

# **2024/25 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for The Mulberry Bush School**

Consistent with Keeping Children Safe in Education [2024](#)



**Published 2024, to be reviewed by August 2025**

Date agreed and ratified by Zoe Lattimer (Safeguarding Trustee 18/09/24)

The policy must be reviewed and updated at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for educational establishments. Updated by the Education Safeguarding Advisory Team.

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Who is who?	Name(s)	Contact details
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Locality Community Support Service (LCSS) worker	Kalli Hampton	<a href="mailto:LCCS.North@oxfordshire.gov.uk">LCCS.North@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a> 03452412703
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	Team number	0345 050 7666
Out of hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT)		0800 833408
Police		101 or in emergencies 999

## The Mulberry Bush Charity Safeguarding Statement:

The Mulberry Bush charity is committed to safeguarding the well-being of all individuals who come into contact with the charity and its activities. We commit to ensuring that all concerns or suspicions of a safeguarding nature arising in the course of the charity's work will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. We provide training to all trustees, staff and volunteers, so that they are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to respond to concerns appropriately. All children and vulnerable adults, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs have the right to protection from all types of harm or abuse and the right to be treated with respect and dignity. We have thorough procedures focussed on Safer Recruitment, selection and vetting of all those working with and for the charity whether paid or in a voluntary capacity. All appointed staff undertake comprehensive Safeguarding training relevant to their role in the charity. In addition to this Charity Safeguarding Statement, the following policy is in place for our services; The Mulberry Bush School, The Mulberry Bush Outreach, The Mulberry Bush Consulting, The Mulberry Bush Outreach and The Mulberry Bush Third Space (MB3), including our Archives.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

*For the purpose of this policy, The Mulberry Bush School and wider organisation will be referred to as 'the school'. The policy directly relates to any child currently living within the residential home and attending the educational setting.*

*For the purpose of this policy, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be referred to DSL and DDSL.*

- 1.1 It is essential that everybody working for the school understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in ensuring children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm. The school is committed to safeguarding children and aims to create a culture of vigilance. All staff should ensure that any decisions made are in the best interests of the child.
- 1.2 Our children's welfare is our paramount concern. The trustee body will ensure that the school will safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and work together with agencies to ensure that the school has adequate arrangements to identify, assess and support those children who are likely to suffer, or suffering abuse, harm or neglect or where significant harm is suggested. [What to do if you think a child is at risk of abuse or neglect - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board \(oscb.org.uk\)](https://www.oscb.org.uk/what-to-do-if-you-think-a-child-is-at-risk-of-abuse-or-neglect)
- 1.3 This policy provides the basis for good practice within the school for safeguarding work. It should be read in conjunction with the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board Safeguarding procedures, plus the safeguarding appendix document. These are in keeping with relevant national procedures and reflect what the partnership considers to be safe and professional practice in this context.
- 1.4 This policy applies to **all** members of staff within the school (including the wider organisation). This includes all permanent, temporary and support staff, trustees, volunteers, contractors and external

service or activity providers. The school recognises that everyone who comes into contact with children and their families/carers has a role to play in ensuring that they are effectively safeguarded.

## **2. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

- 2.1 This policy and the accompanying procedure have been developed in accordance with the following statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures:

[Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children, December 2023: Working together to safeguard children: statutory framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children, December 2023: Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2024  
www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2](#)

## **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1 The school's DSL's have overall designated responsibility for safeguarding and ensures there is always appropriate cover for this role. The responsibilities of all DSL's are described in detail in Appendix A.
- 3.2 The trustee body are collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are fully embedded within the school's ethos and reflected in the school's day-to-day practice.
- 3.3 All staff members, trustees, volunteers and external providers know how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, how to respond to children who disclose abuse and what to do if they are concerned about a child.
- 3.4 The school acknowledges the need to treat everyone equally, with fairness, dignity and respect. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged, and children are supported to understand how to treat others with respect. We also have a statutory duty to report and record any of the above incidents.
- 3.5 The school and trustees take all reasonable action to limit children's exposure to the risks from the school's IT system and ensures the school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness in line with national expectations.

## **4. SUPPORTING CHILDREN**

- 4.1 The school will support children by:
- ensuring the content of the curriculum includes social and emotional aspects of learning through PSHE, RSHE and other curriculum contexts and ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding so that they 'recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it'.
  - ensuring a comprehensive curriculum response to online safety, enabling children and (where appropriate), parents and carers to learn about the risks of new technologies and social media and to use these responsibly.

- encouraging children to talk about feelings and are listened to, providing children with a range of appropriate adults to approach as needed.
- supporting children to feel safe, develop confidence and independence and increase the development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying.
- liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children, including Early Help and preventative services as required in Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- considering intra familial harms and having appropriate follow up with statutory agencies for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.
- having a behaviour policy that is aimed at supporting vulnerable children in the school. The behaviour policy outlines measures to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
- having clear procedures in place for addressing and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse, including harmful sexual behaviours, sexual violence, and sexual harassment (which could take place on or off-line).
- acknowledging the importance of 'contextual safeguarding', <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/> which considers wider environmental factors in a child's life that may be a threat to their safety and/or welfare.
- If in the event of any child being looked after under a Private Fostering arrangement, local authorities will be alerted. On admission to school, and at other times, the school will be vigilant in identifying any private fostering arrangement (including siblings not at our school)
- acknowledging that a child that is looked after (CWCF) or has been previously looked after by the Local Authority potentially remains vulnerable and all staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to support these children.
- taking positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with disadvantages affecting children with certain protected characteristics in order to meet their specific need.

## 5. DEALING WITH A CONCERN AND RECORD KEEPING

5.1 If a member of staff has a concern about a child or if a child tells them they are being, or at risk of being, abused, exploited or neglected, staff will appropriately respond by listening and offering reassurance, staff should:

1. Make an accurate factual record as soon as possible on **Clear Care electronic reporting system** including details of:
  - Dates and times of their observations
  - Dates and times of any discussions in which they were involved.
  - Any injuries
  - Explanations given by the child / adult.
  - What action was taken?
  - Any actual words or phrases used by the child.

- Any questions the staff member asked (remembering not to ask any leading questions)

**In the unlikely event that that member of staff is not able to have access to Clear Care, or the adult is a visitor/ volunteer without access**, then the concern should be sent via email to the safeguarding email: [safeguarding@mulberrybush.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@mulberrybush.org.uk) and a DSL spoken to:

2. Listen to the wishes and feelings of the child, do not to make any promises but keep the child informed (age appropriate) of action that will be taken.
  3. If the child is in immediate harm, a DSL or DDSL must be contacted immediately.
  4. In the case of a medical attention, a first aider or school nurse will be contacted immediately.
  5. In the very unlikely event that a DSL or DDSL cannot be contacted, or in the instance of overnight/ weekends where on call cannot be contacted, staff will refer directly to MASH, the police (where appropriate, and where there is an indication of significant harm), or the LADO Team where an allegation has been made about an adult. If the child has a social worker, they should also be informed.
- 5.2 The DSL will ensure any decisions and justifications for those decisions will be recorded on Clear Care with clear outcomes documented following any action taken.
- 5.3 The school will discuss any concerns we have with the child's parents and carers (where appropriate). Where social workers are involved, they will be informed.
- 5.4 Safeguarding records are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), which place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure. See ICO guidance '[For Organisations](#)' which includes information about your obligations and how to comply, including protecting personal information and providing access to official information. See also NSPCC Guidance: [Child protection records retention and storage guidelines \(nspcc.org.uk\)](#)
- 5.5 All safeguarding records will be transferred in accordance with GDPR/KCSiE to the child's receiving school/setting within 5 school days.
- 5.6 Whilst the Headteacher and Head of Group Living are DSL's, regular conversations within the school management safeguarding meetings will be had about any child presenting with significant concerns, and all other staff will be informed on a need-to-know basis.

## **6. THE ROLE OF AN APPROPRIATE ADULT IN SAFEGUARDING**

- 6.1 The Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) act advises that "The role of the appropriate adult (AA) is to safeguard the rights, entitlements and welfare of juveniles and vulnerable persons", with there being further elaboration that the AA is expected to observe that the police are acting properly and fairly in relation to a vulnerable detained persons rights a and entitlements, as well as helping the detained person understand their rights.

## **7. INFORMATION SHARING**

- 7.1 The school recognises that all matters relating to safeguarding are confidential.



- 7.2 All staff members have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children.
- 7.3 All staff members who come into contact with children will be given appropriate training to understand the purpose of information sharing to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- 7.4 The school will ensure that staff members are confident about what they can and should do according to the law, including how to obtain consent to share information and when information can be shared without consent.
- 7.5 Staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

## **8. MULTI AGENCY WORKING**

- 8.1 The school will develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies, including agencies providing early help services to children, the police and Children's Social Care.
- 8.2 The school will ensure that relevant staff members (where appropriate) will participate in multi-agency meetings and forums, including child protection conferences and core groups, to consider individual children,
- 8.3 The school will participate in Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs), other reviews and file audits as and when required to do so by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board. We will ensure that we have a clear process for gathering the evidence required for reviews and audits and embed recommendations into practice and complete required actions within agreed timescales.

## **9. SAFER RECRUITMENT**

- 9.1 The school is committed to ensuring the development of a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our children and staff.
- 9.2 The trustees and senior leadership team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes outlined within guidance.
- 9.3 The school maintains an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) in line with statutory guidance. This will be monitored and reviewed to ensure compliance by the trustees and the school's leadership team.
- 9.4 At least one of the interviewers will have completed the safer recruitment training.
- 9.5 The school will ensure that contractors and providers are aware of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures and that this will be referred to and followed if an allegation is made regarding a member of their agency. The school will require that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations use the school's procedures to report concerns.
- 9.6 The school will seek assurance that employees and volunteers provided by these organisations and working with our children have been subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding checks in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, 2024*. If assurance is not obtained, permission to work with our children or use our school premises may be refused.

- 9.7 When the school commissions services from other organisations, we will ensure that compliance with our policy and procedures is a contractual requirement.
- 9.8 The school advises all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children that could be a transferable risk to their role.

## **10. TRAINING**

- 10.1 All staff in the school are expected to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and must be able to respond appropriately.
- 10.2 Our DSL team undergoes training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. Our DSL and any members of our DSL team undergo their DSL training every 2 years to fulfil their role.
- 10.3 At our school, all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training at induction with ongoing information and updates shared throughout the year.
- 10.4 Separate training is provided to all new staff on appointment as part of their induction process including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring. This also includes Cyber Security training. This information will be regularly updated.
- 10.5 Our nominated safeguarding trustee receives appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place at our school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.
- 10.6 The school ensures that staff members provided by other agencies and third parties, e.g. supply teachers and contractors, have received appropriate safeguarding training commensurate with their roles before starting work. They will be given the opportunity to take part in whole-school training if it takes place during their period of work for the school.
- 10.7 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide briefings to the school on any changes to safeguarding legislation and procedures and relevant learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR's) in line with Working Together 2023. These will occur annually or more frequently when necessary and will include safeguarding and child protection updates such as online safety (for example, via emails, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), to provide them with the skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- 10.8 The school will maintain accurate and up to date records of staff induction and training.

## **11. WHISTLEBLOWING IN A SAFEGUARDING CONTEXT**

11.1 Whistleblowing is a term that is used when staff want to report a concern within their Organisation. Examples being:

- a criminal offence, for example fraud
- someone's health and safety is in danger
- risk or actual damage to the environment
- a miscarriage of justice

- the company is breaking the law, for example does not have the right insurance
- you believe someone is covering up wrongdoing

While the school has a separate whistleblowing policy, this is a summary that outlines the process when there is a concern that safeguarding issues have not been reported or followed correctly. **This safeguarding policy does not replace the whistleblowing policy** and should be read in conjunction with it.

Our whistleblowing policy allows staff to raise concerns about the management of the organisation and to provide avenues on how to take action.

Different procedures apply depending on whether the matter involves a suspicion or allegation against a member of staff or the organisation as a whole, or whether it involves a suspicion, complaint or disclosure of maltreatment occurring outside the school.

If you are concerned that safeguarding processes are not being followed which puts children at risk, you should, in the first place you should normally raise concerns with your immediate line manager or a member of the school's leadership team.

If you believe that a member of the school staff is **harming a child (an allegation)** and this has been reported to your senior manager and no / insufficient action has been taken, or the member of staff you have concerns about is a member of the school leadership team, then you can contact the Designated Officer's team LADO on 01865 810603 or email: [lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

If you believe your line manager is involved, then you should approach a member of the school leadership team, If you feel a member of the school leadership may be involved, you should approach the CEO or Chair of Trustees and/or one of the Designated Officer's team (LADO) – see contact details above. If the concerns relate to an adult in the wider organisation, then appropriate steps should be taken to follow the safeguarding procedures in terms of escalation to the senior management team.

If you would prefer to raise your concerns outside of the school, then you are able to contact the NSPCC whistleblowing line on 0800 028 0285 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) for national organisations or make contact with Oxfordshire County Council.

If you believe that a child is being abused by individuals outside the school, you can make a referral to Children's Social Care by calling the MASH on **0345 050 7666** (office hours) or **0800 833 408** (outside of office hours).

Further guidance for staff can be accessed through: [Child abuse concerns: guide for practitioners - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/child-abuse-concerns-guide-for-practitioners) and through the NSPCC website [What is Child Abuse & How to Keep Your Child Protected | NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse-how-to-keep-your-child-protected/)

## 12. RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OR CONCERN

12.1 While the school has a separate allegations policy, this is a summary that outlines the process which should be followed. **This safeguarding policy does not replace the policy and should be read in conjunction with it.**

### There are two levels of allegation/concern:

- allegations that may meet the harms threshold
- allegation/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold – referred to as 'low -level concerns'

### **Allegations that may meet the harm threshold:**

12.2 The Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) must be told of allegations against adults working with children and young people within 24 hours by completing **An Allegation and Consultation Referral Form**. This includes allegations relating to individuals or organisations using the school premises for the purpose of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations or service providers that run extra-curricular activities).

The trustees should refer to this guidance if there is an allegation against a member of the senior leadership team. This includes all cases that meet the harm threshold where a person is alleged to have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. This includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school or college, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children and is known as transferable risk. Where appropriate an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person works should be undertaken. If in doubt seek advice from the local authority designated officer (LADO)

Any allegation or concern raised by a member of staff about a member of staff within education or group living, **where it feels it meet the harm threshold** needs to be recorded in writing and sent to the Head of Group Living or Headteacher as soon as possible but within the same day (in accordance with KCSE). **This needs to be followed up with a phone call/or face to face contact.** Any allegations or concern raised about a member of staff within the wider organisation should be raised with the Organisational Safeguarding Lead and/or HR.

### **Allegations that do not meet threshold: 'low-level concerns'**

12.3 A low-level concern is any concern - no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff handbook and /or Teacher's Standards. This includes inappropriate conduct outside of work but does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- being 'unboundaried' in their behaviour towards 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
- humiliating children

Any low-level concerns which are shared about agency staff and contractors will be notified to their employer. The school will consult with the LADO if we are unsure whether a low-level concern meets threshold.

If a member of staff does have a low-level concern about a colleague, they should inform one of the designated safeguarding leads. In addition, they will be required to follow this up in an email. Often it is the case that a low-level concern can be managed through supervision and line manager support. The school encourages self-reflection and transparency should a member of staff feel they wish to share any concerns about their own practice.

Such concerns should always be recorded and reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

### **13. SITE SECURITY**

- 13.1 All staff members have a responsibility to ensure our buildings and grounds are safe, this includes ensuring the safety of any visitors into school.
  
- 13.2 The school will not accept the behaviour of any individual (internal or external to The Mulberry Bush School) that threatens school security or leads others, child or adult, to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse the person access to the school site.

### **14. QUALITY ASSURANCE**

- 14.1 We will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures.
  
- 14.2 The school's senior management and trustees will ensure that action is taken to remedy any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in child protection arrangements without delay.

### **15. POLICY REVIEW**

- 15.1 This policy and the procedures will be reviewed every academic year. All other linked policies will be reviewed in line with the policy review cycle.
  
- 15.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that staff members, including volunteers and sessional workers are made aware of any amendments to policies and procedures.
  
- 15.3 Additional updates to the safeguarding policy and appendix will take place when needed.

**Date approved by the Trustee body:**

**Date reviewed by the Trustee body:**

## APPENDIX A:

### THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

#### Managing referrals:

- Refer cases to MASH and the police, where appropriate, in a timely manner avoiding any delay that could place the child at increased risk.
- Refer to the Oxfordshire Threshold of needs to assist with decision making - [Oxfordshire-Threshold-of-Needs-2021.pdf \(oscb.org.uk\)](#)
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff members on matters of child protection and safeguarding, including contextual safeguarding. Have responsibility to ensure there is at least one key adult for 'Operation Encompass'\* and a point of contact for Child Exploitation.  
\*Guiding principles of the scheme are here [Home : Operation Encompass](#)
- To ensure that the relevant Local Authority is notified if children are persistently absent or [missing from education](#)

#### Record keeping:

- Keep detailed, accurate, secure written (or online) records of all safeguarding and welfare concerns, discussions and decisions made including the rationale for those decisions. This should include instances where referrals were or were not made to another agency such as LA children's social care, LADO etc.
- The school maintains contact details of the child's external network including social workers (if applicable), parent and carer details (with indication of who has parental responsibility) and those who are not permitted contact.
- Where parents/carers have parental responsibility, schools should have at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergencies.
- Maintain a chronology of significant incidents for each child with safeguarding concerns, including a record of decisions made and the reasons for those decisions.
- Ensure such records are kept confidentially and securely and separate from the child's educational record.
- When a child leaves, the school will contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the new school or college and will ensure that the safeguarding file is forwarded to the receiving setting within 5 school days, retain evidence to demonstrate how the file has been transferred; this may be in the form of a written confirmation of receipt from the receiving setting and/or evidence of recorded delivery.

#### Multi-agency working and information sharing:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead recognises and is committed to their responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies in line with statutory guidance.
- The school is not the investigating agency when there are child protection concerns. We will, however, contribute to the investigation and assessment processes as required. We recognise the importance of multi-agency working and will support attendance at relevant safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings or other early help multi-agency meetings. Within our school, this is done in working partnership with our Family Network Practitioners.

#### Training:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Quality Assurance Manager will ensure all staff undertake appropriate annual updates in order to:

- be able to recognise signs of abuse and how to respond to them, including special circumstances such as child sexual exploitation, child on child abuse, sexually harmful behaviours, contextual safeguarding.
- be alert to the specific needs of children in need (as specified in section 17 of the Children Act 1989), those with special educational needs, those susceptible to exploitation, radicalisation and subject to seeing, listening or hearing domestic abuse.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any action the school takes to protect them.
- Ensure each member of staff has read and understood the school's safeguarding policy and procedures, including providing induction on these matters to new staff members. Induction and training must include the school's behaviour policy and the school's procedures for managing children who are absent from education, as well as the staff handbook, the safeguarding policy, responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring in relation to ICT and dealing with disclosures and managing allegation processes.
- Organise face-to-face whole-school Safeguarding training for all staff members at least **every three years**.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure their training remains in date (every 2 years)
- All staff should be aware of key policies within their school which supports safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction.
- Our school will allocate time and resource every year for relevant staff members to attend training and receive continuous professional development opportunities.
- Our Charity Learning and Development Lead will maintain accurate records of induction and mandatory safeguarding training.

#### **Awareness raising:**

- Ensure our school's safeguarding policies are known, understood and used appropriately
- Ensure The Mulberry Bush School's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum), and the procedures are updated and reviewed regularly
- Ensure The Mulberry Bush School's safeguarding policy is available publicly to help parent/carers and external networks understand the school's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the school's policy on ICT and understand the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

#### **Quality assurance:**

- In conjunction with our Quality Assurance Manager, monitor the implementation of and compliance with policy and procedures, including periodic audits of Safeguarding files (at a minimum once a year).
- Complete the 175/157 annual safeguarding report and submit to the Local Authority
- Provide regular reports to the trustees detailing changes and reviews to policy, training undertaken by staff members and relevant data about numbers of children in need of help, support and safeguarding.
- Where appropriate, take lead responsibility for remedying any deficiencies and weaknesses identified in safeguarding arrangements.

#### **Support for staff:**

Given the nature of the work done at our school, we have a built-in therapeutic framework for staff through the medium of reflective space, group supervision and individual supervision etc. Staff can also access 'My Healthy Advantage, the 'Wellbeing Portal' and the 'Employee Assistance Programme' Details available on The Bush Telegraph.

## APPENDIX B: SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

### 16.1 Definitions

- **Abuse:** 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 (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.
- **Children** are any people who have not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday; a 16-year-old, whether living independently, in further education, in the armed forces or in hospital, is a child and is entitled to the same protection and services as anyone younger. KCSIE applies to providers of post 16 education as set out Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021.
- **Child protection** is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and refers to activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm or significant harm is suggested.
- **Early help** is support for children of all ages that improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse. [Early Help and the Locality Community Support Service \(LCSS\) - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board \(oscb.org.uk\)](https://www.oscb.org.uk). As a Residential Special School with children accessing the provision from different local authorities, it might be that some families are supported by Early Help in the community.
- **Harm** is ill treatment or impairment of health and development, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.
- **Safeguarding children** is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.
- **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined as:
  - providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
  - protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
  - preventing 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
  - promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the child.
  - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

A bespoke helpline is available for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance. If you are concerned about something, you can contact the NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education on **0800 136 663** or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

- **Significant harm** is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in the family in the best interests of the child. Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 states '**where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development; his or her**



**health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.'**

**Vulnerable children:** Given the nature of the work that we do at our school, all children who are part of our school have significant vulnerabilities. This list is not exhaustive.

- Has already experienced significant and traumatic adverse childhood experiences through their early years or in utero.
- Experiencing the loss of a parents/carer.
- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs,
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan).
- Has a mental health need.
- Has experiences of being a young carer.
- Is presenting risk factors of having the potential showing of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- In previous settings have historically gone missing from home/care/ education.
- In previous settings has experienced multiple suspensions / has experienced permanent exclusion from schools.
- Has been through multiple foster care placements.
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual and/or criminal exploitation.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending?
- Has been in a family circumstance which presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.
- Is at risk of so-called 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- Has been a privately fostered child.

## **16.2 Categories of abuse:**

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such that it causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development and conveying that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far 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.
- interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying)
- causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger or the exploitation or corruption of children

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

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

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Educational neglect is also considered: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/neglect/>

- **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, 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.
- **Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or 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 in education (KCSIE 2024).

### 16.3 Mental health:

All staff should also be 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.

- Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern immediate action should be taken, following their safeguarding policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing>

The department has published advice and guidance [Preventing bullying - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools](#) (which may also be useful for colleges).

## **APPENDIX C: FURTHER INFORMATION**

### **17.1 Female genital mutilation**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM or already having suffered FGM. [FGM-learning-resource.pdf \(oscb.org.uk\)](#)

- **Indicators** - There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines, and Chapter 9 of those Guidelines (pp42-44) focuses on the role of schools and colleges. Section 5C of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) gives the Government powers to issue statutory guidance on FGM to relevant persons. Once the government issues any statutory multi-agency guidance this will apply to schools and colleges.
- **Actions** - If staff have a concern, they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. Mandatory reporting commenced in October 2015. These procedures remain when dealing with concerns regarding the potential for FGM to take place.
- **Mandatory Reporting Duty** -From October 2015, Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) placed a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead and involve the MASH/Police as appropriate.

### **17.2 Fabricated or induced illness**

Staff must be aware of the risk of children being abused through fabricated or induced illness (FII). There are three main ways of the carer fabricating or inducing illness in a child.

These are not mutually exclusive and include:

- fabrication of signs and symptoms. This may include fabrication of past medical history.
- fabrication of signs and symptoms and falsification of hospital charts and records and specimens of bodily fluids. This may also include falsification of letters and documents.
- induction of illness by a variety of means

Where this is identified and considered a risk a referral will be made to the MASH for support and guidance. School may involve other agencies in making their assessments. That could include school nurse, community paediatrician, occupational therapists for example.

### **17.3 Gang and youth/serious violence**

Children and Young People who become involved in gangs are at risk of violent crime and as a result of this involvement are deemed vulnerable. Agencies and professionals have a responsibility to

safeguard these children and young people and to prevent further harm both to the young person and their potential victims. Risks associated with gang activity include access to weapons (including firearms), retaliatory violence and territorial violence with other gangs, knife crime, sexual violence and substance misuse.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy>

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CSE and CCE may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing and are subsequently found in areas away from their home.
- have been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)

#### **17.4 Faith based abuse**

Our policy recognises the 'National Action Plan to Tackle Abuse linked to faith or belief' which describes this abuse as:

*'Not about challenging people's beliefs, but where beliefs lead to abuse that must not be tolerated. This includes belief in witchcraft, spirit possession, demons or the devil, the evil eye, or djinns, dakini, kindoki, ritual or muti murders and use of fear of the supernatural to make children comply with being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation. The beliefs which are not confined to one faith, nationality, or ethnic community.'*

When this type of abuse is suspected staff will make a referral to the MASH Team for support and guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief>

#### **17.5 Risk of trafficking**

Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime to the UN Convention (2000) (ratified by the UK on 6 February 2006) defines trafficking as:

- "Trafficking of persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat of or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.
- The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used.
- The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article.

- “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

### **17.6 Risks associated with parent/carer mental health**

The majority of parents who suffer mental ill-health can care for and safeguard their children and/or unborn child. Some parents, however, will be unable to meet the needs and ensure the safety of their children.

Within our school, our approach is to recognise, seek support and work with parents and carers where possible involving external networks and our Family Network Team. The Designated Safeguarding Lead would escalate to the MASH Team or existing social worker if they are concerned that the child involved is being placed at immediate risk of harm following any contact they may have with their parents/carers.

### **17.7 Drugs and alcohol**

Children can be at risk of drugs and alcohol directly and indirectly. They may be at direct risk of having access to these substances (see guidance on gangs) or indirectly because they effect family life at home through use by parents/carers, siblings, child-minders etc. Risks associated with drugs and alcohol and should be built into the curriculum policy.

More details can be found at: [Substance Misuse - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board \(oscb.org.uk\)](http://oscb.org.uk)

### **17.8 So called honour based and forced marriages**

Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage refers to a collection of practices used to control behaviour within families to protect perceived cultural or religious beliefs and honour. Violence can occur when offenders perceive that a relative has shamed the family or community by breaking their ‘code of honour’. Honour Based Violence cuts across all cultures and communities: Turkish, Kurdish, Afghani, South Asian, African, Middle Eastern, South and Eastern European for example. This is not an exhaustive list. Where a culture is heavily male dominated, HBV may exist.

‘A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some vulnerable adults, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.’ In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages.

For more information see:

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/forced-marriage/>

<http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk/>

### **17.9 Preventing radicalisation**

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of our wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation, it is possible to intervene to prevent susceptible people being radicalised.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an

extremist ideology. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may need help or protection. School staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme.

From 1 July 2015 all schools are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 ('The CTSA 2015'). Schools must have regard to statutory PREVENT GUIDANCE issued under section 29 of the CTSA 2015. Paragraphs 57-76 of the Prevent guidance are concerned specifically with schools' responsibility to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism." This duty is known as the Prevent duty. It applies to a wide range of public-facing bodies.

The statutory Prevent guidance summarises the requirements on schools in terms of four general themes:

- risk assessment
- working in partnership
- staff training
- IT policies

Schools are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them. Schools and colleges should have clear procedures in place for protecting children at risk of radicalisation. It is not necessary for schools and colleges to have distinct policies on implementing the Prevent duty. The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements. For example, governing bodies and proprietors of all schools should ensure that their safeguarding arrangements consider the policies and procedures of Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCBs).

Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the revised [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#).

The **Prevent** guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Individual schools are best placed to assess the training needs of staff in the light of their assessment of the risk to pupils at the school of being drawn into terrorism. As a minimum, however, schools should ensure that the designated safeguarding lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.

The school ensures that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet. We have a filtering and monitoring system in place as well as the children being taught how to stay safe online. Further information and guidance are available on the OSCB website:

[Radicalisation - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board \(oscb.org.uk\)](https://www.oscb.org.uk)

The Department for Education has also published advice for schools on the Prevent duty and is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts other sources of advice and support. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

## Channel

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. It provides a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be susceptible to radicalisation. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages and an individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided.

Section 36 of the CTSA 2015 places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must be chaired by the local authority and include the police for the relevant local authority area. Following a referral, the panel will assess the extent to which identified individuals are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and, where considered appropriate and necessary, consent is obtained, and support arranged and provided to those individuals. Section 38 of the CTSA 2015 requires partners of Channel panels to co-operate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in providing information about a referred individual. Schools and colleges are required to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education and, as partners, are required to cooperate with local Channel panels. Channel guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance>

#### **17.10 Children who are absent from education.**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children who have unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. If a child doesn't return to school after a holiday or weekend away, then the child's local authority will always be contacted to ensure there is a support plan in place.

#### **17.11 Child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.**

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females and children or adults.

The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual, and it should be treated as exploitation. As well as being physical, it can be facilitated and/or take place online.

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

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child 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. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and



non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g., through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media). CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends and children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

The department provide: [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#)

A full list of indicators can be found here: [Child Sexual Exploitation - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board \(oscb.org.uk\)](#)

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

While there is still no legal definition of 'Child Criminal Exploitation' or CCE, it is increasingly being recognised as a major factor behind crime in communities, while also simultaneously victimising vulnerable young people and leaving them at risk of harm. A simple definition of CCE is: CCE often occurs without the victim being aware that they are being exploited and involves young people being encouraged, cajoled or threatened to carry out crime for the benefit of others. In return they are offered friendship or peer acceptance, but also cigarettes, drugs (especially cannabis), alcohol or even food and accommodation.

**County Lines** is a term used to describe gangs, groups or drug networks that supply drugs from urban to suburban areas across the country, including market and coastal towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines or 'deal lines.' They exploit children and vulnerable adults to move the drugs and money to and from the urban area, and to store the drugs in local markets. They will often use intimidation, violence, and weapons, including knives, corrosives, and firearms. County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery and missing persons and the response to tackle it involves the police, the National Crime Agency, a wide range of Government departments, local government agencies and voluntary and community sector organisations. County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities. Further information can be found here: [Child Criminal Exploitation - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board \(oscb.org.uk\)](#)

### **17.12 Sexual harassment, violence, harmful sexual behaviours (inc. child on child abuse, consent and 'upskirting')**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, including rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.

It is important that we are aware that sexual violence can happen, and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. 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/college. 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.

Staff must challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff should be vigilant to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing. DfE guidance situates sexual violence, sexual harassment, and harmful sexual behaviour in the context of developing a whole-school safeguarding culture, where sexual misconduct is seen as unacceptable and not 'banter' or an inevitable part of growing up. Advice about tackling and reporting sexual harassment in schools and colleges is available in the DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.



It should be recognised that these issues are likely to occur, and so schools should have procedures in place to deal with them. Groups at particular risk include girls, students who are questioning their gender, identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender+ (LGBT+), or are perceived by peers to be LGBT+, and pupils with SEND. We recognise that these children can be targeted by other children, so it is vital your school provide a safe space for these children to speak out and share their concerns with members of staff. Pupils are protected from 'upskirting', bullying, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviour, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. Staff have familiarity with the [Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED), the Human Rights Act 1998 and recent reforms to the Act and how they apply to safeguarding

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/human-rights-act-reform-a-modern-bill-of-rights/outcome/human-rights-act-reform-a-modern-bill-of-rights-consultation-response> ,

The school acknowledges the need to treat everyone equally, with fairness, dignity and respect. Any discriminatory behaviours are challenged, and children are supported to understand how to treat others with respect. We also have a statutory duty to report and record any of the above incidents. Schools must record incidents across the whole spectrum of sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexualised behaviours so that they can understand the scale of the problem in their own schools and make appropriate plans to reduce it.

All such incidents should be immediately reported to the DSL or equivalent and managed in line with our setting's child protection policies. Victims of harm should be supported by the school's pastoral system, their wishes and feelings considered, and they understand the law on child-on-child abuse is there to protect them, not criminalise them.

The appropriate safeguarding lead person should be familiar with the full guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS), Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

### **Upskirting**

'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender can be a victim. The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019.

### **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. Further information about consent can be found here: [Rape Crisis England & Wales](#) -

Sexual consent

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- the age of consent is 16

## **17.13 Digital safety, remote learning and filtering and monitoring**

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Our school strives to have an approach to online safety to protect and educate children and adults in their use of technology and has mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- **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.
- **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
- **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/>)

Our school has an online safety policy, which covers the use of mobile phones, cameras and other digital recording devices e.g. i-Pads. Whilst the children at our school do not have access to personal phones at school, they are supervised when accessing the internet whilst they're attending school or within their residential houses This has been carefully considered within schools ICT Policy and our IT service provider 'Blue Planet '. This includes the management of devices, filtering and monitoring and access to smart technology. The policy also reinforces the importance of online safety,

### **Filters and monitoring**

The trustees and the senior leadership team are doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system. This includes having appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and that there is regular review of their effectiveness.

Our Filtering and Monitoring system has:

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

The trustees and senior leadership team understand their responsibilities for periodically reviewing the effectiveness of these procedures and the standards and will discuss this with IT staff and service providers, discussing what more needs to be done to meet best practice. This includes an understanding of responsibilities to have an appropriate level of security protection and an understanding of evolving cyber-crime technologies and e-security.

Monitoring and filtering standards: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/filtering-and-monitoring-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>  
Cyber security standards: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-digital-and-technology-standards-in-schools-and-colleges/cyber-security-standards-for-schools-and-colleges>

Our school would follow <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providing-remote-education-guidance-for-schools> which is the non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education on providing high quality remote education in cases where it is not possible, or is contrary to government guidance, for some or all children to attend school.

#### **17.14 Pre appointment checks and safer recruitment**

Any offer of appointment made to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, must be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks.

When appointing new staff, the school will:

- verify a candidate's identity. Identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website.
- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity)
- obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available. ~~(DBS)~~
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role
- verify the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, follow advice on the GOV.UK website.
- if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate and verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate. The Teaching Regulation Agency's (TRA) Employer Access Service should be used to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS), and the completion of teacher induction or probation.
- carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed before online searches are carried out. Ensure that evidence of these checks has been retained.
- ensure that an applicant to be employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State for prohibition checks, or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the GTCE before its abolition in March 2012.

#### **17.15 Single central record**

The school keeps a single central record related to all adults working for the organisation. The single central record which covers the following:

- all staff (including supply staff and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school.
- The information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried route) is whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained.
- an identity check / a barred list check / an enhanced DBS check / certificate / a prohibition from teaching check
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK – overseas checks/right to work.

- a check of professional qualifications and a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom

For supply staff, schools should also include whether written confirmation that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, whether any enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of supply staff and the date that confirmation was received.

The details of an individual should be removed from the single central record once they no longer work at the school or college.