

HEBBURN

Comprehensive School



WORK HARD | BE KIND | ASPIRE

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Review Period	Annual		
Date of next review	Autumn term 2025	Author(s)	D Thompson / S Burdis
Type of Policy	Statutory	Approval	Governing Body
Signed by:			
Head Teacher	Mr D Thompson	Date: 03 October 2024	
Chair of Governors	Mr G Thompson	Date: 03 October 2024	

Statement of intent

At Hebburn Comprehensive School we are fully committed to safeguarding children and young people, and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. We implement a whole-school, child-centred approach to managing safeguarding concerns, ensuring that the wellbeing of pupils is always our main priority. We have rigorous systems in place to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils, working closely with outside agencies, to ensure a robust, multi-agency approach.

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

- Ensuring that members of the Governing Board, the Head Teacher and staff understand their roles and responsibilities are alert to the signs of child abuse and know to refer concerns to the DSL and DDSs.
- Teaching pupils how to keep safe and recognise behaviour that is unacceptable.
- Identifying and making provision for any pupil that has been subject to, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Creating a culture of safer recruitment by adopting procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk to children.
- Ensuring that new staff and volunteers are only appointed when all the appropriate checks have been satisfactorily completed.

The DSL is Mrs Sinéad Burdis.

The Deputy DSLs are Mark Bingham and Chloe Bellas.

The Safeguarding and Attendance Support Worker is Anne Young.

The Head Teacher is David Thompson.

The Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Link Governor is Wendy Stead

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'The Prevent duty'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024' (September)
- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- HM Government (2021) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting vulnerable people to being drawn into terrorism'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2022) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage'

Non-statutory guidance

- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'
- DfE (2018) 'Information sharing'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2022) 'Recruiting teachers from overseas'
- Department of Health and Social Care (2022) 'Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Prevent Duty Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- LAC Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Allegations Management Procedure
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy

Roles and responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to:

- Consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the pupil.
- Maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here', in relation to safeguarding.
- Provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn.
- Be prepared to identify pupils who may benefit from early help.
- Be aware of the school's systems which support safeguarding, including any policies, procedures, information and training provided upon induction.
- Be aware of the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs.
- Undertake safeguarding training, including online safety training, during their induction – this will be regularly updated.
- Receive and understand child protection and safeguarding (including online safety) updates, e.g. via email, as required, and at least annually.
- Undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) which is regularly updated.
- Undertake safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email and/or staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- Be aware of the local early help process and understand their role in it.
- Support social workers in making decisions about individual children, in collaboration with the DSL.
- Be aware of and understand the procedure to follow in the event that a child confides they are being abused, exploited or neglected.
- Be aware that a pupil may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or may not recognise their experiences as harmful.
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases.
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, that they will be supported, and that they will be kept safe.
- Speak to the DSL if they are unsure about how to handle safeguarding matters.
- Be aware of safeguarding issues that can put pupils at risk of harm (both online and offline).
- Be aware of behaviours that could potentially be a sign that a pupil may be at risk of harm.

Teachers, including the Head Teacher, have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard pupils' wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties, as outlined in the 'Teachers' Standards'.

All training in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people will create an ethos that:

- is child-centred;
- promotes the participation of children and families in the processes;
- values working collaboratively with multi-agencies;
- respects diversity and promotes equality.

All staff at Hebburn Comprehensive School have undertaken specific online training on how to spot signs of abuse, neglect or maltreatment.

The Governing Board has a duty to:

- Take strategic leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Ensure that the school complies with its duties under the above child protection and safeguarding legislation.
- Guarantee that the policies, procedures and training opportunities in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- Guarantee that the school contributes to multi-agency working in line with the statutory guidance '[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)'.
- Confirm that the school's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practices of the LA as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures.
- Understand the local criteria for action and the local protocol for assessment, and ensure these are reflected in the school's policies and procedures.
- Comply with its obligations under section 14B of the Children Act 2004 to supply the local safeguarding arrangements with information to fulfil its functions.
- Ensure that staff working directly with children read at least Part one of KCSIE.
- Ensure that staff who do not work directly with children read either Part one or Annex A of KCSIE.
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities in regard to safeguarding children.
- Ensure a senior board level lead takes leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements.
- Appoint a member of staff from the SLT to the role of DSL as an explicit part of the role-holder's job description.
- Appoint one or more deputy DSLs to provide support to the DSL, and ensure that they are trained to the same standard as the DSL and that the role is explicit in their job descriptions.
- Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding; this includes ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.
- Ensure systems are in place, children to confidently report abuse, knowing that their concerns will be treated seriously, and they can safely express their views and give feedback; these systems will be well-promoted, easily understood, and easily accessible.
- Ensure that staff have due regard to relevant data protection principles that allow them to share and withhold personal information.
- Ensure that a member of the Governing Board is nominated to liaise with the LA and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Head Teacher or another governor.
- Guarantee that there are effective and appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Ensure all relevant persons are aware of the school's local safeguarding arrangements, including the governing board itself, the SLT and DSL.

- Make sure that pupils are taught about safeguarding, including protection against dangers online (including when they are online at home), through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Review the filtering and monitoring standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support schools and colleges in meeting the standard.
- Ensure they are doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the risks from the school's or college's IT system.
- Ensure the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness.
- Ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.
- Consider the number of and age range of their children, those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system along with the proportionality of costs versus safeguarding risks.
- Adhere to statutory responsibilities by conducting pre-employment checks on staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained to support pupils to be themselves at school, e.g. if they are LGBTQ+.
- Ensure the school has clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health issues in pupils, including clear routes to escalate concerns and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Guarantee that volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- Make sure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Ensure that all staff receive safeguarding and child protection training updates, e.g. emails, as required, but at least annually.
- Ensure that all governors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training upon their induction and that this training is updated regularly.
- Certify that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Confirm that there are procedures in place to make a referral to the DBS and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), where appropriate, if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned.
- Guarantee that there are procedures in place to handle pupils' allegations against other pupils.
- Ensure that appropriate disciplinary procedures are in place, as well as policies pertaining to the behaviour of pupils and staff.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, including those in relation to child-on-child abuse.
- Guarantee that there are systems in place for pupils to express their views and give feedback.
- Establish an early help procedure and ensure all staff understand the procedure and their role in it.
- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of LAC and ensure that this person has undergone appropriate training.
- Ensure that the designated teacher works with the VSH to discuss how the pupil premium funding can best be used to support LAC.

- Introduce mechanisms to assist staff in understanding and discharging their roles and responsibilities.
- Make sure that staff members have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep LAC safe, particularly with regard to the pupil's legal status, contact details and care arrangements.
- Put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for pupils who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify any risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and prevent the risk of their disappearance in future.
- Ensure that all members of the governing board have been subject to an enhanced DBS check.
- Create a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
- Be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

The Head Teacher has a duty to:

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

The DSL has a duty to:

- Take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety **and** understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place).
- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding 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, and/or support other staff to do so.
- During term time, be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Arrange, alongside the school, adequate and appropriate cover for any activities outside of school hours or terms.
- Refer cases:
 - To Children's Services where abuse, neglect and exploitation are suspected, and support staff who make referrals to Children's Services.
 - To the Channel programme where radicalisation concerns arise, and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
 - To the DBS where a person is dismissed or has left due to harm, or risk of harm, to a child.
 - To the police where a crime may have been committed, in line with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) guidance.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners.
- Liaise with the Head Teacher to inform them of issues, especially regarding ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Liaise with the deputy DSLs to ensure effective safeguarding outcomes.
- Liaise with the case manager and the LA designated Officers (LADOs) for child protection concerns in cases concerning staff.
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare, including online and digital safety.

- Liaise with staff when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Work with the Head Teacher and relevant safeguarding leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on their attendance, engagement and achievement at school. This includes:
 - Ensuring that the school knows which pupils have or had a social worker.
 - Understanding the academic progress and attainment of these pupils.
 - Maintaining a culture of high aspirations for these pupils.
 - Supporting teachers to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help these pupils reach their potential.
 - Helping to promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues these pupils are experiencing with teachers and the SLT.
- Ensure that child protection files are kept up-to-date and only accessed by those who need to do so.
- Ensure that a pupil's child protection file is transferred as soon as possible, and within five days, when transferring to a new school, and consider any additional information that should be shared.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures – this will be discussed during the staff induction process.
- Work with the governing board to ensure the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually, and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available publicly, and parents are aware that the school may make referrals for suspected cases of abuse, neglect or exploitation, as well as the role the school plays in these referrals.
- Undergo training and update this training at least every two years.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings; this includes understanding the difficulties pupils may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and considering how to build trusted relationships that facilitate communication.
- Support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters: specifically, to ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes; and to support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, including within school, with other schools, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- 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

- The designated teacher has a responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC, and for children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

At Hebburn Comprehensive we will:

- have a staff body who are committed to children's and young people's welfare and safety;
- be clear about people's responsibilities to safeguard and promote children's and young people's welfare;
- check that there are no known reasons or information available that would prevent staff and volunteers from working with children and young people;
- have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers;
- make sure staff receive training that helps them do their job effectively;
- have robust procedures about how to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people;
- have agreements and protocols for working with other organisations.

For those children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, joint working is essential to safeguard and promote their welfare and, where necessary, to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children.

ABUSE, NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION

The DfE's statutory guidance defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action will be taken to protect that child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are not at immediate risk.

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

For the purposes of this policy, "**abuse**" is defined as a form of maltreatment of a child which involves inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as

the impact of witnessing the 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, institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others, e.g. via the internet. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by one or multiple adults or other children.

For the purposes of this policy, “**physical abuse**” is defined as a form of abuse which may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse can also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

For the purposes of this policy, “**emotional abuse**” is defined as the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, such as interactions that are beyond their developmental capability, overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, including cyberbullying, causing the child to frequently 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, but it may also occur alone.

For the purposes of this policy, “**sexual abuse**” is defined as abuse that involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, and regardless of whether the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration, or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by people of any gender and age.

For the purposes of this policy, “**neglect**” is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child’s health or development. This may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child with adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision (including through the use of inappropriate caregivers); or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

As a result of training, all staff will be aware of the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school, inside and outside of home, and online. All staff will be aware that abuse, neglect and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be given a specific label, and multiple issues often overlap one another; therefore, staff will be vigilant and always raise concerns with the DSL. All staff, especially the DSL and deputy DSLs, will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school and/or can occur between children outside of these environments; this includes being aware that pupils can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families (extra-familial harms). All staff will be aware of the

appropriate action to take following a pupil being identified as at potential risk of abuse and, in all cases, will speak to the DSL if they are unsure.

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

There are four main elements to our policy:

1. **PREVENTION:** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a whole-school protective ethos.
2. **PROCEDURES:** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
3. **SUPPORT FOR PUPILS:** who may have been subjected to abuse or neglect.
4. **RECRUITMENT:** preventing unsuitable people working with children and young people.

Our policy applies to all staff (teaching and support) and to all volunteers working in the school, including community education staff and governors. Any member of staff, regardless of role, can be the first point of disclosure for a child. Concerned parents may also contact school governors or the Designated Child Protection Officers, **Mrs S Burdis, Mr M Bingham or Miss C Bellas**, via the school, on 0191 4833199.

1. PREVENTION

1.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult all help prevention.

1.2 The school will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel safe, happy and secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include, in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help.
- Ensure that when children use the school's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems which are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness. Many pupils are able to access the internet using their own data plan. To minimise inappropriate use, as a school we ensure that children are taught about how they can keep themselves and others safe, including online and the 4C's (Content/Contact/Conduct/Commerce). To be effective, we present this information in an age-appropriate way. We are sensitive to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs or disabilities.

- Include, in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life.

2. PROCEDURES

2.1 As a school, we will follow the procedures set out in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: *advice for practitioners*' (DFE March 2015).

2.2 The school will:

- Ensure it has a designated senior member of staff and deputies, who have both undertaken appropriate in-depth training, updated at least biennially. This will include training on CSE, FGM and extremism and radicalisation.
- Continue to recognise the huge importance of the role of the designated teacher and deputies and arrange support and training.
- Ensure that there are contingency arrangements, should neither the designated member of staff nor the deputy be available.
- Ensure that the designated members of staff will take advice from a Child Protection specialist when managing complex cases.

2.3 Ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:

- The name of the designated person and deputies and their roles.
- How to contact the LADO.
- That they have an individual responsibility for referring Child Protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales set out by the South Tyneside **Safeguarding Children and Adults Partnership (STSCAP)**
- Procedures and any other related guidance are located.

2.4 Provide training for all staff from the point of their induction, and ensure it is updated every three years at a minimum, so that they know:

- Their personal responsibility;
- The best practice in procedures;
- The need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse;
- How to support and to respond to a child who makes a disclosure.

2.5 Undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers, prior to involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances preclude this. For example, if an alleged abuser is a parent or carer, alerting him/her may place the child at further risk.

2.6 Notify the local Children's Services Duty team and Services for Young People if:

- It should have to exclude a pupil made subject of a Child Protection Plan (whether fixed-term or permanently).

2.7 Notify Services for Young People immediately if:

- A pupil subject to a Child Protection Plan is absent from school for more than one day without an explanation.

2.8 The school will:

- Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding Child Protection matters, including prioritising attendance at, and providing written reports for, Initial Case Conferences, Core Groups and Child Protection Review Conferences.
- Keep clear, detailed written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children's Services immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations which are fire-proof.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner, in accordance with the agreed Whistle Blowing Policy.

In line with our NSPCC training, all staff should follow the principles set out below:

RECOGNISE

Signs of possible abuse could include but is not limited to:

- Unexplained changed in behaviour or personality
- Becoming withdrawn
- Seeming anxious
- Becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- Lacks social skills and has few friends if any
- Poor bond or relationship with a parent

- Knowledge of adult issues inappropriate from their age
- Running away or going missing
- Always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body

RESPOND

- Be calm and receptive
- Listen carefully without interrupting
- Repeat back to the young person what they have said for clarification
- Keep your response neutral and do not say what you think about the abuser
- Be aware of your non-verbal communication
- Take the young person seriously
- Not all children will tell someone what is happening to them, so if you see or hear anything that could be a concern for them, you must respond quickly.

REASSURE

- Acknowledge the young person's courage and reassure them
- Let the young person know that you are going to do everything you can to help them and that you will need to tell the nominated child protection lead about what you have been told.
- You must never promise confidentiality.

REPORT

- If the matter is urgent, pass on the information to the DSL / DDDL immediately.
- Send an email to safeguarding@hebburn.net and record in the safeguarding section of Bromcom.
- Understand that the Head Teacher, DSL or DDSL in school will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff **on a need to know basis only**.
- Recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children/young people and know that those concerns will be:
 - addressed
 - managed sensitively and effectively
 - dealt with in a timely manner
 - dealt with in accordance with schools agreed policies/practices, including the Whistleblowing Policy
- Understand that if they have a concern about another adult in school (including agency workers, volunteers, governors, other staff/adults – including but not limited to Local Authority, Health, etc)

they must refer the matter to the Head Teacher (contact details are noted at the end of this document). Where the concerns are about the Head Teacher, they should refer the matter to Chair of Governors (contact details are noted at the end of this document).

- Ensure that staff are able to recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and ensure that the child protection arrangements in school have in place procedures to minimise the risk of child on child abuse and how such allegations are managed.

RECORD

- Record your observations, concerns and actions taken using the school's agreed reporting procedures in Bromcom. Include any actions you have taken
- Ensure any statements you have written are dated and signed.

Gathering Information Following an Incident

It is important to speak to all pupils involved separately and obtain statements of facts from them. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask pupils to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the pupil to gain clarity with open questions. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?). Do not use leading questions and do not promise confidentiality.

3. Supporting the Pupil at Risk

3.1 We recognise that children who are abused, suffer neglect or who witness violence, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self-blame.

3.2 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may be withdrawn.

3.3 We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred for appropriate support and intervention.

3.4 The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- The content of the curriculum, to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos, which (i) promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and (ii) gives pupils a sense of belonging and being valued.

- The school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting all pupils in the school, including those deemed vulnerable. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the child, but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth. The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other pupil support agencies, such as Children's Services (embracing Social Care & Health), Children and Young People's Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services, Matrix, the Emotional Resilience Team and the Young Carers' Team.
- A commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in a pupil's best interest to do so.
- Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse are vulnerable and in need of support and protection.
- Recognition that both mental and physical health are relevant to safeguarding and the welfare of children.
- Monitoring, with vigilance, children's welfare, keeping records and notifying Children's Services as soon as there is any recurrence of a concern.

4. Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children

4.1 The school will operate Safer Recruitment practices, including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to government guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2022). In addition, as part of the shortlisting process school will carry out an online search as part of their due diligence on shortlisted candidates, as outlined in KCSiE, 2023. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview. School will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.

4.2 The school will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Child Protection, in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in the Education Child Protection Procedures, STSCB procedures and the school's Procedures, based on recommendations from the Local Authority, for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse made against Staff.

4.3 The school will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to Child Protection matters are concluded in full, even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the school and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

4.4 The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents.

4.5 The school will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that relationships of a sexual nature with pupils aged 18 or under are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust).

Safer Recruitment

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

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

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

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

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

All schools must ensure they have in place safe recruitment policies and practices, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all staff, including agency staff, students and volunteers working with children and young people. It is a criminal offence to employ knowingly a person who has been barred from working in posts which involve caring for or treating children.

Statutory legislation makes Child Protection responsibilities clear and gives governors, as employers, the ability to dismiss or otherwise discipline Head Teachers and teachers who fail in this duty. In Hebburn Comprehensive School, it is fully accepted that all adults carry a duty of care and responsibility within the remit of safeguarding and protecting children and young people and that a failure in duty of care by any member of staff could result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal from employment.

Please read our separate Safer Recruitment Policy for further details: [HCS-Safer-Recruitment-Policy.pdf \(hebburn.net\)](#)

Single Central Record (SCR)

Consensual and non-consensual sharing of indecent images and videos

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

Staff will receive appropriate training around how to deal with instances of sharing nudes and semi-nudes in the school community, including understanding motivations, assessing risks posed to pupils depicted in the images, and how and when to report instances of this behaviour.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of an incidence of sharing nudes and/or semi-nudes, they will refer this to the DSL as soon as possible.

Serious Violence

Through training, all staff will be made aware of the indicators which may signal a pupil is at risk from, or is involved with, serious violent crime. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- Increased absence from school.
- A change in friendships.
- Relationships with older individuals or groups.
- A significant decline in academic performance.
- Signs of self-harm.
- A significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions.

Staff will be made aware of some of the most significant risk factors that could increase a pupil's vulnerability to becoming involved in serious violence. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Having been frequently absent from school.
- Having been permanently excluded from school.
- Having experienced child maltreatment.
- Having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Staff members who suspect a pupil may be vulnerable to, or involved in, serious violent crime will immediately report their concerns to the DSL.

The school will be aware that the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act will introduce a new duty on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, to share data and information, and put plans in place to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Schools will be under a separate duty to cooperate with core duty holders when asked, and the school will ensure arrangements are in place to do so.

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are 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 behaviour or progress; GDPR
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing;
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries;
- unexplained gifts or new possessions (this could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs).

Mental Health

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

Staff will not attempt to make a diagnosis of mental health problems. The school will ensure this is done by a trained mental health professional. Staff will, however, be encouraged to identify pupils whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem or may be at risk of developing one. Staff will also be aware of how pupils' experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Staff who have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern will act in line with this policy and speak to the DSL or deputy DSLs.

The school will access a range of advice to help them identify pupils in need of additional mental health support, including working with external agencies.

In all cases of mental health difficulties, the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy will be consulted and adhered to at all times.

Concerns about pupils

Adults in our school will take all welfare concerns seriously and we encourage children and young people to talk to us about any concerns they may have. We will always act in the best interest of the child.

If a member of staff has any concern about a pupil's welfare, or a pupil has reported a safeguarding concern in relation to themselves or a peer, they will act on this immediately and will, without delay, inform the DSL or deputy DSLs.

Staff will be aware that pupils may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Staff will be aware that this must not prevent them from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL, or deputy DSL, if they have a concern about a pupil.

All staff members are aware of the procedure for reporting concerns and understand their responsibilities in relation to confidentiality and information sharing.

Where the DSL is not available to discuss the concern with, staff members will contact the Deputy DSLs with the matter.

The LA will make a decision regarding what action is required within one working day of the referral being made and will notify the referrer. The DSL/DDSLs are required to monitor a referral if they do not receive information from the LA regarding what action is necessary for the pupil. If the situation does not improve after a referral, the DSL will ask for reconsideration to ensure that their concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the pupil.

If Early Help is appropriate, the case will be kept under constant review. If the pupil's situation does not improve, a referral will be considered. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, as well as the reasons for making those decisions, will be recorded in writing by the DSL and kept securely.

If a pupil is in immediate danger, a referral will be made to Children's Services and/or the police immediately. If a pupil has committed a crime, such as sexual violence, the police will be notified without delay.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, the school will ensure that the pupil's wishes are always taken into account, and that there are systems available for pupils to provide feedback and express their views. When responding to safeguarding concerns, staff members will act calmly and supportively, ensuring that the pupil feels like they are being listened to and believed.

An inter-agency assessment will be undertaken where a child and their family could benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency. These assessments will identify what help the child and family require in preventing needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed.

Allegations Against Staff

Please see a copy of our separate Allegations management Procedure: [HCS-Allegation-Management-Procedures.pdf \(hebburn.net\)](#)

Serious Concerns

The school recognises that children may abuse their peers physically, sexually and emotionally; this will not be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. The school will take this as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult, and will address it through the same processes as any safeguarding issue. We also recognise that children who abuse others are also likely to have considerable safeguarding needs themselves.

Child-on-child abuse may be a one-off serious incident or an accumulation of incidents. In all cases, the member of staff should discuss the concerns and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Mrs Burdis / Mr Bingham (DDSL) / Miss Bellas (DDSL).

When an allegation is made by a pupil/student against another pupil/student, members of staff should consider if the issues raised indicate that the child and /or alleged perpetrator may have emerging needs, complex/serious needs or any child protection concerns.

Any suspicion or allegations that a child has been sexually abused or is likely to sexually abuse another child (or adult) should be referred immediately to Mrs Burdis (DSL), Mr Bingham (DDSL) or Miss Bellas (DDSL).

Whenever there is an allegation of abuse made against a child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and other appropriate staff will draw together robust risk assessments and action plans to support the victim and the perpetrator. Where Children's Social Care is involved or an early help assessment is opened, this will be agreed as part of a multi-agency plan.

If a member of staff has any concern about a pupil's welfare, or a pupil has reported a safeguarding concern in relation to themselves or a peer, they will act on them immediately by speaking to the DSL or deputy DSLs.

Staff will be aware that pupils may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. Staff will be aware that this must not prevent them from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL, or deputy DSL, if they have a concern about a pupil.

All staff members are aware of the procedure for reporting concerns and understand their responsibilities in relation to confidentiality and information sharing.

Where the DSL is not available to discuss the concern with, staff members will contact the deputy DSLs with the matter. If a referral is made about a pupil by anyone other than the DSL, the DSL will be informed as soon as possible.

The LA will make a decision regarding what action is required within one working day of the referral being made and will notify the referrer. Staff are required to monitor a referral if they do not receive information from the LA regarding what action is necessary for the pupil. If the situation does not improve after a referral, the DSL will ask for reconsideration to ensure that their concerns have been addressed and that the situation improves for the pupil.

If early help is appropriate, the case will be kept under constant review. If the pupil's situation does not improve, a referral will be considered. All concerns, discussions and decisions made, as well as the reasons for making those decisions, will be recorded in writing by the DSL and kept securely in the child's safeguarding records.

If a pupil is in immediate danger, a referral will be made to Children's Services and/or the police immediately. If a pupil has committed a crime, such as sexual violence, the police will be notified without delay.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, the school will ensure that the pupil's wishes are always taken into account, and that there are systems available for pupils to provide feedback and express their views. When responding to safeguarding concerns, staff members will act calmly and supportively, ensuring that the pupil feels like they are being listened to and believed.

An inter-agency assessment will be undertaken where a child and their family could benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency. These assessments will identify what help the child and family require in preventing needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed.

Deciding on Your Next Course of Action

If, from the information gathered, you believe that a pupil may be at risk of significant harm a safeguarding referral must be made immediately to Mrs Burdis, Mr Bingham or Miss Bellas must be made immediately (where a crime has been committed the police will be informed by them).

The incident will be dealt with following the procedures outlined in the school's behaviour policy.

Appropriate support for both the victim and the perpetrator will be put in place.

Managing referrals

All staff members, in particular the DSL, will be aware of the LA's arrangements in place for managing referrals. The DSL will provide staff members with clarity and support where needed. When making a referral to Children's Services or other external agencies, information will be shared in line with confidentiality requirements and will only be shared where necessary to do so.

The DSL will work alongside external agencies, maintaining continuous liaison, including multi-agency liaison where appropriate, in order to ensure the wellbeing of the pupils involved. The DSL will work closely with the police to ensure the school does not jeopardise any criminal proceedings, and to obtain help and support as necessary.

Where a pupil has been harmed or is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the referrer will be notified of the action that will be taken within one working day of a referral being made. Where this information is not forthcoming, the referrer will contact the assigned social worker for more information.

The school will not wait for the start or outcome of an investigation before protecting the victim and other pupils: this applies to criminal investigations as well as those made by Children's Services. Where Children's Services decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate, the school will consider referring the incident again if it is believed that the pupil is at risk of harm. Where Children's Services decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate and the school agrees with this decision, the school will consider the use of other support mechanisms, such as early help and pastoral support.

At all stages of the reporting and referral process, the pupil will be informed of the decisions made, actions taken and reasons for doing so. Discussions of concerns with parents will only take place where this would not put the pupil or others at potential risk of harm. The school will work closely with parents to ensure that the pupil, as well as their family, understands the arrangements in place, such as in-school interventions, is effectively supported, and knows where they can access additional support.

Concerns about school safeguarding practices

Any concerns regarding the safeguarding practices at the school will be raised with the SLT, and the necessary whistleblowing procedures will be followed, as outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the SLT, they should access other whistleblowing channels such as the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (0800 028 0285).

Safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse against staff

All allegations against staff, supply staff, volunteers and contractors will be managed in line with the school's Allegations management Procedure, a copy of which will be provided to, and understood by, all staff. The school will ensure all allegations against staff, including those who are not employees of the school, are dealt with appropriately and that the school liaises with the relevant parties.

When managing allegations against staff, the school will recognise the distinction between allegations that meet the harms threshold and allegations that do not, also known as "low-level concerns", as defined in the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy. Allegations that meet the harms threshold include instances where staff have:

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

Low-level concerns will be handled in line with the school's Allegations Management Procedures.

Child-on-Child Abuse

For the purposes of this policy, "**child-on-child abuse**" is defined as abuse between children.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including child-on-child abuse, as confirmed in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy's [statement of intent](#).

All staff will be aware that child-on-child abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of child-on-child abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that child-on-child abuse is not occurring. All staff will speak to the DSL when they have any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

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

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

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers – sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse'.
- Physical abuse – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.

- Sexual violence – this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Up-skirting.
- Initiation- and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group, and may also include an online element.

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

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

The school's procedures for managing allegations of child-on-child abuse are outlined in the Child-on-child Abuse Policy. Staff will follow these procedures, as well as the procedures outlined in the school's Anti-bullying Policy and Suspension and Exclusion Policy, where relevant.

Multi-Agency Working

The school contributes to multi-agency working as part of its statutory duty. The school is aware of and will follow the local safeguarding arrangements.

The school will be fully engaged, involved, and included in local safeguarding arrangements. Once the school is named as a relevant agency by local safeguarding partners, it will follow its statutory duty to cooperate with the published arrangements in the same way as other relevant agencies. The school will act in accordance with the safeguarding arrangements.

The school will work with Children's Services, the police, health services and other services to protect the welfare of its pupils, through the early help process and by contributing to multi-agency plans to provide additional support.

Where a need for early help is identified, the school will allow access for Children's Services from the host LA and, where appropriate, a placing LA, for that LA to conduct (or consider whether to conduct) a section 17 or 47 assessment.

The school also recognises the particular importance of inter-agency working in identifying and preventing CSE.

Looked after Children

Governing bodies of maintained schools must appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after (LAC) and to ensure that this person has appropriate training. Our designated teacher is **Mrs S Burdis**, who is also the designated Child Protection Officer.

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is abuse and/or neglect. As a school, we will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for keeping looked after children safe. We will ensure that the 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 contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. We will ensure that we have the correct information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

The designated safeguarding lead/designated teacher for looked after children will have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child

Please read our separate LAC Policy for further details: [HCS-LAC-Policy.pdf \(hebburn.net\)](#)

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse, neglect and exploitation, or be involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Schools have a mandatory duty to report to the local authority where they are aware or suspect that a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. Although schools have a duty to inform the local authority, there is no duty for anyone, including the private foster carer or social workers to inform the school. However, it should be clear to the school who has parental responsibility.

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the family of the child involved to check that

they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

On admission to the school, we will take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child who is being registered.

Children who are absent from education

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Schools are aware that children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. For this reason there will be a robust response to persistently absent pupils and children with unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education. School will take a multi-agency approach, where required.

Children Missing from Education

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have at least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022 and 2023) the school has:

1. Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly.
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
3. Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.
4. Staff are aware that since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used.
5. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils 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.

Adding Pupils to the Admissions Register

When we add a pupil to their admission register, we will add the expected start date. If the pupil subsequently does not arrive as expected the school will notify the local authority at the earliest opportunity to prevent the child from 'going missing from education'.

The school will notify the local authority, within five days, when a pupil's name is added to the admission register and will provide all the information held within the admission register about the pupil.

Informing the Local Authority when a Pupil Leaves

When a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register, the school will inform the local authority and supply the following information:

- The full name of the pupil.
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives.
- At least one telephone number of the parent with whom the pupil lives.
- If applicable, the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there.
- The name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the grounds under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

When a pupil leaves the school, the admission register must also record:

- The name of the pupil's new school; and
- the expected start date at the new school.

Where Information is Missing

The school will inform the local authority where they have been unable to obtain the necessary information from the parent, for example, when the child's destination school or address is unknown.

Early Help

Early Help is defined as support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.

Early Help is taking action to support a vulnerable child, young person or family as soon as an issue emerges or a specific need is identified. It can be required at any stage in a child's life from pre-birth to adulthood, and applies to any problem or need that a family cannot deal with, or meet, on their own. The aim of an early help assessment/plan is to intervene early and avoid a problem from escalating to a serious concern at a later date.

Effective Early Help will ensure better outcomes for children and families and should resolve problems before they become overwhelming, enabling children to achieve positive outcomes in school.

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

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Any pupil may benefit from early help, but in particular, staff will be alert to the potential need for early help for pupils who:

- Are disabled, have certain health conditions, or have specific additional needs.
- Have SEND, regardless of whether they have a statutory EHC plan.
- Have mental health needs.
- Are young carers.
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Are frequently missing or going missing from care or from home.
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or sexual or criminal exploitation.
- Are at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for them, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems, or domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects.
- Misuse drugs or alcohol.
- Have returned home to their family from care.
- Are at risk of HBA, such as FGM or forced marriage.
- Are privately fostered.

- Are persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.
- Show early signs of abuse and/or neglect in other ways.
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded and in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit.
- Has a parent or carer in custody (previously it was 'family member in prison'), or is affected by parental offending
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care.

The Early Help Assessment (EHA) tool (also known as Common Assessment Framework) is a national standardised approach that can be used across all services working with children, young people and their families to offer early intervention.

The assessment is designed to be shared between professionals and used as a starting point for planning a response for support. The assessment process is underpinned by collaborative partnership working with families and children.

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) places a statutory responsibility on all agencies to comply with, and work together, to:

- identify children who would benefit from an Early Help assessment;
- offer early help to parents to ensure positive outcomes for the child;
- keep children with families and reduce the need for statutory services.

Procedures

If any early help assessment is identified, staff should follow the procedures outlined below:

- Obtain the consent of the child/parent/carer to start the Early Help Assessment process.
- Discuss with the child/young person/parent/carer, the reasons for starting the Early Help Assessment process, what it will mean to them and what they can expect.
- The first contact is critical to successful engagement (a supportive discussion about the assessment and how it can help).
- Offer a time and a venue to hold the meeting.
- Positive and persistent offers of help should be made to parents/carers.
- Ensure that language that the child/ parent/carer can understand is used (no professional jargon).
- Complete, as far as possible, the initial Early Help Assessment.

- It is essential that the child's and parents'/carers' thoughts and words, as well as the person leading the plan, are in the assessment, as this is evidence of their involvement.
- Ensure that all key adults who are important in the young person's life are included in the assessment. Where necessary, consent must be given by parent/carer to contact other family members directly.
- Identify any relevant issues and draw up a plan of action with them.
- Identify with the child/young person/parent/carer which professionals may be able to help.
- Arrange an initial meeting with the child/young person/parent/carer and the identified professionals/agencies.
- Ensure that families are fully involved in the process and not just 'agreeing' to what professionals have said. The child/young person and family's comments should be included in the paperwork.
- At the meeting identify with the parent who will be the lead professional and who will have overall responsibility, ensuring that review dates and venues are organised, and all professionals are informed.
- Complete the Early Help Assessment Action Plan, ensuring that the process is child-centered,
- Decide on a date and time for the next review meeting
- Register the Early Help Assessment with the EHAT Team at the LA.
- The assessment will be reviewed and actions updated until a plan is no longer needed. The team will decide to close the Early Help plan when they are satisfied that the child's/family's needs can be met by universal services.
- When all outcomes are achieved, the Early Help Assessment can be closed
- If an Early Help Assessment needs to 'Step Up' after a review (outcomes worsening) contact the EHAT team using the single contact form.
- If the level of need reduces and a decision is taken to 'step down' from a child protection plan/child in need plan to an Early Help Assessment, the Social Worker/Child and Family Worker from Children's Services will register the Early Help Assessment and advise the EHAT team of the co-ordinator.

Online safety and personal electronic devices

The school will adhere to the Online Safety Policy at all times.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all pupils will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online.

Through training, all staff members will be made aware of:

- Pupil attitudes and behaviours which may indicate they are at risk of potential harm online.
- The procedure to follow when they have a concern regarding a pupil's online activity.

Filtering and Monitoring

The DSL will ensure that robust systems are in place in relation to filtering and monitoring and they will check internal procedures against the filtering and monitoring standards set out by the DfE.

The school will:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

The school will ensure that suitable filtering systems are in place on ICT equipment to prevent children accessing inappropriate material, in accordance with the school's Cyber-security Policy. The school will, however, ensure that the use of filtering and monitoring systems does not cause "over blocking", which may lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what pupils can be taught online.

Staff will be aware of the filtering systems in place and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified.

Further information regarding the school's approach to online safety can be found in the Online Safety Policy.

Communicating with parents

As part of the usual communication with parents, the school will reinforce the importance of pupils being safe online and inform parents that they will find it helpful to understand what systems the school uses to filter and monitor online use.

The school will also make it clear to parents what their children are being asked to do online for school.

Reviewing online safety

The school will carry out an annual review of its approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by pupils.

Personal electronic devices

The use of personal electronic devices, including mobile phones and cameras, by staff and pupils is closely monitored by the school.

Photographs and videos of pupils will be carefully planned before any activity with particular regard to consent and adhering to the school's Data Protection Policy.

Where photographs and videos will involve pupils who are LAC, adopted pupils, or pupils for whom there are security concerns, the Head Teacher will liaise with the DSL to determine the steps involved. The DSL will, in known cases of pupils who are LAC or who have been adopted, liaise with the pupils' social workers, carers or adoptive parents to assess the needs and risks associated with the pupils.

Staff will report any concerns about pupils' or other staff members' use of personal electronic devices to the DSL, following the appropriate procedures.

Alternative provision

The school will remain responsible for a pupil's welfare during their time at an alternative provider. When placing a pupil with an alternative provider, the school will obtain written confirmation that the provider has conducted all relevant safeguarding checks on staff. School must be satisfied that the provision meets the needs of students who attend.

Work experience

When a pupil is sent on work experience, the school will ensure that the provider has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Where the school has pupils conduct work experience at the school, an enhanced DBS check will be obtained if the pupil is over the age of 16.

School-arranged homestays in UK

Where the school is arranging for a visiting child to be provided with care and accommodation in the UK in the home of a family to which the child is not related, the responsible adults are considered to be in regulated activity for the period of the stay. In such cases, the school is the regulated activity provider; therefore, the school will obtain all the necessary information required, including a DBS enhanced certificate with barred list information, to inform its assessment of the suitability of the responsible adults.

Where criminal record information is disclosed, the school will consider, alongside all other information, whether the adult is a suitable host. In addition to the responsible adults, the school will consider whether a DBS enhanced certificate should be obtained for anyone else aged over 16 in the household.

School-arranged homestays abroad

The school will liaise with partner schools to discuss and agree the arrangements in place for the visit. The school will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether to contact the relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question to ascertain what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside of the UK. The school will use its professional judgement to assess whether the arrangements are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard every child involved in the exchange. Pupils will be provided with emergency contact details to use where an emergency occurs, or a situation arises that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Privately arranged homestays

Where a parent or pupil arranges their own homestay, this is a private arrangement, and the school is not the regulated activity provider.

Confidentiality and information Sharing

All child protection and safeguarding concerns will be treated in the strictest of confidence in accordance with school data protection policies.

Where there is an allegation or incident of sexual abuse or sexual violence, the victim is entitled to anonymity by law; therefore, the school will consult its policy and agree on what information will be disclosed to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator and their parents. Where a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, the school will do all it can to protect the anonymity of the pupils involved in the case.

Concerns will only be reported to those necessary for its progression and reports will only be shared amongst staff members and with external agencies on a need-to-know basis. During the disclosure of a concern by a pupil, staff members will not promise the pupil confidentiality and will ensure that they are aware of what information will be shared, with whom and why.

Where it is in the public interest, and protects pupils from harm, information can be lawfully shared without the victim's consent, e.g. if doing so would assist the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime. Before doing so, the DSL will weigh the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and others. Where a referral is made against the victim's wishes, it is done so carefully with the reasons for the referral explained to the victim and specialist support offered.

Depending on the nature of a concern, the DSL will discuss the concern with the parents of the pupils involved. Discussions with parents will not take place where they could potentially put a pupil at risk of harm. Discussion with the victim's parents will relate to the arrangements being put in place to safeguard the victim, with the aim of understanding their wishes in terms of support arrangements and the progression of the report. Discussion with the alleged perpetrator's parents will have regards to the arrangements that will impact their child, such as moving classes, with the reasons behind decisions being explained and the available support discussed. External agencies will be invited to these discussions where necessary.

Where confidentiality or anonymity has been breached, the school will implement the appropriate disciplinary procedures as necessary and will analyse how damage can be minimised and future breaches be prevented.

Where a pupil is leaving the school, the DSL will consider whether it is appropriate to share any information with the pupil's new provider, in addition to the child protection file, that will allow the new provider to support the pupil and arrange appropriate support for their arrival.

Staff will ensure that confidentiality protocols set out by the STSCAP are adhered to and that information is shared appropriately. If in any doubts about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from the designated teacher for safeguarding.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies, through the school's Child Protection Officers, in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child in the process of disclosing that they will be able to keep the disclosure secret.

The Head Teacher, Designated Teacher or Deputy will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a 'need-to-know' basis only, as the information is data protected and could be part of a criminal investigation. Please note that all agencies, including schools, must follow this guidance.

In **Child Protection** cases, staff need only have enough information to prepare themselves for dealing with a child who may become upset or distressed. Details of a Child Protection investigation or information about

a child's history **will not** be shared with any member of staff, other than the Head Teacher and/or Child Protection **Officers**.

Managing Investigations

If any member of staff has concerns about a child protection issue, or receives a disclosure from a child, they need to do the following:

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or Deputies, who should in turn, make an assessment and report to Children's Services, if applicable.
- The DSL/Deputy should record concerns on the relevant referral forms or chronology form.
- Make available all handwritten notes, both signed and dated, recording as accurately as possible what the child has said and where the disclosure took place.
- Make available any written evidence, such as stories or drawings.
- Indicate the locations of any bruising or marks.
- Monitor the child for further concerns or signs of abuse.
- Treat all information with absolute confidentiality.
- Ensure that all electronic records are logged in the MIS and are only accessible by the Head Teacher, DSL and DDSs.

The Designated teacher or deputy will inform the member of staff that the matter is being/has been dealt with at the appropriate time: **please note that, due to the confidential nature of child protection, no further details will be provided to the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made.**

Training

Staff members will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction, which will be updated on a termly basis and/or whenever there is a change in legislation.

The induction training will cover:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- The Child-on-child Abuse Policy and procedures.
- Online Safety Training.
- The Staff Code of Conduct.
- Part one of 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE) (or Annex A, if appropriate).
- The Behaviour Policy.
- The Children Missing Education Policy, including the safeguarding response to children who have unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education.
- Appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, including online safety training.
- Information about the role and identity of the DSL and deputy DSLs.

All staff members will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually. Training will cover, at a minimum:

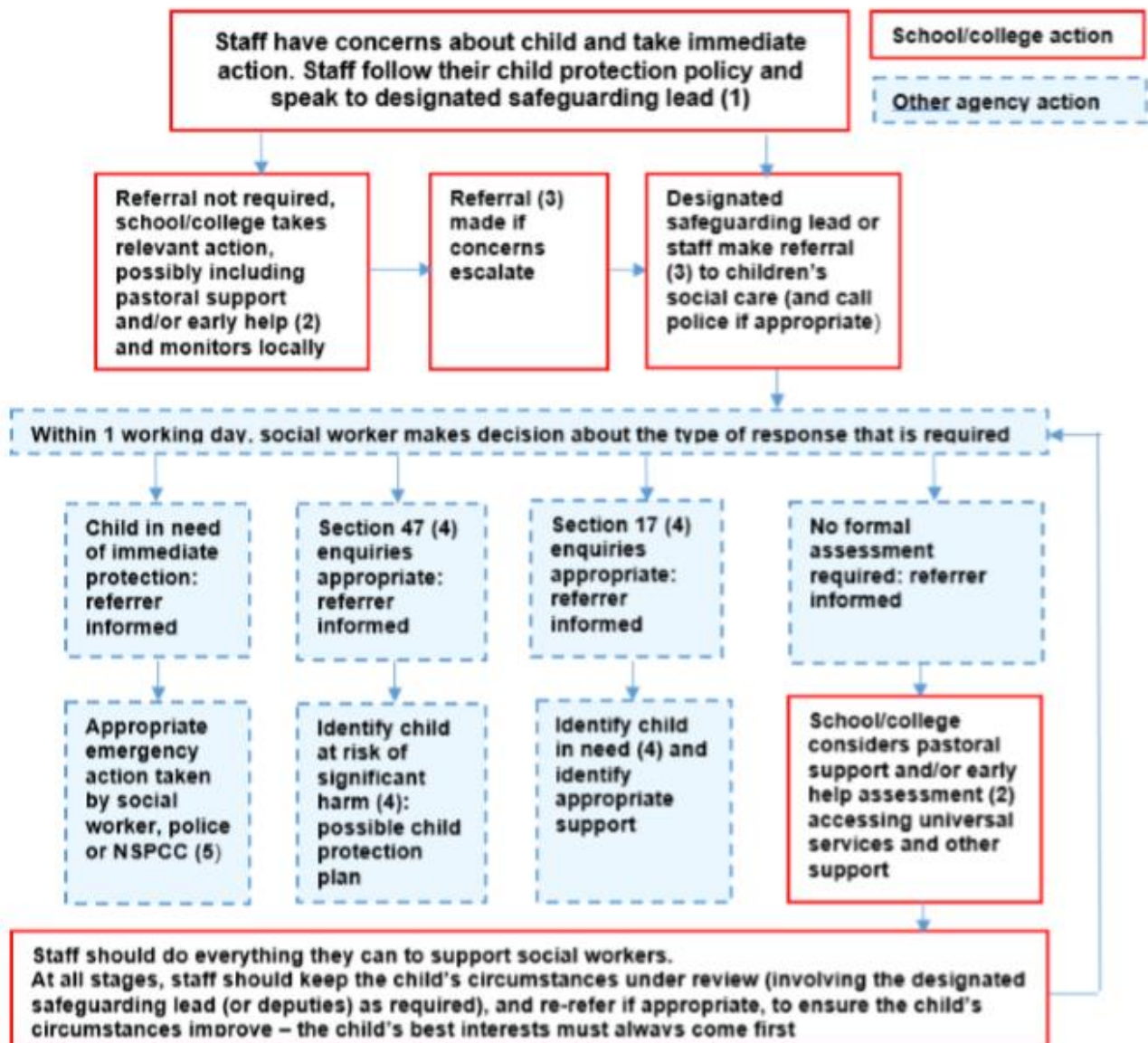
- The issues surrounding sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- Contextual safeguarding.
- How to keep LAC and PLAC safe.
- CCE and the need to refer cases to the National Referral Mechanism.

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed at least annually by the DSL and the Head Teacher. This policy will be updated as needed to ensure it is up-to-date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including any lessons learnt.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff. All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **Autumn Term 2025**.

Actions where there are concerns about a child



Responsibilities and Contact

Head Teacher	Mr D R Thompson
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs S Burdis
Safeguarding Manager and Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Mr M Bingham
Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Miss C Bellas
Designated Governor	Mrs W Stead
Safeguarding & Attendance Support Officer	Mrs A Young
Local Authority Designated Officer	Mrs A Nolan
STSCP Business Manger	Mrs J Nolan

Hebburn Comprehensive School

Campbell Park Road

Hebburn

NE31 2QU

0191 4833199

office@hebburn.net

South Tyneside Safeguarding Children and Adults Partnership (STSCAP)

Laygate Centre

38 Laygate Place

South Shields

NE33 5RT

0191 4246513

Key Duties:

The Children Act 2004 places duties on named agencies to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

The agencies involved in South Tyneside are:

- South Tyneside Council
- The North East Strategic Health Authority
- Northumbria Tyne and Wear NHS Trust
- South Tyneside Primary Care Trust
- South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust
- Northumbria Police
- Northumbria Probation Trust
- South Tyneside Youth Offending Service
- Children and Young People's Services

The duties are defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places similar duties upon schools and further education providers.

Contact Details

For childcare concerns please contact:

The ISIT Team at the Town Hall in South Shields - 0191 424 5010

Out of Hours - 0191 456 2093

Police - 0191 295 7170

Jackie Nolan

Safeguarding Children and Adults Partnership (STSCAP)

Business Manager

Laygate Centre

38 Laygate Place

South Shields

Tyne and Wear

NE33 5RT

Tel: 0191 4246513 / Mobile 07881 510 758

Email: jaqueline.nolan@southtyneside.gov.uk

Lynn Hodson

Safeguarding Children and Adults Partnership (STSCAP)

Administration

Laygate Centre

38 Laygate Place

South Shields

Tyne and Wear

NE33 5RT

Tel: 0191 424 4761

Email: lynn.hodson@southtyneside.gov.uk

Please note that any contact made directly from the school should be in consultation with Mrs S Burdis or Mr D Thompson.

Other Useful Contact Numbers

Early Help Service &

Early Help Advice team: 0191 424 6210

Contact and Referral (Children's Social Care): 0191 424 5010

Adult and Children's Out of Hours contact: 0191 4562093

Children's Standards Unit: 0191 4247317

Appendix A

Child Protection

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Children in Need

Children who are defined as being 'in need', under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, are those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services (section 17 (10) of the Children Act 1989), plus those who are disabled.

Child Sexual Exploitation

The statutory definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be found in the guidance document Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) and may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation.
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks.
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work.
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late.
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls.
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections.
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault.
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups.
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers).

- Frequenting areas known for sex work.
- Concerning use of internet or other social media.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Potential vulnerabilities include:

Although the following vulnerabilities increase the risk of child sexual exploitation, it must be remembered that not all children with these indicators will be exploited. Child sexual exploitation can occur without any of these issues.

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse.
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects, or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example).
- Recent bereavement or loss.
- Social isolation or social difficulties.
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality.
- Economic vulnerability.
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status.
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited.
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work.
- Having a physical or learning disability.
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories); and
- sexual identity.

More information can be found in:

Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)

Child Criminal Exploitation:

Information about Child Criminal Exploitation can be found in KCSIE (2022) page 37 – 39 and Annex B pages 140 - 142

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

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being.
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol.
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

County Lines:

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

Again, whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

Some indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from their home

- have been the victim, perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing

Where child sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or the risk of it, is suspected, staff should refer this immediately to the designated or deputy designated member of staff for child protection (**Mrs Burdis, Mr Bingham or Miss Bellas**). If, after discussion, there remain concerns, local safeguarding procedures will be triggered, including referral to local authority (LA) children's social care and the police, regardless of whether the victim is engaging with services or not.

Domestic Abuse

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent and introduced a statutory definition for the first time.

Definition

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;

(d) economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and

(e) psychological, emotional or other abuse.

People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person.

(The definition can be found here: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted>)

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Hebburn Comprehensive School is part of the Operation Encompass initiative.

Operation Encompass enhances communication between the police and schools where a child is at risk from domestic abuse. By knowing that the child has had this experience, the school is in a better position to understand and be supportive of the child's needs and possible behaviours

Operation Encompass will complement existing safeguarding procedures

The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK.

FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that the majority of cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

Risk factors for FGM include:

- Low level of integration into UK society.
- Mother or a sister who has undergone FGM.
- Girls who are withdrawn from PSHE.

- Visiting female elder from the country of origin.
- Being taken on a long holiday to the country of origin.
- Talk about a 'special' procedure to become a woman.

Indications that FGM may have already taken place may include:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may even look uncomfortable.
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- Spending long periods of time away from a classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- Frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- Prolonged or repeated absences from school or college, especially with noticeable behaviour changes (e.g. withdrawal or depression) on the girl's return.
- Reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations.
- Confiding in a professional without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. As a school, we will be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty on teachers, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Honour Based Abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such.

Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of HBA, they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency.

Forced Marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. 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. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some communities use religion and culture as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

If any staff have concerns about a pupil being coerced into a forced marriage, they should contact the school's DSL immediately.

The Prevent Duty

As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, schools have a duty to 'the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism'. This has become known as the 'Prevent Duty'.

Where staff are concerned that children and young people are developing extremist views or show signs of becoming radicalised, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism and is able to support staff with any concerns they may have.

We use the curriculum to ensure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet.

Staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) making a Prevent referral.

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

Extremism and Radicalisation

Preventing Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media) and settings (such as the internet).

However, it is possible to protect [REMOVE THE WORD 'vulnerable' HERE IN LINE WITH KCSiE 2023] people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being radicalised. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the DSL (or deputy) making a referral to the Channel programme.

Recognising Extremism

Early indicators of radicalisation or extremism may include:

- Showing sympathy for extremist causes.
- Glorifying violence, especially to other faiths or cultures.
- Making remarks or comments about being at extremist events or rallies outside school.
- Evidence of possessing illegal or extremist literature.
- Advocating messages similar to illegal organisations or other extremist groups.
- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and peer relationships (but there are also very powerful narratives, programmes and networks that young people can come across online so involvement with particular groups may not be apparent.)

- Secretive behaviour.
- Online searches or sharing extremist messages or social profiles.
- Intolerance of difference, including faith, culture, gender, race or sexuality.
- Graffiti, art work or writing that displays extremist themes.
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others.
- Verbalising anti-Western or anti-British views.
- Advocating violence towards others.

Please see our separate policy on 'Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation'.

Child-on-Child Abuse/Allegations of Abuse made Against Other Children

Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022 states that *'Governing bodies should ensure that their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse and sets out how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be investigated and dealt with'*

Staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (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 standalone 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 nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- 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
- Initiation/hazing type violence or 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.

As stated in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', "abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. When staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse they should speak to their DSL.

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. It is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators. Any form of abuse by children should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.

The perpetrators of peer abuse are likely to have considerable, complex needs and could pose a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, including physical or sexual abuse. They may, therefore, be suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm (both online and offline) and may be in need of protection themselves. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by an alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

Cyber Bullying

All staff in school should be aware of the potential, inappropriate uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Cyberbullying is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat to harass, threaten or intimidate someone.

It is important to note that Cyber Bullying can be a criminal offence under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 (Section 1), which states that: "electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal." This is also supported by the Communications Act 2003 (Section 127) which states that: "electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another person could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour."

If the behaviour involves taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18, this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, and the school will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

Sexting / Youth Produced Imagery

Sending or receiving of a sexually explicit text message, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of that image. By having in their possession, or distributing indecent images of a person under 18 to someone else, young people are often not aware that they are likely to be breaking the law under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes December 2020 page 29)

Child on child abuse can affect any child/young person, but vulnerable children are most at risk.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

KSCIE 2022 Part 5 and separate guidance 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' sets out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Homelessness

The DSL and deputy DSLs will be aware of the contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so that concerns over homelessness can be raised as early as possible.

Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include:

- Household debt.
- Rent arrears.
- Domestic abuse.
- Anti-social behaviour.
- Any mention of a family moving home because "they have to".

Referrals to the Local Housing Authority do not replace referrals to CHILDREN'S SERVICES where a child is being harmed or at risk of harm. For 16- and 17-year-olds, homelessness may not be family-based and referrals to CHILDREN'S SERVICES will be made as necessary where concerns are raised.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

For the purposes of this policy, "**child abduction**" is defined as the unauthorised removal or retention of a child from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents and other relatives, other people known to the victim, and strangers.

All staff will be alert to community safety incidents taking place in the vicinity of the school that may raise concerns regarding child abduction, e.g. people loitering nearby or unknown adults conversing with pupils.

Pupils will be provided with practical advice and lessons to ensure they can keep themselves safe outdoors.

Cyber-crime

For the purposes of this policy, “**cyber-crime**” is defined as criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. This includes ‘cyber-enabled’ crimes, i.e. crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online, and ‘cyber-dependent’ crimes, i.e. crimes that can be committed only by using a computer. Crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers, known as ‘hacking’.
- Denial of Service attacks, known as ‘booting’.
- Making, supplying or obtaining malicious software, or ‘malware’, e.g. viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence.

All staff will be aware of the signs of cyber-crime and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures where concerns arise. This may include the DSL referring pupils to the National Crime Agency’s Cyber Choices programme.

Modern slavery

For the purposes of this policy, “**modern slavery**” encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can include CCE, CSE, and other forms of exploitation.

All staff will be aware of and alert to the signs that a pupil may be the victim of modern slavery. Staff will also be aware of the support available to victims of modern slavery and how to refer them to the National Referral Mechanism.

Virginity testing and hymenoplasty

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

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

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

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

The procedures are degrading and intrusive, and can result in extreme psychological trauma, provoking conditions such as anxiety, depression and PTSD, as well as physical harm and medical complications. Staff

will be alert to the possible presence of stress, anxiety and other psychological or behavioural signs, and mental health support should be made available where appropriate.

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

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

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

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

The school will not involve families and community members in cases involving virginity testing and hymenoplasty, including trying to mediate with family or using a community member as an interpreter, as this may increase the risk of harm to the pupil, including expediting arrangements for the procedure.

procedures will be followed – this could include referral to CHILDREN’S SERVICES, the police or the Forced Marriage Unit. The DSL or Head Teacher will ensure the pupil is spoken to privately about these concerns and further action taken as appropriate. Pupils will always be listened to and their comments taken seriously.

It will be made clear to staff members that they should not approach the pupil’s family or those with influence in the community, without the express consent of the pupil, as this will alert them to the concerns and may place the pupil in further danger.

Advice will be sought from the Forced Marriage Unit following any suspicion of forced marriage among pupils.

If a pupil is being forced to marry, or is fearful of being forced to, the school will be especially vigilant for signs of mental health disorders and self-harm. The pupil will be supported by the DSL and senior mental health lead and referrals will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Staff members will make themselves aware of how they can support victims of forced marriage in order to respond to the victims needs at an early stage, and be aware of the practical help they can offer, e.g. referral to social services and local and national support groups.

Local child safeguarding procedures will be activated following concerns regarding forced marriage – the school will use existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children’s social care.

The school will support any victims to seek help by:

- Making them aware of their rights and choices to seek legal advice and representation.
- Recording injuries and making referrals for medical examination where necessary.
- Providing personal safety advice.
- Developing a safety plan in case they are seen, e.g. by preparing another reason for why the victim is seeking help.

The school will establish where possible whether pupils at risk of forced marriage have a dual nationality or two passports.

The school will aim to create an open environment where pupils feel comfortable and safe to discuss the problems they are facing – this means creating an environment where forced marriage is discussed openly within the curriculum and support and counselling are provided routinely.

The school will take a whole school approach towards educating on forced marriage in the school curriculum and environment – in particular, the school’s RSHE curriculum will incorporate teaching about the signs of forced marriage and how to obtain help. Appropriate materials and sources of further support will be signposted to pupils. Pupils will be encouraged to access appropriate advice, information and support.

Teachers and other staff members will be educated through CPD about the issues surrounding forced marriage and the signs to look out for.

Pupils with family members in prison

Pupils with a family member in prison will be offered pastoral support as necessary. They will receive a copy of [‘Are you a young person with a family member in prison?’](#) from Action for Prisoners’ Families where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

Pupils required to give evidence in court

Pupils required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or crimes they have witnessed, will be offered appropriate pastoral support.

Pupils will be provided with the booklet [‘Going to Court and being a witness’](#) from HMCTS where appropriate and allowed the opportunity to discuss questions and concerns.

Appendix B

Standards for Effective Child Protection Practice in Schools:

In best practice, schools should:

- Have an ethos in which children feel secure, their viewpoints are valued, and they are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Provide suitable support and guidance so that pupils have a range of appropriate adults to whom they can turn if they are worried or in difficulties.
- Work with parents to build an understanding of the school's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children and a recognition that this may occasionally require children to be referred to investigative agencies as a constructive and helpful measure.
- Be vigilant in cases of suspected child abuse, recognising the signs and symptoms, have clear procedures whereby teachers report such cases to senior staff and are aware of local procedures so that information is effectively passed on to the relevant professionals.
- Monitor children who have been identified as at risk, keeping, in a secure place, clear records of pupils' progress, maintaining sound policies on confidentiality, providing information to other professionals, submitting reports to case conferences and attending case conferences.
- Support Child Protection training and provide regular training to school staff every three years and to designated teachers a minimum of every two years, to ensure their skills and expertise are up to date, through ensuring that targeted funding for this work is used solely for this purpose.
- Contribute to an inter-agency approach to Child Protection by developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.
- Use the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness and build confidence so that pupils have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others, taking into account the guidance for Governors on Sex and Relationships Education in circular 5/94.
- Provide clear policy statements for parents, staff and children on this and on both positive behaviour policies and the school's approach to bullying.
- Have a clear understanding of the various types of bullying - physical, verbal and indirect, and act promptly and firmly to combat it, making sure that pupils are aware of the school's position on this issue and whom they can contact for support.

- Take particular care that pupils with SEND, who may be especially vulnerable to abuse, are supported effectively with particular attention paid to ensuring that those with communication difficulties are enabled to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate communicative skills.
- Have a clear policy about the handling of Allegations of Abuse by Members of Staff, ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the procedures and that they are followed correctly at all times, using the guidance set down in the latest government guidance on the safeguarding of children.
- Have a written whole-school policy, produced, owned and regularly reviewed by school staff, and which clearly outlines the school's position and positive action in respect of the aforementioned standards.
- Ensure that specified information is passed on in a timely manner to the LA for monitoring purposes.