gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line")., working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. Children who are criminally exploited should have their vulnerabilities recognised by adults and professionals (particularly older children) and should be treated as victims. It is not possible for a child to consent to be exploited, abused or trafficked, and they may not recognise that it is happening to them.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however staff should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave

in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. Being involved in the sexual exploitation of children includes introducing them to other individuals for the purpose of exploitation, trafficking a child for the purpose of sexual exploitation, taking payment for sexual activities with a child or allowing their property to be used for sexual activities with a child.

CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. This can be committed by an individual or an organised network and most sexual abuse is committed by those previously known to the victim. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship. As with CCE, victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a significant concern, as professionals continue to encounter cases where children are manipulated, groomed, and exploited without fully understanding the abuse they are experiencing.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or pattern of incidents. That's abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Whilst all staff should speak to the DSL (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about FGM, there is a specific legal duty on teachers[7]. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

Mental Health

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, develop into safeguarding concerns. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide. They could also be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem.

[7] Under section 5B(11) (a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, 'teacher' means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England)

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If a child is struggling with their mental health, self-harming, has an eating disorder or is experiencing suicidal ideation and making plans to end their life, there are likely to be potential warning signs which education staff are well placed to recognise. These could include: significant changes in behaviour, ongoing difficulty sleeping, withdrawing from social situations, not wanting to do things they usually like, and physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.

Not every child who exhibits these behaviours is suicidal or has a mental health concern. However, by identifying these and other potential warning signs, education staff can identify children who may be struggling with their mental health and contemplating suicide and offer support and vital early intervention. Schools and colleges should ensure that any interventions they offer are evidenced as safe and effective and appropriate for the need and phase of education.
If staff have a concern about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern, they should follow their child protection policy and speak to their Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy. If staff feel that a child is in danger, they should call 999 or arrange for them to be taken to A&E immediately by a parent/carer or other suitable person. If a child needs help urgently for their mental health, but it's not an emergency, staff can get help from NHS 111 online or call 111 and select the mental health option.

Staff can access a range of advice to help them identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

Harrow MHST- Mental Health Support Team https://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/services/mental-health-services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services/mental-health-support-team-schools-mhst

Reasonable force

Schools should follow the new Restrictive intervention guidance detailing:

- *advice about the new legal duty to record and report the use of seclusion effective*
- *additional clarification on the use of reasonable force to help school staff use this power safely and appropriately*
- *advice on the use of seclusion*
- *advice on how schools can minimise the need to use restrictive interventions*
- *provide specific support for staff who work with pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)*
- *make clearer the responsibilities of school staff, governing bodies and proprietors*

HM Government guidance Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention sets out how to support children and young people with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum conditions and mental health difficulties who are at risk of restrictive intervention in special education settings; however, all schools and colleges may find the information helpful.

Serious violence

All staff should be aware of the indicators which may signal that children are at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.
Serious violence is a continuing safeguarding concern. It may involve physical assault, carrying, threatening with, or using weapons, often in the context of peer conflict or bullying, and it can also be associated with criminal exploitation. Staff should report any concerns about a child carrying or using a weapon (or expressing intent to do so) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy). The Designated Safeguarding Lead should assess the risk to both the individual pupil and others in the school, considering wider information or concerns, and take appropriate action. Depending on the risk, they should put in place a safety and support plan, and where relevant, consider action to de-escalate peer conflict. Schools play a key role in protecting children from violence, safeguarding victims, as well as those who may be at risk of, or are involved in committing violence (who may also be victims themselves). Staff should be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of or involved in serious violence. These risks are higher for children with disrupted education (e.g. suspensions, permanent exclusions, time in alternative provision) or a history of offending

8. Children potentially at greater risk of harm

The governing body recognises that whilst all children should be protected there are some groups of children who are potentially at greater risk of harm and, in some cases, these children may find it difficult to communicate what is happening to them.

Alternative Provision

Where a school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, it continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and should be satisfied that the placement meets the pupil's needs.

The cohort of pupils in Alternative Provision often have complex needs, it is important that governing bodies and proprietors of these settings are aware of the additional risk of harm that their pupils may be vulnerable to. Schools should obtain written information from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment (i.e. those checks that schools would otherwise perform on their own staff). This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes), so that the commissioning school can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.
Schools should always know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or

satellite sites the child may attend. They should regularly review the alternative provision placements they make. Reviews should be frequent enough (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 should be immediately reviewed, and terminated, if necessary, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to complex safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and/or complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health.

The governing body/proprietor expects that the Local Authority will share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL will hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both LAs and school to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or to a child missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services.

Children 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 be absent or become missing 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

It is important that the school's procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education are followed, particularly on repeat occasions, to

help identify the risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to LA children's social care and need a social worker (such as on a child in need or child protection plan, or as a looked after child), where absence from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. As such, all staff should be aware of the school's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures (See Attendance policy 2026-2027)
This includes informing the LA if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the LA, 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.

Further information and support include:

- schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the LA when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points can be found in the DfE's statutory guidance: Children Missing Education.
- general information and advice for schools can be found in the Government's Missing Children and Adults Strategy.
- further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in: Full-time-Enrolment of 14 to 16 year olds in Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges
- Statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance

Elective Home Education

Many home education children have an overwhelmingly positive learning experience. We would expect the parents' decision to home educate to be made with their child's best education at the heart of the decision. However, this is not the case for all, and home education can mean some children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs.

Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, the school will work together with the LA and other key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible.

Ideally this would be before a final decision has been made to, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan in place the LA will need to review the plan, working closely with parents and carers.

Children requiring mental health support

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.

The governing body will ensure there is a clear system and process in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate, and a clear referral and accountability system.

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 14 (MASH referral)
If you have a mental health concern that is not also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action- this will include sessions with the school Learning Mentor.

Staff can access further advice in a DfE guidance documents Preventing and tackling bullying and mental health and behaviour in schools which set out how staff can help prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience as part of an integrated, whole school approach to social and emotional wellbeing, which is tailored to the needs of pupils.

The school's senior mental health lead will be a member of, or be supported by, the senior leadership team.

Looked after children and previously looked after children.

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The governing body/proprietor will ensure staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

The governing body/proprietor will ensure there are arrangements in place so that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

Appropriate staff will also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The DSL should have the details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child. The role of the virtual head has been extended to include responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children in kinship care and improving attendance

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. The governing body/proprietor recognise that when dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

For children who are care leavers, the DSL should have details of the LA Personal Advisor appointed to guide and support the care leaver and liaise with them as necessary regarding any issues of concern.

Young carers
Schools and colleges should be alert to the needs of young carers, recognising that caring responsibilities can impact on their attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. Early identification is essential to ensure young carers receive support at the right time and by the appropriate services including additional support from external partners, or local authority and health services.

Children with SEN and disabilities, health issues and /or medical conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline.

Staff should avoid making assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury may relate to the child's disability or medical condition without further exploration.

Staff should also be aware that these children may be more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying, misogyny/msyandry) than other children. Similarly, staff should be aware of the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) without outwardly showing signs or being able to communicate how they are feeling. They may also have a need for intimate care, are isolated from others and are more likely to be dependent on adults for care
Staff also need to be mindful of children's cognitive understanding, for example, whether they are able to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and the consequences of repeating the content/behaviours in school.

As such, any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will require close liaison with the DSL and SENCO.

The fact that there has been an incident relating to the management of a child or young person's medical condition (including allergies) would not in and of itself warrant a referral to local safeguarding partners. A safeguarding referral would only be needed where an incident highlighted concern that the child or young person might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their medical condition. This might occur where relevant information about a child or young person's medical condition is not provided to a school, college or setting, or where they are repeatedly sent without essential medication, thereby putting the individual at risk. Further information is provided in our statutory guidance on supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions and Allergy safety in schools; statutory guidance about the support that pupils with medical conditions and allergies should receive at school

Further information can be found in the DfE's:
- SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years, and

from specialist organisations such as:
- The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support

Services (SENDIASS). SENDIASS offer information, advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. All local authorities have such a service: Find your local IAS service here
• Mencap - Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people
• NSPCC - Safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and NSPCC - Safeguarding child protection/deaf and disabled children and young people

Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself a risk factor for harm; however, they can sometimes be vulnerable to discriminatory bullying. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are. Schools and colleges should consider how to address vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying and take steps to prevent it, including putting appropriate sanctions in place. Children who are questioning their gender. In recent years, we have seen a significant increase in the number of children who are questioning the way they feel about being a boy or a girl, including the physical attributes of their sex and the related ways in which they fit into society.
It is not for schools and colleges to initiate any action in this area; this guidance is focused on circumstances where a child or their parent has raised a request relating to social transition to which a school or college is responding.
Schools and colleges should keep in mind that it is common for children to engage in activities that are less typically associated with their sex. For example, at primary school age, girls may play with trucks, or boys may dress in clothes that are perceived as feminine. Sometimes young children also go through a period of questioning their gender but for the majority this will not continue into adulthood, while a small proportion may continue to question their gender and this feeling may intensify into puberty.
Schools and colleges should take time to understand the thoughts and feelings of children who are questioning their gender and should be appropriately professionally curious about the full range of the child's experiences.
Schools and colleges should remain aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs, for example relating to relationships with family, peers or their broader social environment, including discriminatory bullying.
Schools and colleges should consider adopting policies across school and college life that maintain flexibility and avoid rigid rules based on gender stereotypes

9. Opportunities to teach safeguarding

The governing body/proprietor will ensure that children and young people are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The governing body/proprietor recognise that effective education should be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with SEND.

Relevant topics will be included within Relationships Education *(primary schools)* and Relationships and Sex Education (also known as Sex and Relationship Education) *(secondary schools)* and through Health Education *(all pupils in state funded schools)*, having regard to statutory guidance.

Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares children and young people for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobic and sexual violence/harassment

The governing body/proprietor expect that the school's values and standards should be upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. These will be underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, as well as by a planned programme of evidence-based RSHE delivered in regularly timetables lessons and reinforced throughout the whole curriculum. This whole-school approach will be fully inclusive and developed to be age and stage of development appropriate, and will tackle (in age-appropriate stages) issues such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent
- Stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- How to recognise and 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, racism, derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict, so called honour-based violence such as forced marriage and FGM, and how to access support, and
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.

The school will ensure that there are appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to safeguard children and young people from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

10.Online safety and filtering and monitoring

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues such as child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and sexual predation and technology often provides the platform that facilitates such harm.

The governing body/proprietor has had due regard to the additional information and support set out in KCSiE and ensures that the school has a whole school approach to online safety, and has a clear policy on use of communications technology in school. Online safety will be a running and interrelated theme when devising and implementing policies and procedures. This will include considering how online safety is reflected in all relevant policies and whilst planning the curriculum, any teacher training, the role of the DSL and any parental engagement.

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. The school adopts a whole school approach to online safety to protect and educate pupils and staff in their use of technology, and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns as appropriate.

Online safety issues can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example, pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, or radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- Contact: being exposed to harmful online interaction with other users, for example, 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;

*4 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance

- Conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes including where generated by AI, and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images, and online bullying, misogyny); and
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams. If staff feel that either they or pupils are at risk this should be reported to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (https://apwg.org/).

Guidance to support schools and colleges to understand safety considerations and legal responsibilities if they choose to use Generative AI (either teacher-facing or pupil-facing) can be found at Generative artificial intelligence in education https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education/generative-artificial-intelligence-ai-in-education.
To complement this, the department, in partnership with the Chiltern Learning Trust and Chartered College of Teaching, have published online resources to help school and college staff to use AI safely and effectively ensure that a review of their effectiveness is carried out at least once every academic year. Reviews should be carried out by the SLT member responsible for filtering and monitoring, with the support of the school's DSL and IT support. They should include checks that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations, and a record should be kept of these checks an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks pupils face online. Schools can use the department's 'plan technology for your school service
to self-assess against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them

The review should include a member of the senior leadership team, the DSL, the IT service provider and a governor. The school should ensure they have the appropriate level of security protection procedures in place in order to safeguard their systems, staff and learners and review the effectiveness of these procedures periodically to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies. Guidance on cyber security including considerations can

be found at Cyber security training for school staff - NCSC.GOV.UK. In addition, schools and colleges should consider taking appropriate action to meet the Cyber security standards for schools and colleges which were developed to help them improve their resilience against cyber-attacks.
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/cyber-security-standards-for-schools-and-colleges

The school's online safety policy outlines the appropriate filtering and monitoring which take places on school devices and school networks. It also outlines the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation filtering and monitoring. [5]

School staff can access resources, information and support as set out in Annex A of KCSiE.

11. Mobile Phones

All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only. Statutory guidance on Mobile phones in schools https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools/mobile-phones-in-schools is clear that the department expects schools to implement a policy whereby pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the school day including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime. There are a number of ways in which schools can ensure that they are mobile phone-free, and it is for Head of School to decide how best to achieve this within their own unique contexts.

12. Sport

As children get older, some sports are typically taught and played in single sex groups. The Equality Act 2010 contains an exception in relation to single-sex sport. It applies to participation in any sport or game, or activity of a competitive nature, where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average girl would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average boy (or vice versa). This means that schools and colleges can separate children according to their biological sex in these circumstances without discriminating unlawfully against them on the basis of their sex. Some sports may need to be played in single-sex groups from a certain age to ensure children's safety, and where this is the case there must be no exceptions. In other cases, schools or colleges may have adopted a policy of single-sex sports for reasons related to fairness.
Where there are no safety concerns and a child makes a request relating to how they participate, schools and colleges will need to consider the request in light of the advice on "considering requests for support with social transition". This means that the school or college would need to take into account all the relevant factors, including whether supporting social transition is overall in the best interests of the child, as well as considering the impact on other children and the aim of creating safe and fair environments for children to participate in PE.

13. Regulations and safeguarding requirements relating to school premises
Toilets

Schools must not allow children into toilets designated for the opposite biological sex. This includes where schools are responding to a request to support any degree of social transition for children who are questioning their gender. Schools must provide separate toilets for boys and girls aged 8 and over (apart from where individual toilets are in a room that can be locked from the inside, intended for use by one pupil at a time). This is required by the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 which apply to both maintained schools, academies and independent schools and reflects schools' safeguarding obligations.

If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the toilet designated for their biological sex, schools and colleges should consider whether they can provide an alternative toilet facility, for example self-contained individual toilets, without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. These alternative arrangements should not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child, or of any other children.

It is important that schools and colleges keep a clear record of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly.

Where a school or college provides mixed-sex toilets in addition to single sex toilets, schools and colleges should assess safeguarding risks and plan accordingly, for example, mixed-sex toilets should be in individual, lockable rooms and open directly onto public areas (e.g. a corridor).

13. Changing Rooms and Showers

Schools must not allow a child, aged 11 years or older at the start of the school year, to undress in front of a child of the opposite biological sex. This is required by the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which require maintained schools, academies and independent schools to provide suitable changing accommodation and showers for pupils who are aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year. This means that the changing accommodation and showers must be suitable for the pupils they are provided for, having regard to their ages, numbers, and sex and any special requirements they may have and is informed by the school's safeguarding obligations. When responding to a request to support any degree of social transition, a school must not allow a child access to changing rooms designated for the opposite sex.

If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the changing rooms and showers designated for their sex, schools and colleges should consider whether they can provide an alternative changing or washing facility without compromising the provision of single-sex facilities. This could be a fully enclosed room – for use by one child at a time that can be secured from the inside – or by allowing access to facilities at an alternative time. These alternative arrangements should not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or of any other children.

It is important that schools and colleges keep a clear record of these situations, ensure they are communicated appropriately, and review them regularly.

14. Procedures

If staff notice any indicators of abuse/neglect or signs that a child or young person may be experiencing a safeguarding issue they should record their concerns on the school's

safeguarding management system or on a school recording form for safeguarding concerns and pass it to the DSL without delay. [*A suggested recording form is included at Appendix B*]

What to do if you are concerned.

If a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, it is important that you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully;
- Accept what is being said;
- Allow the child/young person to talk freely – do not interrupt or put words in the child/young person's mouth;
- Only ask questions when necessary to clarify, do not investigate or ask leading questions;
- Reassure the child, but don't make promises which it might not be possible to keep;
- Do not promise confidentiality;
- Emphasise that it was the right thing to tell someone;
- Reassure them that what has happened is not their fault;
- Do not criticise the perpetrator;
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told;
- Do not include your opinion without stating it is your opinion;
- Pass the information to the DSL or alternate without delay
- Record on CPOMS (under SAFEGUARDING category)
- Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the DSL as dealing with a disclosure can be distressing.

When a record of a safeguarding concern is passed to the DSL, the DSL will record the time and date the record of concern was received. The DSL will assess the concern and, taking into account any other safeguarding information known about the child/young person, consider whether it suggests that the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm, has been reached or may be a child in need. If the DSL is unsure whether the threshold has been met, they will contact the MASH Golden Number for advice (0208 901 2690). Where appropriate, the DSL will complete and submit the online MASH referral form MASH-referral form)

Additional note- As St Georges is located on the edge of Harrow borough, many pupils live in Brent and Ealing. The borough of the child's home address will need to be located in order to call the correct MASH team. (All phone numbers are in the appendix)

Where the DSL believes that a child or young person may be at imminent and significant risk of harm they should call The Golden Number immediately and then complete the MASH Referral.

Where a safeguarding concern does not meet the threshold for completion of a MASH Referral, the DSL should record how this decision has been reached and should consider

whether additional needs of the child have been identified that might be met by a coordinated offer of Early Help including the school or college's local Early Help offer.

School staff might be required to contribute to multi-agency plans to provide additional support to children. This might include attendance at child protection conferences or core group meetings. The school is committed to providing as much relevant up to date information about the child as possible, including submitting reports for child protection conferences in advance of the meeting in accordance with HSCP procedures and timescales.

Where reasonably possible, the school is committed to obtaining more than one emergency contact number for each pupil.

School staff must ensure that they are aware of the procedure to follow when a child goes missing from education.

15. Information sharing, record keeping and confidentiality

Information sharing is vital in safeguarding children by identifying and tacking all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and in promoting children's welfare, including in relation to their educational outcomes. Schools have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

As part of meeting a child's needs, the school understands that it is critical to recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies and will contribute to multi-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, and to keep the information they hold safe and secure, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing where there are real safeguarding concerns. Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. Staff will have regard to the Government guidance: Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers which supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018, UK Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the DSL or a deputy. Professional judgement should be used to ensure that the information shared is focused and proportionate. This may include summarising or omitting information which is not necessary for safeguarding purposes. But care should be taken not to omit information where it may be relevant to understanding or managing safeguarding risk. This is further supported by the new information sharing duty, which is intended to give staff greater confidence to share information appropriately and in a timely way to safeguard children. Specific statutory guidance on the Information Sharing Duty will be provided in due course, following consultation.

In addition to the child protection file, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving particularly where the information would support an assessment of risk to others in the school as well as the individual pupil. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse, or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and can have that support in place for when the child arrives or incidents that may indicate concerns about serious violence or harmful behaviours which may include misogyny/misandry
Where information indicates a risk to others and/or the individual pupil, for example where a pupil has previously carried, threatened with, or used a knife or weapon, it is incumbent on the receiving school to assess risk, and accordingly, put in place a safety and support plan for when the child arrives. It would be good practice for a conversation to take place between the designated safeguarding leads at both settings, where there are issues or concerns.

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice.

- "be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of all concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care or the Prevent program etc." KCSIE 2026

If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.

The school recognises that confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all matters relating to child protection. Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the DSL or alternate DSL with other relevant members of staff. This will be on a 'need to know' basis and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.
A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents/carers or pupils), or promise a child to keep a secret which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

As well as allowing for information sharing, in circumstances where it is warranted because it would put a child at risk of serious harm, the DPA 2018, UK GDPR and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 allow schools to withhold information. This may be particularly relevant where a child is affected by domestic abuse perpetuated by a parent or carer, is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation, and the serious harm tests is met.

Ordinarily, the school will always undertake to share its intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation.

The General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 states that, the school has the authority to share information with the Local Authority "in the exercise of our official duties without seeking consent".
The "**public task basis**" as described in the legislation allows authorities to use data when they can demonstrate that the processing is to perform tasks that are set by national law. This means parental consent is not necessary for the obtaining and sharing of information

"Between agencies when that information is for child protection or safeguarding purposes or for an assessment of a child or children's needs.
"Public task: the processing is necessary for you to perform a task in the public interest or for your official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law." GDPR Article 6

The school will have regard to the HSCP Guidance on the Transfer of a Child Protection /or Safeguarding File to another Education Setting. Where a child leaves the school, the DSL will ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible (within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term). The file will be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

16. Managing allegations made against teachers, including supply and trainee teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors

The school will follow the HSCP Managing allegations against staff and volunteers if a safeguarding concern or allegation is raised against an adult in a position of trust.

An allegation that may meet the harm threshold is any information which indicates that a member of staff /volunteer may have:

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

This applies to any child the member of staff, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor has contact with in their personal, professional or community life. It also applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in our school.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold will be dealt with in accordance with the school's policy for managing low-level concerns.

If any member of staff has concerns that a colleague, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor might pose a risk to children, it is their duty to report these to the Head of School., who will consider whether an onward referral to the LADO is required, Where the concerns or allegations are about the Head of School, these should be referred to the Chair of Governors.

The Head of School/Chair of Governors should report the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day. The referral should be made via MASH using the MASH referral form.

17. Use of school premises for non-school activities

The governing body will ensure that where school facilities/premises are hired or rented out to organisations or individuals, sports associations or service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

The governing body will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed. Arrangements will also be put in place for the body hiring or renting the school facilities or premises to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

These arrangements will apply regardless of whether or not the children who attend any of these services or activities are children on the school roll.

Where a lease or hire agreement is entered into the governing body/proprietor will ensure safeguarding requirements are included as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; this will make clear that any failure to comply would lead to termination of the agreement. The guidance on Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings details the safeguarding arrangements that schools and colleges should expect these providers to have in place.

18. Whistleblowing

The governing body/proprietor recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example, pupils in the school or members of the public.

The governing body/proprietor would wish for everyone in the school community to feel able to report any child protection/safeguarding concerns through existing procedures within school, including the whistleblowing procedure adopted by governors/proprietor where necessary, see Harrow Whistleblowing-Policy However, for members of staff who do not feel able to raise such concerns internally, there is a NSPCC Report abuse in education whistleblowing helpline 0800 136 663 (line available from 8.00am to 8.00pm, Monday to Friday, 09:00am to 6pm at weekends.) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

19. Useful Contacts:

Harrow Children's Social Care & Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	'Golden Number': 020 8901 2690 Emergency Duty Team: weekends, bank holidays and between 5pm-9am during the week: 020 8424 0999
Brent Children's Social Care & Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	'Golden Number': 020 8937 4300 Emergency Duty Team: weekends, bank holidays and between 5pm-9am during the week: tel:02088635250
Ealing Children's Social Care & Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	'Golden Number': 020 8825 8000
Police	101 or for emergency: 999
FGM - Mandatory reporting	Police on 101
Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations against staff (LADO)	Initial referrals via MASH/Golden Number LADO: Lado@harrow.gov.uk
Children and Young People with Disabilities 0-25 years	020 8966 6481
Local multi-agency procedures, guidance and Training: Harrow Safeguarding Children Partnership	www.harrowscb.co.uk/
NSPCC	0800 800 5000
Report Abuse in Education NSPCC Helpline	0800 136 663
Childline	0800 1111
Government's Whistle-blowing Service via NSPCC Report Line	0800 028 0285
Forced Marriage Unit	Tel: 020 7008 0151 From overseas: +44(0)20 7008 0151 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) Out of hours: 020 7008 1500 (ask for Global Response Centre) Email: fmu@fco.gov.uk
Support and Advice about Extremism DfE helpline (non-emergency advice for staff and governors)	Tel: 020 7340 7264 Email: counterextremism@education.gsi.gov.uk
Disclosure and Barring Service	Tel: 03000 200 190 Email: customerservices@dbs.gov.uk
Teaching Regulation Authority	Tel: 020 7593 5392 Email: misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk