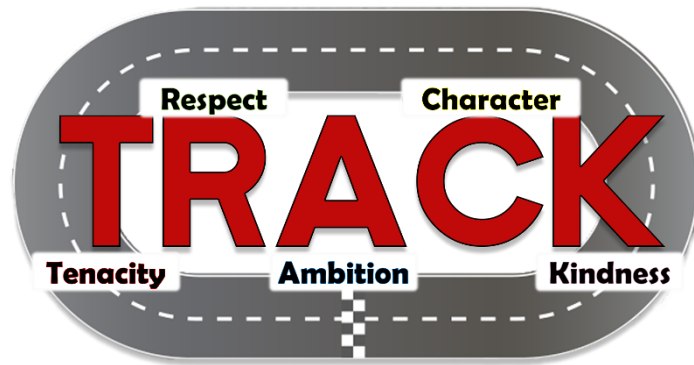




# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



Approved by: Governing Body

Date:

Last reviewed on: September 2025

Next review due  
by: September 2026

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## **KEY CONTACTS FOR SCHOOL BASED STAFF**

### **DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

**Name: Mrs Preesha Lachani (Deputy Headteacher)**

Email address: plachani@stonebridge.brent.sch.uk

Telephone: 0208 965 6965

### **DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS**

**Name: Mrs Kate Pelazza (Headteacher)**

Email address: Kpelazza@stonebridge.brent.sch.uk

Telephone no.: 0208 965 6965

**Name: Ms Tracy Halpin**

Email address: thalpin@stonebridge.brent.sch.uk

Telephone no.: 0208 965 6965

### **NAMED GOVERNOR FOR SAFEGUARDING**

**Name: Ms Tara Furlong (Chair of Governors)**

Telephone no.: 0208 965 6965

*(Please state confidential and for the immediate attention of the Chair)*

### **INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS & VISITORS**

## **KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND BEYOND**

### **Brent Children's Social Care / Early Help Assessment referral**

Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley HA9 0FJ

Duty Officer Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

Brent Family Front Door 020 8937 4300

Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team 020 8863 5250

<https://www.brent.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/keeping-children-safe#Reportchildabuse>

### **Brent Pupil Protection Advisor**

Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley HA9 0FJ

Duty Officer 020 8937 4305

### **Met Police - Brent & Harrow Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT)**

Edgware Police Station, Whitchurch Lane, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 6LB

Duty Officer

020 8733 3562 (Phone)

020 8733 3589 (Fax)

020 8733 3503 (Any time)

### **The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)**

33 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2WG

Duty Officer 09:00 till 17:00, Monday to Fridays, 0870 000 3344

### **Brent Health and Safeguarding Child Team**

Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley HA9 0FJ

Duty Officer Monday-Friday 9am-5pm, 020 8795 6397

### **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for staff allegations.**

Florence Lindsay-Walters

Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley HA9 0FJ

Duty Officer Monday-Friday 9am-5pm, Brent Family Front Door 020 8937 4300

Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team 020 8863 5250

[Florence.Lindsay-Walters@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Florence.Lindsay-Walters@brent.gov.uk)

### **Prevent Strategy Coordinator**

020 8937 4225

The National Domestic Abuse helpline 24 hours a day - 0808 2000 247

## **AIMS**

At The Stonebridge School, we are committed to safeguarding children and we expect everyone who works in our school to share this commitment. All adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children to talk to us about anything that worries them. We will always act in the best interest of the child. We understand that sometimes children will not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experience as harmful.

All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment, which promotes the social, physical, emotional and moral development of the individual child. The governors and staff of The Stonebridge School fully recognise the contribution they make to the safeguarding of children. We recognise that all staff, teaching and support, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm (any kind of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or any kind of neglect).

The school aims to ensure that:

- Staff share any concerns they have about a child with the DSL or Deputy DSL
- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Staff are properly training in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues

At The Stonebridge School, we work in close partnership with the three key safeguarding partners:

- The local authority (including social services, Education Welfare Officer & other external agencies)
- A clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA (Health; school nurse, paediatric team, CAMHs,)
- The chief officer of police in the LA area (Police)

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children as:

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

We protect, prevent and promote the welfare of all children by:

- Having regular training for staff so that all staff can identify concerns and take action;
- teaching children how to keep themselves safe so that they learn to recognize risk at school and in the wider world;
- working external agencies by making arrangements to work together; identifying and responding to the children's needs.
- Working with parents/carers by helping families access early help support where necessary and also by sign posting families to relevant agencies.

## **SCHOOL COMMITMENT**

We recognise that for children, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with trusted adult helps prevention. Our school will therefore:

- support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- raise the awareness of both teaching and support staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- develop a structured procedure within the school to be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- develop and promote effective working relationships with parents / carers and other agencies, e.g. Social Services, police.
- ensure all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect.
- ensure that there is an ongoing culture of vigilance within the school and that safeguarding children remains high profile through appropriate staff development and training
- ensure that all appropriate checks are completed for all adults / young people who work at the school and have supervised / unsupervised access to our children and where necessary, risk assessments in place and implemented

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to; e.g. circle time and through social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is implicit throughout the curriculum
- ensure that children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe, e.g. planned curriculum for each year group, involvement of outside agencies such as Police liaison officer, school nurse
- include in the curriculum material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare, transition to secondary school and parenting skills.
- ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies
- ensure that staff are aware of and alert to any dangers in relation to child on child abuse in line with this policy and the Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy
- ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children from harmful online materials and that children are taught how to keep themselves safe online.

## **EQUALITY STATEMENT**

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

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

## **LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE**

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#), which set out what must be recorded on the single central record and the requirement for at least 1 person conducting an interview to be trained in safer recruitment techniques
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on teachers to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what ‘regulated activity’ is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains schools’ duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race). This means our governors and headteacher should carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our school to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it’s proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there’s evidence that they’re being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment
- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) (referred to in this policy as the “2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations”) and [Childcare Act 2006](#), which set out who is disqualified from working with children
- This policy also meets requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

## DEFINITIONS

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** means:

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

**Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online.

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

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

**Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes** (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams. This also includes pseudo-images that are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video.

**Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

- The local authority (LA)

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

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

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

## PROCEDURES

Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with LA and The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children Arrangement procedures.

We will ensure that:

- The Deputy Headteacher (DHT) will act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the Stonebridge School. The DSL will undertake regular training (Advanced Safeguarding Training every 2 years or earlier if applicable).
- deputy DSL's will also receive appropriate training (Advanced Safeguarding Training every 2 years or earlier if applicable).
- The DSL will be the first person to be approached in the light of any concerns, allegations or disclosures.
- The DSL will update the child protection records and share information. Cases will be allocated to the DSL to take a lead on but regular meetings will take place to review progress and to offer supervision to the deputy DSLs as and when needed.
- All members of staff, governors and volunteers to receive annual level 1 training to inform them of the policy, procedures and any changes. This may also be throughout the year through directed time, e.g. staff meetings, INSET days.
- All members of staff are required to read at least part 1 of '*Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022*' and this is accessible via the school's website.
- All staff are aware of the statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children '*Working together to Safeguard Children 2018*' and '*Information Sharing 2018*'.
- All staff to be aware of '*What to do if you're worried a child is being abused; advice for practitioners 2015*' and '*Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges*'.
- All members of staff are familiar with the categories and definitions used when referring to Child Protection.
- All members of staff to understand about 'Contextual Safeguarding' with reference to the wider environmental factors in a child's life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
- The school assesses the risks and issues in the wider community when considering the well-being and safety of its pupils.
- All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse.
- All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse. They will ensure that time is given to the child in order that they can fully concentrate on the child's disclosure and that this time is found as a matter of urgency. When a disclosure is made, this must be shared with the DSL or a deputy DSL immediately so that appropriate action can take place in a timely manner and will be recorded on Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS). Volunteers, visitors and SMSAs will report any concern by speaking to the DSL or deputy DSL can completing a Cause of Concern form.
- All members of staff, including visitors and volunteers know how to report any concerns they have to safeguard children.
- The DSL will ensure that the correct safeguarding and child protection procedure for recording and reporting to formal settings is made available to staff. Staff will ensure that these are kept confidential, completed in a timely manner and in line with deadlines.
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to safeguarding procedures. A child protection statement will be included on the school website in the parent/carer section.
- Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and updated annually or earlier in the case of changes to legislation.
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of our safeguarding policy as part of their induction into the school.
- All training undertaken by staff, governors and volunteers will be documented and filed.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and governors in the school and is consistent with the procedures of the three safeguarding partners (police, health, LA including social services & EWO). Our policy and procedures also apply to extended school and off-site activities.

## ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff are expected to read, understand and comply with at least part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025) (about specific safeguarding issues).

All staff will sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have read, understood and will comply the guidance.

All staff will be aware of:

- the indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of the school/college, inside and outside of home, and online. Exercising professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
- that abuse, neglect, exploitation, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot be covered by one definition or one label alone. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.
- all staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines and radicalisation.
- that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.
- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, The Staff Code of Conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy, the online safety which include the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- the early help process (sometimes known as the common assessment framework) and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment.
- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play.
- what to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- the signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as peer-on-peer abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM and radicalisation.
- the importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

## The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL is a member of the senior leadership team. Our DSL is the Deputy Headteacher. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the school. This includes online safety, and understanding our filtering and monitoring processes on school devices and school networks to keep pupils safe online.

During term time, the DSL will be available during school hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. When the DSL is absent, the deputy DSLs (Headteacher and SENCo) will act as cover. If the DSL and deputies are not available, a member of staff will act as cover for that day and staff will be informed who the member of staff will be. The staff member will support staff and act with guidance from the DSL.

## Role of the DSL

The role of the DSL is to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Work in close partnership with the three safeguarding partners: the local authority, a clinical commissioning group for an area within the local authority; and the chief officer of police for an area (any part of which falls) within the local authority area) and make arrangements to work together with appropriate relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs.
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly
- Ensure appropriate action is taken and procedures followed
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our school
- Maintain a record of pupils with a multi-agency plan and be responsible for monitoring those children
- Keep records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensure that ongoing monitoring of children is kept up to date and that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupil records.
- Attend reviews/meetings (or nominate an appropriate member of staff)
- Notify Social Services, DSL when a child on the child protection register leaves the school and informs the new school, ensuring the safe and secure transfer of information
- Organise regular safeguarding training for staff
- Liaise with staff to ensure that the curriculum offers opportunities for raising pupil awareness, and developing strategies for ensuring their own protection.
- Adhering to The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children Arrangements and school procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible abuse.
- Ensure that action points agreed at Child Protection Conferences, Child Protection Reviews and Core Group Meetings are carried out.
- Ensure that accurate and up to date information about individual children is presented at Child Protection Conferences.
- Ensure that any pupil currently with a Child Protection plan who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to their key worker at Social Services and that the attendance of children with a Child in Need Plan (CIN) is monitored closely and any concerns referred to their key social worker.
- The DSL will also keep the headteacher informed of any issues, and liaise with local authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate.
- Ensure the knowledge and skills of the DSL and those stepping into that role in the absence of the DSL should be updated at regular intervals, but at least annually, to ensure they keep up with developments relevant to the role. This could be provided via, for example, e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read about recent safeguarding developments.
- The DSL and those carrying out this role in the absence of the DSL should undergo relevant training that is updated every two years.
- Manage referrals from school staff or any others from outside the school;
- Work with external agencies and professionals on matter of safety and safeguarding;
- Undertake training;
- Raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection amongst the staff and parents; and
- Ensure that child protection information is transferred to the pupil's new school
- Be aware of pupils who have a social worker\*
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and leadership staff.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support including supervision to carry out this role. The DSL can be contacted via email for concerns that arise during out of school hours and outside term time. If a matter is urgent and the DSL cannot be contacted outside term time, then staff/parents carers should contact the Headteacher. If none are available, staff and parents/carers are advised to contact Family Front Door (0208 937 4300) directly or 999 if a child is at immediate risk.

## The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including ensuring that all staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:

- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction.
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, and updating the content of the training regularly
- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Ensuring the relevant staffing ratios are met for the Early Years, where applicable
- Making sure each child in the Early Years Foundation Stage is assigned a key person

It is the role of the Headteacher to investigate any child protection allegations made against a member of staff, following the correct procedures.

## Designated Safeguarding Governor

The role and responsibility of the designated governor responsible for safeguarding is to monitor and report back to the Governing Body about the efficiency of procedures within school. Specific details about safeguarding will not be available to the Governor as this information is confidential. At the Stonebridge School, the Safeguarding Governor is the Chair of Governors. If a concern that relates to the Head teacher arises, the Chair of Governors must be informed and will liaise with the LADO. The Local Authority has a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in its area who are in need.

## The Governing Board

The governing board will:

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

- The school has procedures to manage any safeguarding concerns (no matter how small) or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors). The section titled 'allegations about a member of staff' within this policy covers this procedure
- That this policy reflects that children with SEND, or certain medical or physical health conditions, can face additional barriers to any abuse or neglect being recognised
- Where another body is providing services or activities (regardless of whether or not the children who attend these services/activities are children on the school roll):
- Seek assurance that the other body has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies/procedures in place, and inspect them if needed
- Make sure there are arrangements for the body to liaise with the school about safeguarding arrangements, where appropriate
- Make sure that safeguarding requirements are a condition of using the school premises, and that any agreement to use the premises would be terminated if the other body fails to comply

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

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

## ABUSE

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

## TYPES OF ABUSE

There are four main types of abuse and these are:

- Physical abuse including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Emotional abuse including domestic abuse
- Sexual abuse including (sexual violence & harassment, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE))
- Neglect

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

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child 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 children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also

known as child on child abuse) in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or colleges policy and procedures for dealing with it.

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **KEY SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

### **1. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

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) in 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. Even where a young person is old enough to legally consent to sexual activity, the law states that consent is only valid where they make a choice and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice. If a child feels they have no other meaningful choice, are under the influence of harmful substances or fearful of what might happen if they don't comply (all of which are common features in cases of child sexual exploitation) consent cannot legally be given whatever the age of the child.

Where it is the victim who is offered, promised or given something they need or want, the exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or alcohol) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived receipt of love or affection). It is critical to remember the unequal power dynamic within which this exchange occurs and to remember that the receipt of something by a child/young person does not make them any less of a victim. It is also important to note that the prevention of something negative can also fulfil the requirement for exchange, for example a child who engages in sexual activity to stop someone carrying out a threat to harm his/her family. Whilst there can be gifts or treats involved in other forms of sexual abuse (e.g a father who sexually abuses but also buys the child toys) it is most likely referred to as child sexual exploitation if the 'exchange', as the core dynamic at play, results in financial gain for or enhanced status of, the perpetrator. Where the gain is only for the perpetrator/facilitator, there is most likely a financial gain (money, discharge of a debt or free/discounted goods or services) or increased status as a result of the abuse. If sexual gratification, or exercise of power and control, is the only gain for the perpetrator (and there is no gain for the child/young person) this would not normally constitute child sexual exploitation, but should be responded to as a different form of child sexual abuse.

**Child sexual exploitation is never the victim's fault, even if there is some form of exchange: all children and young people under the age of 18 have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm.**

### **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;
- Go missing from school or home and are subsequently found in areas away from their home.
- Have been perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime), as well as the victim.
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicions 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 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 (poverty);
- 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 at:*

*[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/591903/CS\\_E\\_Guidance\\_Core\\_Document\\_13.02.2017.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591903/CS_E_Guidance_Core_Document_13.02.2017.pdf) Child sexual exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)*

### **2. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) occurs 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) in 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.

### **3. CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE**

At the Stonebridge School there is there a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, and it should never be passed off, for as “banter”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Children can abuse other children and this can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers, sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals. School staff must discriminate between what constitutes exploratory play that is appropriate to the child's developmental stage and what may constitute peer abuse. As a school, we recognise that even if

there are no reported cases of peer-on-peer abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported. We will implement the school's Behaviour & Anti Bullying Policy consistently and allow opportunities for children to talk to adults and raise concerns.

Where there is a concern that a pupil in school may have behaved inappropriately towards another pupil, this should be passed immediately to the DSL/deputy DSLs whether the concern is for a child attending school or being educated remotely. They will alert the DSL or deputy DSLs and they will carry out an investigation in person or via telephone or Microsoft Teams as well as make a referral to services if needs be.

The DSL/deputy DSL will discuss the matter with parents/carers or social care as appropriate and with the child's interests at the core of all decisions made.

When investigating the matter, the Designated Safeguarding Leads will consider:

- the possible impact on the child/victim.
- any disparity in age between the abusing and abused child.
- whether there is any element of coercion or violence.
- exploratory play should be dealt within school, involving parents/carers as appropriate.

The DSL/deputy DSLs will:

- keep the involved children separate to avoid collusion or intimidation
- not talk to the children about the incident to avoid distorting the evidence, other than initially establishing what is alleged to have taken place;
- keep a detailed log of actions, discussions and decisions.
- contact parents/carers of the children involved in light of the information gathered
- may contact Family Front Door (social services) for guidance and support throughout the process.

If the assessment concludes that the allegations made can be substantiated, the school will make a referral to social care who have the responsibility for progressing enquiries and carrying out investigations. The school will work to support the families but will place safeguarding the abused child and abuser at the heart of all decisions. When dealing with allegations that involve peer to peer sexual abuse, the school will be mindful that there is significant research evidence, to suggest that children who behave in a sexually inappropriate and/or aggressive way towards other children, are often victims of abuse themselves.

### **Minimising the risk of child on child abuse**

The children will also be taught to embody the school values as well as British Values. Also, through the Relationship, Sex Education curriculum and the PSHE curriculum, the children will be taught about healthy relationships and unhealthy relationships including the importance of consent and what to do if they are concerned. Other opportunities such as science lessons, outside agencies such as NSPCC assemblies, Police Liaison Officer / workshops will be implemented to equip the children to keep themselves safe and raise awareness. All the learning will be underpinned by the school's values and link directly to the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy, which will be implemented by all staff at the school. In order to minimise the risk of child on child abuse, all children will be encouraged to report all concerns or incidents of child on child abuse to their teacher or a trusted adult and the adult will reassure them that the incident will be treated seriously. All staff are to pass this information on to the DSL/deputy DSLs who will deal with it accordingly.

Where a child may have been a victim of child on child abuse, a risk assessment will be carried out by the DSL and appropriate agencies contacted as needed. This will be reviewed regularly, especially following any significant changes. Specific work would be undertaken with the child by senior leaders and may involve a referral to specialist outside agencies as well. Additional support for pupils with additional barriers such SEND, pupils using English as an additional language will be implemented. For example, ensuring that a child is spoken to in their home language through a staff member translating, ensuring that a child with SEND is able to use various medium to communicate their worries such as pictures, PECs, Makaton and also involving staff that work regularly with the child in conversations to support the child.

### **Recording Incidents of child on child abuse**

All incidents of child on child will be recorded CPOMS. The information will be shared with relevant agencies, governors and parents/carers as appropriate and if safe to do so.

### **Harmful sexual behaviours (HSB)**

Children's sexual behaviours exist on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviours are developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. Harmful sexual behaviours can occur online and offline and can occur simultaneously between the two. Harmful sexual behaviours will be considered in a child protection context.

When considering harmful sexual behaviours, ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors to consider. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child is disabled or smaller in stature. The Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool can help when considering harmful sexual behaviours.

The most effective preventative education programme will be through a whole school approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. At the Stonebridge School, we have a clear set of values and standards, and these will be upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. This will be underpinned by the school's behaviour policy, pastoral support system and by a planned programme of evidence-based content delivered through the RSE curriculum and the wider curriculum when appropriate. Such a programme will be developed to be age and stage of development appropriate, and will tackle such issues as:

- healthy and respectful relationships;
- what respectful behaviour looks like;
- gender roles, stereotyping, equality;
- body confidence and self-esteem;
- prejudiced behaviour;
- Importance of consent
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong; and
- addressing cultures of sexual harassment

The curriculum will be presented in a way that allows children an open forum to talk things through; such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding disclosures and staff will fulfil their safeguarding duties and pass these on. Children will be made aware of the processes by which to raise their concerns or make a report. This should include processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer. All staff are aware of how to manage a disclosure enabling the relevant member of staff to support individuals involved and staff should speak to the DSL if further support is needed. The school will work closely with outside agencies for further specialist support, e.g. police, health or social services where it is necessary to do so.

### Upskirting

'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence. Incidents of upskirting should not happen at school as pupils have to leave their mobile phones in the school office, however should any incident of upskirting happen, the school will follow the safeguarding procedures and treat the incident as child on child abuse. If the incident of upskirting relates to members of staff, the school will follow the procedures for allegations against a professional and also advise the victim to contact the police.

### Sharing nudes and semi-nude (previously known as sexting)

Sexting is defined as the production and/or sharing of sexual photos and videos of and by young people who are under the age of 18. It includes nude or nearly nude images and/or sexual acts. It is also referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

'Sexting' does not include the sharing of sexual photos and videos of under-18 year olds with or by adults. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police.

### What to do if an incident involving 'sexting' comes to your attention

Report it to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

- Never view, download or share the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – this is illegal.
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL.
- Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.

- Do not ask the young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL.
- Do not share information about the incident to other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL.
- All such incidents must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managed in line with this safeguarding policy.
- The DSL should refer to the full 2017 guidance from the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS), *Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Young People*.

#### **4. Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. It is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and more likely that sexual harassment will be perpetrated by boys however any incidents of sexual violence or harassment will be dealt with very seriously. All stakeholders will be made aware of the importance of:

- understanding that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- not recognising, acknowledging or understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and/or downplaying some behaviours related to abuse as it can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it; and
- understanding that all of the above can be driven by wider societal factors beyond the school and college, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language. This is why a whole school approach (preventative education) through our curriculum is vital. as described in Part 3 of this advice is important.

All incidents of sexual harassment or sexual violence between children must be reported immediately to the DSL/Deputies who will deal with them with the utmost seriousness. All incidents will be recorded on CPOMS by the staff.

A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised.

#### **Sexual Harassment**

When referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child on child sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- upskirting (is a criminal offence);
- sexual “jokes” or taunting;
  - physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature, interfering with someone’s clothes (when the above occurs, the DSL

will consider when any of the above crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim);

- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
  - o consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. Sharing nude photographs of under a child under 18 years of age is a criminal offence;
  - o sharing of unwanted explicit content;
  - o sexualised online bullying;
  - o unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
  - o sexual exploitation; coercion and threats. It is important that all staff consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

## **Sexual Violence**

It is important that all staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way and that it can happen both inside and outside of school. When referring to sexual violence, we do so in the context of child on child sexual violence as outlined in the Sexual Offences Act 2003:14 as described below:

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (Schools should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault.)

**Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

## **Consent**

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

**Sexual consent**

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- the age of consent is 16;
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

## **RECOGNISING AND TAKING ACTION**

All staff are expected to be able to identify signs of possible abuse exploitation or neglect understanding that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of school, inside and outside of home, and online. All staff will exercise professional curiosity and knowing what to look for is vital for early identification of abuse and neglect so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of protection or help. They should also be able to recognise all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and shall be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health condition and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory education health and care (EHC) plan)

- Has a mental health need
- Is a young carer
- Is bereaved
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, care or home
- Is missing education, or persistently absent from school, or not in receipt of full-time education
- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation
- Is susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Is suffering from mental ill health
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage
- Is a privately fostered child
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- Staff, volunteers and governors must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

#### IF A CHILD IS SUFFERING OR LIKELY TO SUFFER HARM, OR IN IMMEDIATE DANGER

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

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

Links to the GOV.UK webpage for reporting abuse to your local council:

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

#### IF A CHILD MAKES A DISCLOSURE TO YOU

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

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police directly (see 7.1), and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process
- Bear in mind that some children may:ot feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers

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

## IF YOU DISCOVER THAT FGM HAS TAKEN PLACE OR A PUPIL IS AT RISK OF FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education explains that FGM comprises “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs”.

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

Possible indicators that a pupil has already been subjected to FGM, and factors that suggest a pupil may be at risk, are set out in appendix 1 of this policy.

**Any teacher** who either:

- Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl’s physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

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

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

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

**Any member of staff** who suspects a pupil is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

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

Figure 1 below, before section 7.7, illustrates the procedure to follow if you have any concerns about a child’s welfare.

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

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

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

### Early help assessment

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

We will discuss and agree, with statutory safeguarding partners, levels for the different types of assessment, as part of local arrangements.

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

### REFERRAL

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

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

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

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

If you have concerns about extremism

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

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

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

The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a pupil. You can also email

[counter.extremism@education.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.gov.uk). Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

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

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

If you have a concern about mental health

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

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

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

If you have a mental health concern that is **not** also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL to agree a course of action.

Refer to the Department for Education guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) for more information.

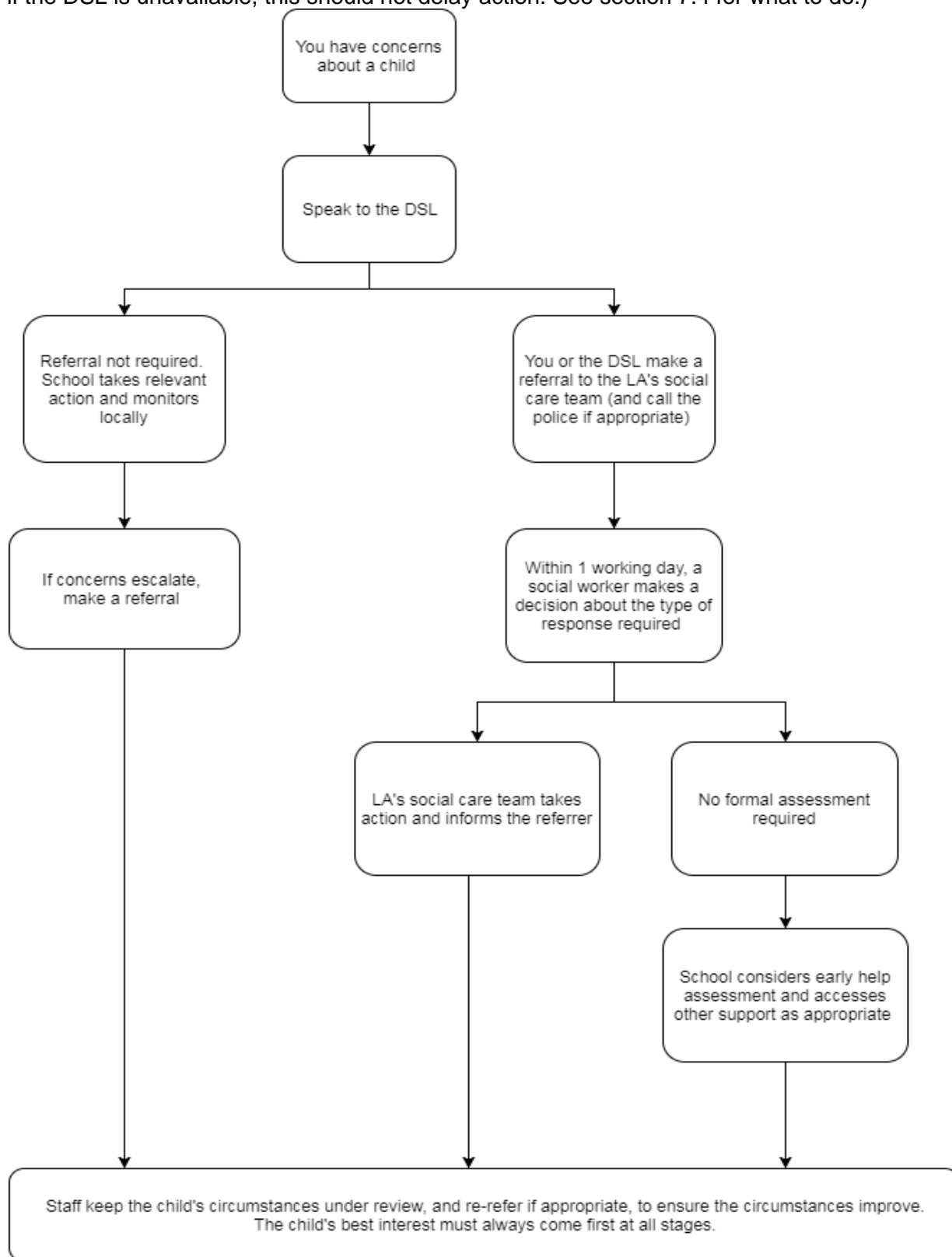
### **Responding to a disclosure or sexual harassment or sexual violence**

It is important to note that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report or a member of school or college staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed, or a child's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. As per our usual safeguarding and child protection procedures, if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait for the child to disclose to them. The staff member's initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the staff respond to a disclosure can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously as any incidents that may happen in school. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised. As with all safeguarding concerns, it is important that in such instances staff take appropriate action in accordance with their child protection policy. Staff should not assume that someone else is responding to any incident or concern. If in any doubt, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or deputies. In such cases, the basic safeguarding principles remain the same, but it is important for staff to understand why the victim has chosen not to make a report themselves. This discussion should be handled sensitively and with the support of children's social care if required. There may be reports where the alleged sexual violence or sexual harassment involves pupils or students from the same school but is alleged to have taken place away from the school premises, or online. There may also be reports where the children concerned attend two or more different schools. The safeguarding principles, and schools and college's duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of our children, remain the same. Ideally, effective safeguarding practice includes:

- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible;
- where the report includes an online element, **staff are not to search/screen** the content being reported. This is against the law. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the police for inspection;
- not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead or children's social care) to discuss next steps. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to;
- recognising that a child is likely to disclose information to someone they trust: this could be anyone on the school. They should be supportive and respectful of the child;
- recognising that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse;
- keeping in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation;
- listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should generally be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and ask what the nature of that harm was;
- considering the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes, especially if a second member of staff is present. However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, it is essential a written record is made;
- only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. Schools and colleges should be aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation; and
- informing the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy DSL), as soon as practically possible, if the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy DSL) is not involved in the initial report.

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

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



## **Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')**

### **Your responsibilities when responding to an incident**

If you are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos, including pseudo-images, which are computer-generated images that otherwise appear to be a photograph or video (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

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

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

### **Initial review meeting**

Following a report of an incident, the DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff – this may include the staff member who reported the incident and the safeguarding or leadership team that deals with safeguarding concerns. This meeting will consider the initial evidence and aim to determine:

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

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

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

If none of the above apply then the DSL, in consultation with the headteacher and other members of staff as appropriate, may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care. The decision will be made and recorded in line with the procedures set out in this policy.

### **Further review by the DSL**

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

They will hold interviews with the pupils involved (if appropriate).

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

### **Informing parents/carers**

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

### **Referring to the police**

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through contacting your DSL. The DSL will work in partnership with appropriate agencies.

### **Recording incidents**

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

### **Curriculum coverage**

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

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation
- Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:
- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images
- This policy on the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is also shared with pupils so they are aware of the processes the school will follow in the event of an incident.
- Teaching follows best practice in delivering safe and effective education, including:
- Putting safeguarding first
- Approaching from the perspective of the child
- Promoting dialogue and understanding
- Empowering and enabling children and young people
- Never frightening or scare-mongering
- Challenging victim-blaming attitudes

### **Assessing adult-involved nude and semi-nude sharing incidents**

All adult-involved nude and semi-nude image sharing incidents are child sexual abuse offences and must immediately be referred to police/social care. However, as adult-involved incidents can present as child-on-child nude/semi-nude sharing, it may be difficult to initially assess adult involvement.

There are two types of common adult-involved incidents: sexually motivated incidents and financially motivated incidents.

### **Sexually motivated incidents**

In this type of incident, an adult offender obtains nude and semi-nudes directly from a child or young person using online platforms.

To make initial contact, the offender may present as themselves or use a false identity on the platform, sometimes posing as a child or young person to encourage a response and build trust. The offender often grooms the child or young person on social media, in chatrooms or on gaming platforms, and may then move the conversation to a private messaging app or an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environment where a request for a nude or semi-nude is made. To encourage the child or young person to create and share nude or semi-nude, the offender may share pornography or child sexual abuse material (images of other young people), including AI-generated material.

Once a child or young person shares a nude or semi-nude, an offender may blackmail the child or young person into sending more images by threatening to release them online and/or send them to friends and family.

Potential signs of adult-involved grooming and coercion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications, which may include the offender sharing unsolicited images
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- Coerced/pressured into doing sexual things, including creating nudes and semi-nudes
- Offered something of value such as money or gaming credits
- Threatened or blackmailed into carrying out further sexual activity. This may follow the child or young person initially sharing the image or the offender sharing a digitally manipulated image of the child or young person to extort 'real' images

### Financially motivated incidents

Financially motivated sexual extortion (often known as 'sextortion') is an adult-involved incident in which an adult offender (or offenders) threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child or young person unless they pay money or do something else to benefit them.

Unlike other adult-involved incidents, financially motivated sexual extortion is usually carried out by offenders working in sophisticated organised crime groups (OCGs) overseas and are only motivated by profit. Adults are usually targeted by these groups too.

Offenders will often use a false identity, sometimes posing as a child or young person, or hack another young person's account to make initial contact. To financially blackmail the child or young person, they may:

- Groom or coerce the child or young person into sending nudes or semi-nudes and financially blackmail them
- Use images that have been stolen from the child or young person taken through hacking their account
- Use digitally manipulated images, including AI-generated images, of the child or young person

The offender may demand payment or the use of the victim's bank account for the purposes of money laundering.

Potential signs of adult-involved financially motivated sexual extortion can include the child or young person being:

- Contacted by an online account that they do not know but appears to be another child or young person. They may be contacted by a hacked account of a child or young person
- Quickly engaged in sexually explicit communications which may include the offender sharing an image first
- Moved from a public to a private/E2EE platform
- Pressured into taking nudes or semi-nudes
- Told they have been hacked and they have access to their images, personal information and contacts
- Blackmailed into sending money or sharing bank account details after sharing an image or the offender sharing hacked or digitally manipulated images of the child or young person.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff taking a report should never promise confidentiality as it is very likely that it will be in the best interests of the child to seek advice and guidance from others in order to provide support and engage appropriate agencies. The school will only engage staff and agencies who are required to support the children involved and/or be involved in any investigation. The child may ask the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. There are no easy or definitive answers when a victim makes this request. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if there is another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.

It is important to note that:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding

- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe
- In addition, see the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools, which will help school staff, governors and trustees understand how to comply with data protection law, develop their data policies and processes, know what staff and pupil data to keep and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests
- If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
  - There's no definitive answer, because even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there's another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
  - The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
  - The DSL should consider that:
    - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
    - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care
    - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains
- Regarding anonymity, all staff will:
  - Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
  - Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment – for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
  - Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities
- The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information
- If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they should speak to the DSL (or deputy)

**The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) will consider the following:**

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk);
- the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to children's social care; and
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this will be referred to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach, in these cases. Ultimately, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children. If the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) decide to go ahead and make a referral to children's social care and/or a report to the police against the victim's wishes, this should be handled

extremely carefully, the reasons should be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support should be offered.

## **ANOYMITY**

As a matter of effective safeguarding practice, staff will do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things, this will mean carefully considering, (based on the nature of the report), which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved. The school should also consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

## **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment should include the time and location so the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) can make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment will consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support;
- whether there may have been other victims,
- the alleged perpetrator(s); and
- all the other children (and staff) at the school or college, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms. Risk assessments will be recorded (written or electronic) and will be kept under review. At all times, the school will be actively considering the risks posed to all their pupils and students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) will ensure they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required. The above school risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Any such professional assessments should be used to inform the schools approach to supporting and protecting their pupils and updating their own risk assessment.

## **MANGAGING A REPORT OR A REFERRAL**

The schools consider every report on a case-by-case basis. When to inform the alleged perpetrator(s) will be a decision that should be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to children's social care and/or the police, then, as a general rule, the school will speak to the relevant agency and discuss next steps and how the alleged perpetrator(s) will be informed of the allegations. However, as per general safeguarding principles, this does not and will not stop the school taking immediate action to safeguard their children, where required. There are four likely scenarios for schools to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. It will be important in all scenarios that decisions and actions are regularly reviewed and that relevant policies are updated to reflect lessons learnt. It is particularly important to look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a pattern is identified, the school will decide on a course of action. Consideration will be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur and where appropriate extra teaching time and/or staff training will be delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again. The four scenarios are:

### **1. Manage internally**

- In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, the school or college may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or require referrals to be made to statutory services and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising their behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support.
- Our response will be underpinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

### **2. 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'. The DSL/Deputies may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent HSB and

may prevent escalation of sexual violence. It is particularly important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) know what the Early Help process is and how and where to access support. In some cases the DSL/Deputies may get Early help and manage a report internally for both the victim and perpetrator(s). This reflects the Working together to safeguard children guidance.

### **3. Referrals to children's social care**

- Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, the school will make a referral to local children's social care.
- At the point of referral to children's social care, the schools will generally inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision should be made with the support of children's social care.
- If a referral is made, children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved are in need of protection or other services.
- Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the school or college (especially the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy DSL) should work alongside, and cooperate with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children that require support.
- The school will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school or college. It will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) to work closely with children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions the school take do not jeopardise a statutory investigation. The risk assessment will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, the alleged perpetrator(s), any children directly involved in the reported incident and all children (and adult students) at the school should be immediate.
- In some cases, children's social care will review the evidence and decide a statutory intervention is not appropriate. The school or college (generally led by the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy DSL) should be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) should consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support.
- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All concerns, discussions, decisions, and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

### **4. Reporting to the police**

- Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care (as above).
- It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process.
- Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is this will be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach. The following advice may help schools and colleges decide when to engage the Police and what to expect of them when they do:

At this stage, the DSL/Deputies will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.

- Where a report has been made to the police, the DSL will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator(s) and their parents or carers. The DSL will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.
- All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. The names and structures of these units are matters for local forces. It will be important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are aware of their local arrangements.
- In some cases, it may become clear very quickly, that the police (for whatever reason) will not take further action. In such circumstances, the school will continue to engage with specialist support for the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) as required.

### **Managing any delays in the criminal process**

Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school take do not jeopardise the police investigation. Questions about the investigation will be discussed with the police, they should ask the police. The police will help and support the school as much as they can (within the constraints of any legal restrictions).

### **The end of the criminal process**

If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the DSL/Deputies will update the risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all children at the school and consider any suitable action in line with their behaviour policy. This process will include a review of the necessary actions to keep all parties safe and meet their needs. If the perpetrator(s) remain(s) in the same school as the victim, the school will be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator(s) now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions the school thinks are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the perpetrator(s)' timetable.

- Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other children or school community, the school will ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).
- Where cases are classified as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, the school will should continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated or was withdrawn does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. The DSL/deputies will discuss any decisions with the victim in this light and continue to offer support.
- If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the designated safeguarding lead should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.
- If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school or college should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per their own behaviour policy.
- As set out in part one of Keeping children safe in education, all concerns, discussions, and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified, and addressed.

### **Safeguarding and supporting the victim**

The needs and wishes of the victim should be paramount (along with protecting the child) in any response. It is important they feel in as much control of the process as is reasonably possible. Wherever possible, the victim if they wish, should be able to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that school is a safe space for them.

- Consider the age and the developmental stage of the victim, the nature of the allegations and the potential risk of further abuse. All staff should be aware that, by the very nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment, a power imbalance is likely to have been created between the victim and alleged perpetrator(s). The victim should never be made to feel they are the problem for making a report or made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support will be tailored on a case by-case basis. The support required regarding a one-off incident of sexualised name-calling is likely to be vastly different from that for a report of rape.

Support can include:

- Early help and children social care support as set out in Part 1 of Keeping children safe in education.
- Children and Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs) who provide emotional and practical support for victims of sexual violence. They are based within the specialist sexual violence sector and will help the victim understand what their options are and how the criminal justice process works if they have reported or are considering reporting to the police. ChISVAs will work in partnership with schools to ensure the best possible outcomes for the victim. Police and social care agencies can signpost to ChISVA services (where available), or referrals can be made directly to the ChISVA service by the young person or school.
- Contact details for ChISVAs can be found at Rape Crisis (England & Wales) and The Survivors Trust.
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). CAMHS is used as a term for all services that work with children and young people who have difficulties with their emotional or behavioural wellbeing.

- The specialist sexual violence sector can provide therapeutic support for children who have experienced sexual violence. Contact Rape Crisis (England & Wales) or The Survivors Trust for details of local specialist organisations.
- The Male Survivors Partnership can provide details of services which specialise in supporting men and boys.
- NHS - Help after rape and sexual assault provides a range of advice, help and support including advice about the risk of pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STI), reporting to the police and forensics.
- Rape and sexual assault referral centres services can be found at: Find Rape and sexual assault referral centres. Sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) offer medical, practical and emotional support. They have specially trained doctors, nurses and support workers. If children, young people, or their families are unsure which service to access, they should contact their GP or call the NHS on 111.
- Childline provide free and confidential advice for children and young people.
- Internet Watch Foundation works internationally to remove child sexual abuse online images and videos and offers a place for the public to report them anonymously.

### **Discipline and support**

Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary. The school will treat each case individually bearing in mind that perpetrators are often also victims of abuse. The school or college should be very clear as to which category any action they are taking falls or whether it is really both and should ensure that the action complies with the law.

### **Working with parents and carers**

The school will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of sexual violence (this might not be necessary or proportional in the case of sexual harassment and should be considered on a case-by-case basis). The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk. The schools will carefully consider what information they provide to the respective parents or carers about the other child involved and when they do so. In some cases, children's social care and/or the police will have a very clear view and it will be important for the school to work with relevant agencies to ensure a consistent approach is taken to information sharing. The DSL/Deputies will meet the victim's parents or carers with the victim present to discuss what arrangements are being put in place to safeguard the victim and understand their wishes in terms of support they may need and how the report will be progressed. The DSL or Deputies will also meet with alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss any arrangements that are being put into place that impact an alleged perpetrator, such as, for example, moving them out of classes with the victim and what this means for their education. The reason behind any decisions will be explained. Support for the alleged perpetrator will be discussed. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) would generally attend any key meetings and take a lead on the case(s). Other agencies may be invited to attend meetings with parents/carers for both the victim and perpetrator.

The school will base all decisions on a clear behaviour and anti-bullying policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. We recognise that parents and carers may well struggle to cope with a report that their child has been the victim of an assault or is alleged to have assaulted another child. Details of organisations that support parents will be provided to support them and will also be signposted on the school website in the parent/carers' section.

It is also important that intra familial harms are understood and any necessary support for siblings following incidents.

### **Safeguarding other children**

Consideration will be given to supporting children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape and assault by penetration. Witnessing such an event is likely to be traumatic and support may be required. Following any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, it is likely that some children will take "sides". The school will do all it can to ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s), and any witnesses, are not being bullied or harassed. Social media is very likely to play a central role in the fall out from any incident or alleged incident. There is the potential for contact between victim and alleged perpetrator(s) and a very high likelihood that friends from either side could harass the victim or alleged perpetrator(s) online and/or become victims of harassment themselves. As part of its risk assessment, the school will consider any additional potential support needs to keep all of their children safe. Policies, processes, and the curriculum offer will be kept under constant review to protect all children. Reports of sexual violence and/or harassment (especially

where there is evidence of patterns of behaviour) may point to environmental and or systemic problems that could and should be addressed by updating relevant policies, processes, or relevant parts of the curriculum.

### **Discipline and the alleged perpetrator(s)**

With regard to the alleged perpetrator(s), the school will follow the guidelines outlined in the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy. Disciplinary action maybe be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or children's social care are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not in itself prevent a school from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities, about what happened, and imposing a penalty accordingly. This is a matter for the school and should be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) will take a leading role. The school will consider if, by taking any action, it would prejudice an investigation and/or any subsequent prosecution. Careful liaison with the police and/or children's social care will help the school to make a determination. It will also be important to consider whether there are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for the school to reach its own view about what happened while an independent investigation is considering the same facts.

## **Vulnerable groups (in relation to sexual harassment and sexual violence)**

### **Children with Special Educational Needs**

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be especially vulnerable to sexual harassment and sexual violence. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers.

Concerns about any children with SEND should be raised to the DSL who will work closely with the SENCO to ensure appropriate support for the child as the matter is investigated.

### **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Gender Questioning (LGBT)**

The section of KCSIE 2025 on gender questioning children remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published.

We recognise that pupils who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bisexual or gender questioning (LGBTQ+) can be targeted by other children. See our behaviour policy for more detail on how we prevent bullying based on gender or sexuality.

We also recognise that LGBTQ+ children are more likely to experience poor mental health. Any concerns should be reported to the DSL.

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

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

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

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

At the Stonebridge School, we will ensure that all staff are vigilant and take action to support all pupils.

## **BULLYING**

Our policy on bullying is set out in our school Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy. Staff should follow the guidelines in this policy as bullying is now considered under peer-to-peer abuse. We acknowledge that children who bully other children may need to be considered under child protection procedures of the school.

## **ONLINE BULLYING & CONDUCT**

All incidents of bullying will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour Policy, E-Safety and ICT AUP Policy. Where necessary, incidents will be escalated to the three safeguarding partners (police, health and social services).

## **RACIST INCIDENTS**

Our policy on racist incidents is set out in our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy. It acknowledges that a single serious incident, repeated racist incidents or to allow or condone racism may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## DOMESTIC ABUSE

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:

- physical or sexual abuse;
- violent or threatening behaviour;
- controlling or coercive behaviour;
- economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and
- psychological, emotional or other abuse.

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

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. It can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can also include ill treatment that isn't physical, as well as 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.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children and affect their health, wellbeing, development and ability to learn.

As a school we have signed up to Operation Encompass whereby the police inform us if they have been called out to an incident of domestic abuse that involves any of our children so that we can best prepare a safe and supportive environment when they come into school. The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

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

## PREVENT

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

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence
- **Extremism** is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:
  - Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
  - Undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
  - Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results outlined in either of the above points
- **Terrorism** is an action that:
  - Endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people;
  - Causes serious damage to property; or
  - Seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system

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

Schools have a duty to prevent children from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. The DSL, or designated Prevent lead, will undertake in-depth Prevent awareness training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies. They'll make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school from becoming involved with or supporting terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force.

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

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

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour.

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

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

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

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 **always** take action if they are worried.

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 DSL) 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.

The school adopts the government's 'Prevent' initiative and seeks to address any issues through four key areas as suggested by the government:

- Leadership and values
- Teaching, learning and the curriculum
- Pupil support processes
- Managing risks and responding to events

## **LEADERSHIP AND VALUES**

The school community including staff and parents are expected to demonstrate an adherence to the school's core values and staff Code of Conduct and model expected behavior continually. This is through:

- building ties with all local communities, seeking opportunities for linking with other schools
- staff identifying children whose behaviour suggests that they are being drawn into radicalisation or extremism and being able to deal with a young person saying something unpalatable, incendiary or offensive
- exploring and promoting diversity and shared values between and within the school communities
- creating explicit values that are inclusive of all pupils and develop critical personal thinking skills
- understanding young people's preconceptions. These may reflect extremist or otherwise offensive thinking, but rather than ignoring them, allowing the views to be aired and dealt with.

## **TEACHING, LEARNING AND THE CURRICULUM**

- Explore key issues through the curriculum and through pupil participation and safeguarding processes.
- Implement social and emotional aspects of learning through circle time, PSHE curriculum.
- Use of drama, assemblies, books to promote tolerance and understanding and building in discussion opportunities and group exercises, and taking an approach that emphasises "honest realism" rather than shying away from controversial details.
- Address and explore issues through The Stonebridge School Values.
- Through cross curricular links offer opportunities for discussions.
- Having a curriculum that actively promotes an understanding of fundamental British Values.

## **PUPIL SUPPORT**

- Support those at risk of being isolated.
- Use restorative approaches to repair harm caused.
- Use of social skills groups and Place to Be and other therapeutic interventions to explore deep rooted issues.
- Create a safe place for pupils to discuss issues that they experience.
- Support parents through work with the PSA.

### **Managing risks and responding to events**

- If staff suspect that a child may be at risk, the concern would be recorded following all safeguarding concerns as highlighted in this policy; the Safeguarding form would be completed and handed in to a DSL.
- Challenge and deal with all prejudices including Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and other prejudices.
- Use 'safe to learn' anti-bullying strategies to minimise hate and prejudice-based bullying.
- Referrals made based on concerns and relevant agencies contacted.
- Parental support through meetings and support from the PSA.

## **CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION (CME)**

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

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

- Go missing from school or home and are subsequently found in areas away from their home
- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM

- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

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

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 a least two up to date contacts 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 (2025) 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. Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:
  - leave school to be home educated
  - move away from the school's location
  - remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
  - are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
  - are permanently excluded

We will ensure that pupils who are expected to attend the school, but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority. When a pupil leaves the school, we will record the name of the pupil's new school and their expected start date. The Attendance Officer will consult with the DSL. Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending or complete tasks remotely and does not, we will:

- Contact the parents/carers to establish the reason for non-attendance.
- Families for whom the school have not made contact will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- The social worker(s) of children with a multi-agency plan will be notified about their absence as well.
- We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details through our newsletters, website messages and social distanced conversations at school.

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

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

## **ATTENDANCE**

The school will carry out daily registration and absences will be dealt with in accordance with the school's attendance and punctuality procedures by the Attendance Officer and the correct codes used in light of any government guidelines relating to remote education. The attendance and absence procedures will be instigated when;

- there is a repeated pattern of absence
- the reason for absence is unclear or unexplained

- a member of staff has concerns about a pupil's absence
- the parent/carer cannot be contacted to get a reason as to why the child is absent is not accessing the learning set remotely.
- a parent/carer informs that their child is leaving or has left the school.

When a pupil leaves the school, the school will make contact with the receiving school to ensure that the child is registered and has started to attend. Child Protection documents will be sent to the receiving school where relevant through secure means of transfer either electronically or in person.

When a pupil leaves the school without clear indication of a receiving school, the school will notify the EWO so that tracking procedures can be started.

The school will also inform the EWO of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

## **ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION**

The DfE recognises that 'many home educated children have a positive learning experience'. However, it can also 'mean that some children are not in receipt of suitable education. This makes them less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and supported in line with their needs'. In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, a school must make a return to the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register. Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, the LAs, schools, and other key professionals will work together to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers where possible. Ideally, this would be before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of each child. This is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker.

## **SO CALLED 'HONOUR BASED' ABUSE**

### **Honour Based Abuse (HBA)**

Honour based violence (HBA) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour; these may include 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. Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual violence. There is no, and cannot be, honour or justification for abusing the human rights of others. 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. The school recognises that incidents of Honour Based Abuse (HBA) involving children at primary school may be scarce though not impossible. However, it is imperative that staff are aware of such issues that may affect families or involve families in our school and consequently the children at our school through older siblings or other family members.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is physical abuse**

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 years old and 8 years old.

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

### **Symptoms of FGM**

FGM may be likely if there is a visiting female elder, there is talk of a special procedure or celebration to become a woman, or parents wish to take their daughter out-of-school to visit an 'at-risk' country (especially before the summer holidays), or parents who wish to withdraw their children from learning about FGM. Staff should not assume that FGM only happens outside the UK.

### **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 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
- Fracture or dislocation of legs/arms as a result of restraint
- Spend long periods of time away from a classroom during the day
- with bladder or menstrual problems
- Severe pain in groin area
- Haemorrhage
- Being withdrawn - emotional and psychological shock (exacerbated by having to reconcile being subjected to the trauma by loving parents, extended family and friends);
- Urinary infections
- Change in physical appearance/dress & body language

Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy DSL) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. The Serious Crime Act 2015 sets out a duty on teachers to notify police when they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. In schools, this will usually come from a disclosure (unlike in the medical profession where an observation may have been made). Teachers must personally report cases to the police where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out by calling 101; and then report any such cases to the DSL/ headteacher. Cases should be reported by the close of the next working day at the latest. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases. Where there is a risk to life or likelihood of serious immediate harm, the case must be reported immediately to the police by calling 999 if appropriate.

### **Forced Marriage (FM)**

A Forced Marriage (FM) is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where pressure is a factor. This is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage. Forced Marriage is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence. Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Whistleblowing may come from younger siblings.

Forced Marriage is a criminal offence since June 2014.

A person commits an offence under the law of England and Wales if he or she:

- uses violence, threats or any other form of coercion for the purpose of causing another person to enter into a marriage, and
- believes, or ought reasonably to believe, that the conduct may cause the other person to enter into the marriage without free and full consent.
- practises any form of deception with the intention of causing another person to leave the United Kingdom, and
- intends the other person to be subjected to conduct outside the United Kingdom that is an offence under subs (1) or would be an offence under that subsection if the victim were in England or Wales.

Any information pertaining to Forced Marriage must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Leads who will contact the relevant agencies. Staff must not attempt to intervene directly in such cases. Issues around human rights are addressed through the curriculum focusing on key aspects such as rights of girls, individualism, Saying No.

### **MENTAL HEALTH**

All staff at the Stonebridge School are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Mental health concerns about a child are also safeguarding and staff must report these to the DSL or a deputy DSL. School staff are not expected or trained to diagnose mental health conditions or issues, but may notice behaviours that may be of concern.

Only trained professionals can diagnose mental health needs, but, as with other safeguarding issues and abuse, school staff are in a good place to spot changes in children that suggest they may have, or be developing, a mental health issue. Staff are trained to be alert to changes – these could be physical, behavioural, or emotional. Staff are aware that:

- Mental health needs can also make children more vulnerable to abuse, or be an indicator that a child is experiencing abuse
- Abuse, neglect, exploitation and other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences can affect children's mental health
- That some children will have developed anxieties related to coronavirus, or found the long period at home hard to manage. For other children, the crisis might have exacerbated existing mental health needs, like self-harm or eating disorders

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that various issues have on pupils' mental health and that signs of mental health issues could be indicators that a child is being significantly harmed or has been harmed. Staff will look out for behavioral signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed. Mental wellbeing will be taught through our curriculum and when faced with cases that require specialist intervention, in conjunction with the SENCO and parents/carers, families will be referred to appropriate agencies such as CAMHs, GPs and other forms of therapy. The necessary referrals will be made and support triggered for the children.

## **MODERN SLAVERY**

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. All staff (especially in the office are best placed to raise concerns around the identity of children as the children are enrolled into the school) must pass on any concerns about modern day slavery.

## **CHILD ABDUCTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY INCIDENTS**

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents near a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents/carers, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. Staff must ensure that they are handing children to the relevant adult at the end of the school day. Parents/Carers are to call the office to inform staff of any new appointed adults that will collect their children. Admin staff must ensure that authorisation is gained from the parents/carers before a child/ren are handed to an adult not on the contact list. All staff to liaise with a member of SLT if they need further support. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own), it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. As a school, we provide outdoor-safety lessons delivered by teachers or by local police staff. These lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities to deal with safeguarding risks rather than simply warning them about all strangers.

## **CHILDREN AND THE COURT SYSTEM**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds. The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained. Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers and will be used to support families when needed.

## **CHILDREN WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IN PRISON**

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. We are aware that families may not wish to share with the school information relation to a family member being in prison however whenever this information is shared, the DSL will work with the family and with relevant agencies to support the children to help mitigate any negative consequences for those them.

## **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property must be passed on to the DSL/Deputies as soon as possible. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The new duties shift focus to early intervention and encourage those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis. In most cases school staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 and 17 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's social care will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy DSL) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

## **KEY GROUPS TO BE MONITORED BY THE DSL**

### **CHILDREN WITH A SOCIAL WORKER**

At the Stonebridge School we recognise that when a child has a social worker, it is an indicator that the child is more at risk than most pupils. This may mean that they are more vulnerable to further harm, as well as facing educational barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and poor mental health. We take these needs into account when making plans to support pupils who have a social worker.

The DSL/Deputy DSLs have regular touch base meetings with the children. The school facilitates social workers to carry out 1:1 work and support with the children at school. Meetings with the school nurse are also facilitated by the school. The Admin team inform the DSL when children without a social worker are absent and this information is passed onto the social worker. The overall wellbeing and educational outcomes are monitored by the DSL and necessary actions taken.

### **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - (LAC)**

The DSL is responsible for Looked After and those recently leaving care. We keep a list of pupils who are looked after by the local authority. In the light of the research that shows that these pupils fare less well at schools than their peers and to narrow this gap, we monitor their progress and wellbeing carefully by:

- being involved in and following the guidance set out in the pupil's personal education plan (PEP)
- oversees the general well-being and progress of all LAC children.
- offering in school support such as anger management, play therapy or social skills training as appropriate.
- targeting pupil premium specifically to support children in care.
- attending any liaison or review meetings held on their behalf, including speaking for them or acting as their advocate at such meetings should they request it, and keeping in touch with social workers and/or carers
- monitoring their attendance carefully and reporting any unexplained absence to social care and the Educational Welfare service
- monitoring their academic progress carefully to try to ensure they are making good progress in school making full use of "tracker" systems
- informing Year Leaders that they are on the looked after register without breaching confidentiality so he/she knows to register any concerns speedily to the safeguarding team
- being careful not to accept any under achievement just because the child is 'looked after'
- looking out for difficulties with home learning or resources that may be a result of their being in care and liaising with carers to organise and manage their work and by providing the resources needed
- enlisting the support of and liaising with other agencies as appropriate

- checking that they have access to all elements of school life, including visits and other activities, and by giving these pupils the opportunities to take part in those self-esteem projects/residential organised by the school as and when appropriate.

## **SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIPS & ADOPTION**

We also keep a record of those pupils who are looked after by someone other than a parent, Adopted or on Special Guardianship plans. We offer them a support package and work with external services appropriate to their particular circumstances.

## **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 and neglect, 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.

## **YOUNG CARERS**

It is the responsibility of the DSL to keep a record of those pupils who play the part of a major carer for a family member. However, such families do not often publicise their situation for fear of social care involvement. We offer a support package to these pupils appropriate to their individual situation. This package would contain elements of the support offered to pupils looked after by the local authority.

## **CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES**

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. They are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers. At the Stonebridge School our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

We recognise that pupils with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- Pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils
- The potential for pupils with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges

- Cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so

At the Stonebridge School, we provide extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place, for example children can use pictures and drawings supported by adults that are familiar to them, use of Makaton or pecs to support communications.

## **SAFEGUARDING IN THE EARLY YEARS**

### **Staff Ratios**

We ensure that staff ratios are compliant with statutory guidance to keep children safe.

In our Nursery;

- At least 1 member of staff is a school teacher or has another approved level 6 qualification
- There is at least 1 member of staff for every 13 children
- At least 1 other member of staff holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification

In reception classes there are never more than 30 children per teacher, except where permitted exceptions apply. There is secure process for children to be dropped off and collected at the end of the school day.

## **ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDING MEASURES**

### **ACCIDENTS & WELFARE**

If an accident occurs, the child/ren are sent to the medical rooms. The Welfare officer then judges whether any medical attention is required. In cases when children are medically attended to, a first aid slip is sent home to the parents/carers and a copy of it is kept in school. The welfare officer is first aid trained as well as a number of other adults in various classes in the school. Where a child requires medication regularly, a meeting will be held with the welfare officer and parent/carer and a plan is set out, outlining the frequency of the medication and dosage. The parent also signs a letter to consent that the welfare officer can administer the medication.

### **Pediatric First Aid**

The Welfare Team staff have valid Pediatric First Aid Training; this is updated regularly and in line with statutory guidance. In addition to this, all the Nursery Nurses and reception class teachers also have Pediatric First Aid Training. There is also at least one member of staff in each year group who has been first aid trained. More than half of the SMSAs have also had pediatric first aid training so that they can attend to children during playtimes.

### **Medication**

All parents/carers have to complete a form to give consent children who require medication to be administered during the school day. Medication is kept in the Welfare Room and in the Nursery for the Nursery children. If a child requires more complex medication to be administered, a meeting is held with the Welfare Team, the School Nurse or relevant medical professional, parents/carers to complete a risk assessment for the child and for any additional training to happen. A risk assessment will then be written by the Welfare Team and is shared with relevant adults who will read it and sign. A copy will be kept in the Welfare Room.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Site Team oversee other health and safety requirements and report this to Senior Leaders including site security. Daily checks are carried prior to staff and children coming on site and actions taken. Our Health & Safety policy are set out in separate documents. They reflect the consideration we give to the protection of our children within the school environment.

## **SITE SAFEGUARDING**

The school safeguards the site in a variety of ways. All entrances to the school building are secure. Access to the school site is via the main office and all visitors are expected to sign in and wear a visitor's badge. All members of the school have a fob and an identification badge which has their name and role. A weekly survey is carried out by the site manager and the fire alarm is tested on a weekly basis as well. Ongoing issues are raised by staff and these are logged for the site staff to deal with. These are monitored regularly and actions and outcomes are written in response to issues.

## LETTINGS AND SAFEGUARDING

The **school** is dedicated to ensuring the safeguarding of its pupils at all times. It is a requirement of hire that **hirers** abide by the **schools'** requirements in respect of safeguarding. Any failure from the **hirer** in this respect will result in the hire being terminated.

It is the responsibility of the **hirers** to ensure that safeguarding measures are in place while hiring out the space. If there is a chance that those hiring the premises will come into contact with pupils, for example if the hire occurs during **school** hours, or when pupils may be present in the **school** (during after **school** clubs or extra-curricular activities), we will ask for confirmation that the **hirers** have had the appropriate level of DBS check.

The **hirer** will be required to have appropriate safeguarding policies in place, including safeguarding and child protection, and shall provide copies of these policies on request to the **school**.

The **hirer** confirms that, should any safeguarding concerns present themselves during the hire of the **school** premises, they shall contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead by calling the **school** on 0208 9656965 or email [safeguarding@stonebridge.brent.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@stonebridge.brent.sch.uk) as soon as reasonably practicable.

## FIRE DRILLS & LOCKDOWN

Fire drills are carried out half termly and the findings are reported to the governors and actions are written and followed up by site staff. The school has Lockdown Procedures and Senior Leaders ensure that children and staff practise what to do should so that they know how to keep themselves safe.

## INTIMATE CARE

Intimate care is any care which involves carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. The school is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. Where a member of staff has carried out intimate care the parent/carer should be informed when the child is collected from school. More details can be found in the Intimate Care Policy.

## SAFEGUARDING IN THE CURRICULUM

At the Stonebridge School, pupils are taught about how they can keep themselves and others safe, including online, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. 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 Children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. Our school will therefore support all pupils by:

- encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying – PSHE, Circle Time, Worry Box, SEND support, Lunchtime and After School Clubs & 1:1 sessions with Senior Leaders.
- promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the school – School Core Values, Year Group assemblies, Collective Worship through class assemblies, PSHE and Circle Time.
- offering the support through specialist agencies as part of Early Help.
- liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- notifying Social Services as soon as there is a significant concern.
- providing continuing support to a child about whom there have been concerns when moving from one class teacher to another or who leaves the school by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover.
- ensuring that children who are at risk are closely monitored.
- ensuring that monitoring procedures are up to date and regularly reviewed.
- children will be given time & privacy should they wish to talk to an adult.
- ensuring the school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all children and adults a sense of being respected and valued.

- including in the curriculum opportunities for PSHE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help – Curriculum Map for PSHE across the school.
- having an E-safety policy which emphasises how children can be safe when using the Internet. Staff are trained and themes of e-safety are looked at through the curriculum and assemblies throughout the year.

## ONLINE SAFETY

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

To address this, our school aims to:

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

### The 4 key categories of risk

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying, and
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group (<https://apwg.org/>).

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

- Educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
  - The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
  - Keeping personal information private
  - How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
  - How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they're a witness rather than a victim
- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required and at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:

- Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to school for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
- Staff will not take pictures or recordings of pupils on their personal phones or cameras
- Make all pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in school, use of the school's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the [DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (described above) from the school's IT systems.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly

This section summarises our approach to online safety policy. For full details about our school's policies in these areas, please refer to our online safety policy which can be found on our [www.stonebridgeprimary.co.uk](http://www.stonebridgeprimary.co.uk).

## Cybercrime

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

Cyber-dependent crimes include;

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above. All concerns of this nature must be passed onto the DSL immediately.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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

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

The Stonebridge School will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our Behaviour and Anti bullying policy and Artificial Intelligence Policy.

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

## **SAFEGUARDING MEASURES RELATING TO STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

### **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

The school is committed to safer recruitment processes and ensures that all new members of staff are safe to work with children. All staff, volunteers and students have an enhanced DBS check. The school will deploy the harms test to ensure the suitability of all staff working in the school. This in regard to a person's conduct outside school, and need not include a child, for example, domestic abuse of a partner.

It is the responsibility of the member of staff, volunteer or student to make the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or Business Manager aware of any changes to their DBS or of any such incidents which may impact on their suitability for the role within which they are working. From March 2016, the government has introduced the requirement for all governors of maintained schools to undergo an enhanced DBS check in order to "provide reassurance to the governing body that an individual is not disqualified from holding office as a governor due to criminal convictions". 128 checks will also be carried out on governors as well as relevant checks for overseas staff. The school holds a single Central Record with relevant data for all members of staff, governors and volunteers. All supply staff are added to the Single Central Record (SCR). Checks for supply teachers are supplied by their agencies and they are then checked by the Admin Officer who oversees the Single Central Record.

### **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

At the Stonebridge School, we recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the headteacher without delay; any concerns about the headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors who can be contacted by contacting the office. All information will be passed on to the chair of Governors directly. Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

The headteacher has to decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern or allegations that meet the harms threshold. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see below).

Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

The guidance in KCSIE (Part Four) will be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers and volunteers has:

behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;

possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;

behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or

- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (also includes behaviour outside the school).

This includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school or college, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk. Where appropriate an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person works will be undertaken. Advice from the local authority designated officer (LADO) will be sought.

All allegations of this nature must be reported to the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher (if the headteacher is unavailable). If the concern is about the headteacher then staff should report to the concern to the Chair of Governors. All concerns must be reported without delay. A "case manager" will lead any investigation. This will be either the headteacher, or, where the headteacher is the subject of an allegation, the chair of governors or chair of Governors. Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold are referred to as 'low level concerns'. (\*Person could be anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.) Allegations should be reported to the LADO 'without delay'.

Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation. The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school or college, or a combination of these.

### **Low-level Concerns; concerns that do not meet the harms threshold**

Concerns may be graded Low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation; and the person\* has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Staff should be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards. Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing, including:

- name\* of individual sharing their concerns
- details of the concern
- context in which the concern arose
- action taken

Records must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. The school will follow the recommended guidance to keep all records at least until the individual leaves their employment. Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO. The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again. (\* if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible).

### **Non-recent allegations**

Where an adult makes an allegation to a school or college that they were abused as a child, the individual should be advised to report the allegation to the police. Non-recent allegations made by a child, should be reported to the LADO in line with the local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations. The LADO will coordinate with children social care and the police. Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago it happened.

### **PHYSICAL INTERVENTION**

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort and at all times be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may very well be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures. The school follows The DFE guidance Use of Reasonable Force (2013) alongside Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention (2019). If staff are involved a situation where they have to restrain a child. A Safeguarding Incident form is completed and the incident discussed with the DSL/Deputy DSLs. Parents/carers are informed of the incident. The member/s of staff may also have supervision with the DSL/Deputy DSLs. The incident is also uploaded onto CPOMs.

## **LONE WORKING**

Staff are advised to inform another colleague if they are working in a one to one situation with a child. This situation should be avoided wherever possible. Rooms should be selected with a window in the door or the door should be left open. School staff are advised to avoid situations where allegations may be made against them by avoiding working in one to one situations that are not in a public area.

## **WHISTLEBLOWING**

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude, actions or conduct of colleagues. These concerns should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher. Concerns about the Headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors. Where there are concerns about the way that safeguarding is carried out in the school, staff should refer to the Whistle-blowing Policy. A whistleblowing disclosure must be about something that affects the general public such as:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- an legal obligation has been breached
- there has been a miscarriage of justice
- the health or safety of any individual has been endangered
- the environment has been damaged
- information about any of the above has been concealed.

The NSPCC runs a whistleblowing helpline on behalf of the government, the number is 0808 800 5000.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

All new staff and volunteers will be given an induction. The Induction Training is mandatory will include;

- the safeguarding and child protection policy;
- the behaviour policy;
- the staff code of conduct policy;
- the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies). (see KCSIE 2025). All staff will sign a declaration confirming that they have received an induction and understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

### **Regular staff training**

All other staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All staff will receive regular safeguarding training in relation to national updates as well as any safeguarding updates within the school.

### **Other training opportunities**

The DSL and Deputies will attend training every two years; and in addition to formal training, their knowledge and skills will be refreshed at regular intervals, at least annually.

Safer Recruitment training will be made available to all relevant staff and governors who are involved in the recruitment process.

## **EDUCATIONAL VISITS**

All educational visits and visitors must be link to the curriculum and should be agreed by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator prior to the visit. Staff will be expected to complete a risk assessment highlighting control measures that they will implement for the visit to ensure the safety of the whole group. Parents/carers will be informed about local visits however their consent will be sought for visits that are not local to the school. Educational Visits Procedures are set out in separate documents. They reflect the consideration we give to the protection of our children within when undertaking school trips and visits.

## **VISITORS**

All visitors to the school will undergo relevant safeguarding checks to ensure that they are suitable to work with children and appropriately supervised. The staff member organising the visit is responsible for liaising with the admin officer who carries out these checks. Key aspects of the checks for visiting speakers will include:

- a formal procedure for inviting speakers, which involves approval by a member of SLT and a clear understanding of why the speaker has been chosen
- a list of appropriate checks on the suitability of the person, which may include internet searches and/or contacting other schools where the person has spoken previously

- although not always possible, it is useful to invite speakers from an established company, charity or other group whose aims are well-documented
- a document for the speaker to read and sign, to ensure that they understand they must abide by the school's equality commitments; that there must be no statements which might cause offence to others, or otherwise undermine tolerance of other faiths or beliefs; and there must be no extremist material.
- an understanding that the speaker will be expected to talk with staff about the content of the presentation before the event; speakers and staff must allow time for this discussion, whether it is on the day or beforehand
- an understanding that such talks and presentations will not be used to raise funds, without the prior written permission of the Headteacher
- arriving at reception in good time to book in, and must bring suitable identification. Although viewing DBS certificates may be appropriate, most visiting speakers will not be in 'regulated activity' and so will not necessarily have a DBS certificate to present
- being supervised at all times and not left alone with pupils, unless they have confirmed DBS checks.
- understanding that their presentation will be brought to an early end, if the content proves unsuitable.

After the presentation, an evaluation form should be completed which will include feedback from staff, note any contentious subject areas or comments, and state whether the speaker could be booked again in the future. Once a person has visited a school, future checks should be proportionate.

### **Use of school premises for after school activities/ non- school related activities**

For all after school activities that are supervised by the school staff, all the child protection and safeguarding arrangements will apply. When other organisations use the school premises for events that involve young people/children or during a time when young people or children are on site, the service provider will have to demonstrate appropriate safeguarding and child protection arrangements as outlined in Keeping Children Safe 2025 (part 2). The safeguarding arrangements should be included in any lease or hire agreement; (including inspecting these as needed); as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

### **INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR BY VISITORS**

The school expects all the school community to adhere to the school's core values. Where any visitor is causing harassment, anxiety and distress, (HAD) the school will record such incidents and further action such as a ban from the school premises may be enforced.

### **RECORD KEEPING**

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

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the rationale for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as local authority children's social care or the Prevent programme, etc. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.
- Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.
- Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school.
- If a child for whom the school has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another school, the DSL will ensure that their child protection file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main pupil file.
- To allow the new school/college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- 5 days for an in-year transfer, or within
- The first 5 days of the start of a new term
- In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving school and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the safety of the child.
  
- Further information about safeguarding record keeping arrangements:
- Are records are kept electronically on CPOMs.
- All concerns are logged on CPOMs by a member of staff that it was reported to.
- All records have password protected and only the DSL and Deputy DSL have access to the records.
- All records will be transferred to another school if the child is transitioning to a high school or to another primary school.

#### UPDATES

This policy will be updated regularly; at least annually.

## **APPENDIX 1: TYPES OF ABUSE**

### **Physical abuse**

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

#### Indicators include:

- Marks and Bruises
- Suspicious stories about how marks made
- Frequent bumps etc
- Broken Bones
- Frightened / nervous at simple movements / jumpy
- Jumping when adult raises voice
- Introverted, shy or withdrawn
- Tearful
- Poor behaviour / Bullying others
- Repeating inappropriate behaviour/ bullying
- Violent outbursts
- Hair missing
- Scratches / burns
- Stories include violent descriptions / pictures depict regularly violent scenarios
- Hitting or aggressive to other children
- Sleeping in class
- Self-conscious when changing for PE
- Restless and fidgety
- Wetting / soiling them self
- Mood swings
- Little contact with other children
- Poor attendance
- Use of bad language
- Physically threatening behaviour
- Shouting

#### Additional signs:

constant injuries that can't always be explained / change of mood / withdrawn or aggressive / change of character or behaviour / self-comfort / verbal abuse / non-cooperation / poor health / unkept / fear of adults / absences / strange behaviour after weekends or holidays / forgotten pe kit / flinching in response to sudden movements / frequent medical appointments / do not want to go home at the end of the day / unable to form relationships with adults / self-protection / guarding / lack of eye contact / constantly ill with no real symptoms / fearful of adults

### **FGM**

FGM involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. FGM is illegal in the UK and it is also illegal for someone to arrange for a child to go abroad with the intention of having the procedure carried out.

#### Indicators include:

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- Fracture or dislocation of legs/arms as a result of restraint
- Spend long periods of time away from a classroom during the day
- with bladder or menstrual problems

- Severe pain in groin area
- Haemorrhage
- Being withdrawn - emotional and psychological shock (exacerbated by having to reconcile being subjected to the trauma by loving parents, extended family and friends);
- Urinary infections
- Detached / isolated
- Change in physical appearance/dress & body language
- Withdrawn aggressive
- Unable to form relationships with adults
- Changes in attitude, personality or behaviour
- Changes in interaction with others
- Feelings shown through writing or art work
- Peer group problems
- Extremes of emotion
- Underachieving

Teachers have a mandatory statutory duty to report cases where FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 to the police by calling 101. Teachers must also inform the DSL. Non-teaching staff must inform the DSL or Deputy DSL if they discover FGM has been carried out. Any cases where staff suspect a child has undergone FGM or is at risk of having FGM carried out must be reported to the DSL.

## **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Children witnessing the effects of domestic abuse between the parents or carers can also be victims of domestic abuse.

### Indicators include:

- Low self esteem
- Withdrawn / frightened / shy
- Secretive
- Makes little eye contact
- Emotionally finds it difficult to maintain relationships with peers and adults
- Jumpy or stuttering during conversations with adults
- Cries a lot / very sensitive
- A Loner
- Pictures use mainly dark colours
- Stealing
- Mood swings
- Lack of concentration
- Very quiet, speaks little
- Poor social skills
- Bullies others
- Very unsettled
- Anti-social behaviour
- Lack of confidence

### Additional signs:

wetting / soiling / self-harm / self-comfort / rocking / change in appetite / underachievement / timid / tearful / anorexic / bulimic / do not want to go home at the end of the day / attention seeking / changes in standard of work / depression / introverted / withdrawn / changes in relationships / no friends / hard to make friends / needy / clingy / change in physical appearance/dress & body language / withdrawn aggressive / changes in

attitude, personality or behaviour / changes in interaction with others / peer group problems / extremes of emotion / alien to praise

### **DOMESTIC ABUSE (EMOTIONAL ABUSE)**

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

#### Indicators include:

- Disproportionate reactions (overly apprehensive, tearful, angry or fearful)
- Withdrawn or quiet
- Negative relationships with opposite sex (children and peers)
- Aggression or bullying
- Tantrums
- Vandalism
- Problems in school, truancy,
- Difficulty with speech problems that were not there before
- Difficulties with learning
- Attention needing
- Struggle to make or keep friendships
- Reluctance to come to school
- Reluctance to go home with parents
- Aggressive comments or language (sometimes not expected for that age)
- Self-harming
- Nightmares or insomnia
- Bed-wetting
- Anxiety, depression, fear of abandonment
- Feelings of inferiority
- Constant colds, headaches, mouth ulcers, asthma, eczema
- Seem afraid or anxious to please
- Need for constant acceptance
- Be possessive over friends or belongings

#### Additional signs:

change of mood / withdrawn or aggressive / change of character or behaviour / self-comfort / verbal abuse / non-cooperation / / unkept / fear of adults / absences / strange behaviour after weekends or holidays / extreme responses to correction/ flinching in response to sudden movements / frequent medical appointments / do not want to go home at the end of the day / unable to form relationships with adults / self-protection / guarding / lack of eye contact / constantly ill with no real symptoms / fearful of adults

### **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

#### Indicators include:

- Hiding under clothes / baggy clothes
- Inappropriate physical contact with other children
- Withdrawn / shy
- Aggressive to children of the opposite sex
- Scared of others
- Don't like being touched
- Touch themselves or others
- Won't change for PE
- Very quiet or loud
- Use of sexual language
- Stories or drawings include sexual connotations
- Exposing self
- Hesitate when wanting to talk to teacher
- Soiling/ wetting / stains on underwear
- Repeated Urine problems
- Re-enacting sexualised behaviour as part of play
- Bruising
- Sexually specific behaviour or / and language
- Abusive to other children
- Little physical contact, finds hugs touches difficult will move away.

Additional signs:

sexual play – home corner / playground / inappropriate / provocative sexual language / medical difficulties / change of mood / withdrawn or aggressive / change of character or behaviour / masturbation / anorexic / bulimic / self-harming / do not want to go home at the end of the day / secretive / withdrawn / change in physical appearance/dress & body language / unable to form relationships with adults

### **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)**

CSE is a form of abuse that occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved from local authorities or other countries (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

Indicators 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 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);
- Sexual identity.

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

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

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

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be forced to work in cannabis factories, coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

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

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

### **Child sexual exploitation**

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

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

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

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam.

CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

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

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

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

## **NEGLECT**

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

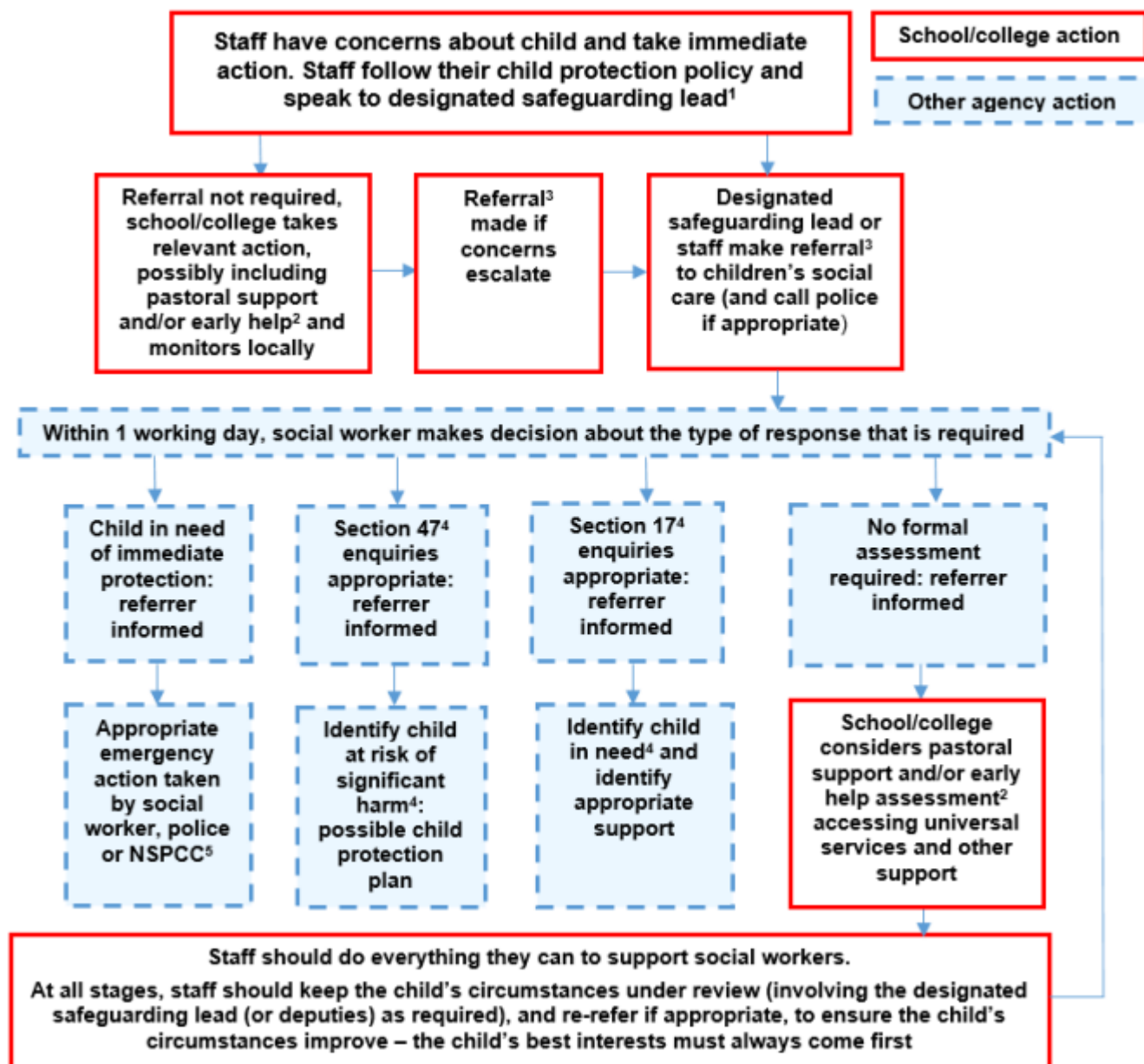
### Indicators include:

- Child smells, clothes are dirty, hair unbrushed
- Appears unhealthy but is always in school when unwell
- Low attendance – EWO involvement
- No Breakfast
- Is unfamiliar with basic routines of feeding self and toileting etc
- Always hungry
- Late before and after school
- Attention seeking / needs praise to feel confident
- Poor hygiene, does not know how to use toilet properly
- Angry
- Parents have little contact with school. Do not attend parents evening
- Homework not completed / PE kit repeatedly forgotten
- Correct clothes not worn to school i.e. not warm enough in winter, not cool enough in summer
- Steal things
- Come to school on their own when they are too young
- Lying
- Older siblings care for younger children and take on the parent role.
- Cries a lot
- Makes slow progress
- Packed lunch does not provide child with a balanced diet
- Over eats at lunchtime
- Untidy / unkempt
- Parents do not follow up medical requests from school i.e. need for eyes to be tested.
- Instability in family, different carers/ boyfriends
- Sleeps in class / Goes to sleep late little routine at home

### Additional signs:

Inadequate packed lunch / unkempt / scruffy / sleeping during lessons / overly tired / repeated health problems that go unchecked or are not dealt with / headlice / ringworm not dealt with and constantly reoccur /disorganised / attendance / punctuality (end & beginning of day) / do not want to go home at the end of the day / overweight / unable to form relationships with adult / content of writing or drawing / underachieving

## APPENDIX 2: ACTIONS WHERE THERE ARE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD



1 In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part four of this guidance.

2 Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

3 Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. See Working Together to Safeguard Children.

4 Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details are in Working Together to Safeguard Children.

5 This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO)

### APPENDIX 3: GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING DISCLOSURES BY CHILDREN

When a child makes a disclosure, they may well experience deep anxiety over the consequences of this, for themselves and for any person they may name. They need reassurance, support and your honesty.

Never promise that you will keep secret anything a child discloses.

Wherever possible, staff should ensure that, while still giving confidentiality, the door of classrooms are kept open. (This may not be appropriate in some situations).

Always be clear that you may have to tell the DSL or the Headteacher and that they will decide what to do.

Re-assure the child that they have not done anything wrong.

If a child needs further re-assurance tell them that they have done the right thing / a brave thing, by telling.

Don't give false assurances like 'Everything will be ok'.

When a child is making a disclosure let them do the talking. Do not ask any leading questions e.g. 'did he/she hit you?' We need to know 'what' happened, 'when' it happened and, if possible, by 'whom'. Don't try to find out if it has happened before.

You might say 'Tell me a bit more' or ask something like 'How did you feel?' As a rule the child should do the talking. Give them plenty of time to respond – long silences are ok.

If they are reluctant to speak any further don't push them. A trained person will ask the questions at a later time, if necessary.

If you are in doubt about a question being a leading one don't ask it.

Never make judgements about any disclosures e.g. 'That was bad thing your mum/dad did'.

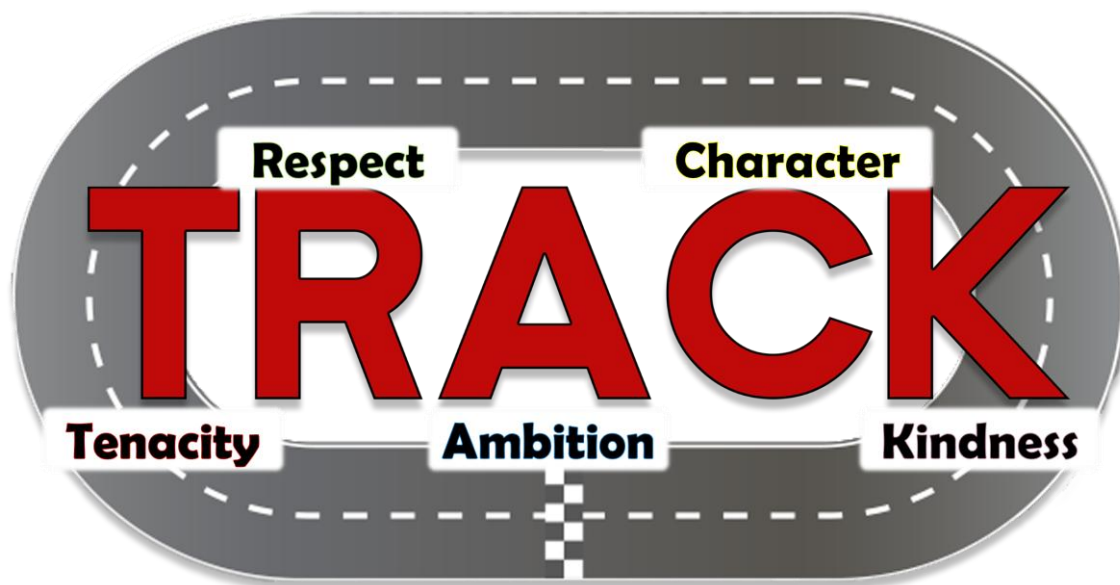
It is important to listen. Try to record the conversation or make notes as the child is talking, you may say, 'As this is so important is it alright if I write down what you are saying?' If you feel this is not appropriate listen and then write your record as soon as possible. It should be an accurate record of what they say and what you say. Hand the record over to the designated teacher

Be aware of the time as you are talking with the child – if it is in the afternoon action may well need to take place before the end of school day.

Never discuss a disclosure with anyone other than the DSL / Headteacher (Assistant Headteachers in the Designated teacher's and Head Teacher's absence) or class teacher.

## APPENDIX 4: VALUES

Our Core Values



### VALUES CELEBRATED EVERY MONTH

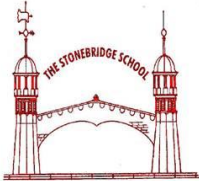
MONTH	VALUE CELEBRATED
September	Respect
October	Equality
November	Self-control
December	Generosity
January	Compassion
February	Forgiveness
March	patience
April	fairness
May	determination
June	Honesty
July	Optimism

## APPENDIX 5: PROMOTING FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES

We believe that it is important to have a curriculum that actively promotes the fundamental values of the society in which we live. We are very proud of the meaningful ways we do this in our school.

Democracy	Rule of Law	Individual Liberty	Mutual Respect and Tolerance of those with Different Faiths and Beliefs
Peer voting for roles and responsibilities e.g. School Council School Council have to write a letter of application Pupil Voice decisions made by School Council e.g. school lunch menus Black History Month Disability Awareness Month Pupil Voice feedback about teaching and learning Debates within lessons PHSE Curriculum	High standards and expectations of behaviour and the impact and consequences of not following rules. Class Behaviour Charters E-safety lessons Road safety awareness Anti-bullying week Visits to places that promote equality	School Council Children encouraged to take on additional responsibilities e.g. playground buddies Celebration of achievements in assemblies and through certificates and house points Circle Time Place2 Talk E-safety lessons Pupil Voice feedback Black History Month Disability Awareness Month Our 12 School Values	RE Curriculum Assemblies Whole School celebrations for Eid, Diwali and Christmas Visits to local places of worship Exploring different cultures through the curriculum particularly art and music

## APPENDIX 6- WELFARE CHECK FORM

THE STONEBRIDGE SCHOOL Shakespeare Avenue, Stonebridge, NW10 8NG  Tel: 020 8965 6965				
NAME OF CHILD				
DATE OF BIRTH		YEAR GROUP		
ADDRESS				
INFORMATION NEEDED FOR DATE				
ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT				
ACADEMIC PROGRESS				
BEHAVIOUR AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS – with peers and staff				
ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY				
CONTACT WITH PARENTS / CARERS – General contact and Parent’s Evening attendance				
ANY SPECIFIC INCIDENTS OR MATTERS OF CONCERN				
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED – P.E. Kit/ Homework				

## APPENDIX 6- SAFEGUARDING CONCERN FORM

Date	Time	Location
Full name of child	Year & Class	Those Involved

### Details of concern

*Please ensure that this is an accurate account and including any specific details, e.g. location and rough size of injuries. You must only use the child's exact words - do not paraphrase.*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please ensure that this is handed in to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

## **APPENDIX 7: KEY DOCUMENTATION**

At the time of reviewing the policy, the following documents were referred to. Staff need to be mindful that these links may not work as legislation changes. When the policies are reviewed following new legislation, these will be amended as and when needed.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2025

[Keeping children safe in education 2025](#)

Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023

[Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, 2015

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What\\_to\\_do\\_if\\_you\\_re\\_worried\\_a\\_child\\_is\\_being\\_abused.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation, 2022

[HM Government - Multi-agency statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Prevent, 2023

[Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Information sharing, 2024

[DfE non statutory information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)