



**CLARE COMMUNITY**

PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Ratified by Governing Body	<b>CCPS LGB</b>
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**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

Date approved: **October 2024**

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## Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Prevent Lead	Lorna Stranger Head Teacher	01787 277423 lstranger@clareprimary.org
Alternate designated Safeguarding Lead (ASL)	Luba Brown SENDCo Rob Davies Mel McIvor	01787 277423 lbrown@clareprimary.org rdavies@clareprimary.org mmcivor@clareprimary.org
Nominated Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection	Stella Byrne	07948 262951
Nominated Trustee for Safeguarding and Child Protection	Keith Haisman	01787 279342
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Rennie Everett / Dian Campbell	Email on LADO@suffolk.gov.uk or LADO central telephone number 0300 123 2044
Children's Social Care – for reporting concerns	Duty and Assessment Team - Suffolk	Customer First: 0808 800 4005 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub Consultation Line: 0345 606 1499
	Duty and Assessment Team - Essex	Family Operations Hub: 0345 603 7627 Out of hours No: Telephone: 0345 606 1212
Mental Health	Access and Assessment Team	Advice Line: 0300 123 1334

Whistleblowing	NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	0800 028 0285 <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a>
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## School Ethos

At Clare Community Primary School we want to encourage and inspire creativity, giving as good a foundation as we possibly can in those vital basic skills such as reading and number within an intellectually exciting context; but we also recognise the importance of helping our pupils to develop as caring and thoughtful people, able to work and play sensitively with others reflecting our belief in kindness being pivotal to all lives.

Our sincere wish is that we can work in partnership with parents and carers to give children the best possible education and start in life. We pride ourselves on our nurturing and aspirational educational environment. We aim to give each individual the opportunity to grow and learn in a caring and well-disciplined environment, teaching them how to attain the best from their ability, to develop high self-esteem, to respect others and to enjoy the world; embodying our core values of Community, Learning, Aspiration, Respect and Enthusiasm. Above all, we want our pupils to be excited to come to school in the mornings. Safeguarding the wellbeing of our pupils is at the heart of all that we do.

## Rationale

This statutory guidance describes the roles of **all staff** (Including volunteers), as well as that of the designated safeguarding lead, the headteacher and the nominated governor for child protection.

The Trust and governing board have an overarching role in ensuring that policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law at all times. Safeguarding and Child Protection is the responsibility for all staff, governors and volunteers and this policy is to be read, understood and adhered to by all adults working within the school.

This policy is available on the school website and is included in the Staff Handbook, Volunteers' information pack and Staff Induction pack

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance;
- safer children make more successful learners;
- policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

## Child protection statement

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and are consistent with those of the Local Safeguarding Board (LSCB)

## Policy principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount;
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection;
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm;
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

## Policy aims

- To provide all staff, governors and volunteers with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities;
- To ensure consistent good practice;
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and other partners.

## The role of the Safeguarding Trustee

- Report regularly to the Trust Board to ensure that trustees can comply with their collective responsibility for making sure that safeguarding procedures are properly followed.
- Act as a co-ordinator for safeguarding local governors.
- Meet with nominated safeguarding local governors, and DSL's where appropriate, to ensure that policies remain fit for purpose and that best practice is followed.
- Receive termly safeguarding reports from local safeguarding governors in order to be alerted to safeguarding trends or patterns.
- Receive reports of safeguarding audits.
- Ensure that the child protection policy is understood across the layers of governance and by all stakeholders.
- Ensure the trustees, local governors and staff are trained sufficiently, and regularly oversee the Trust's Single Central Record, and ensure the proper procedures are in place for it to be administered correctly.

### Terminology

- **Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- **Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.
- **Staff** refers to **all** those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.
- **Staff** refers to voluntary helpers in regular contact with the school. They receive induction and Safeguarding/CP training and sign a volunteer's agreement. These volunteers are DBS checked.
- **DSL** refers to the designated safeguarding lead at the school
- **Child** includes everyone under the age of 18.
- **Parent/carer** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

## Safeguarding legislation and guidance

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- The Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 (Independent schools only, including academies and CTCs)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Teacher Standards 2021
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015

### The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, with regular updates
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has a working knowledge of LSCB procedures
- makes staff aware of LSCB training courses and the latest policies on safeguarding
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies including the LSCB
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually liaises with the nominated governor and headteacher (where the role is not carried out by the headteacher) as appropriate
- makes the child protection policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means.

### The alternate designated safeguarding lead(s):

Is/are trained to the same level as the DSL and, in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the alternate will assume all of the functions above.



## **Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct**

Please also refer to the Clare Primary School Staff (included in the Staff Handbook) and Volunteers (received in induction) codes of conduct.

Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect;
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately;
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them;
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils;
- being a good listener;
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse;
- reading and understanding the school's child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues;
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse;
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police or children's social care.

The designated person for child protection must undergo training every two years.

In addition to formal training, their knowledge and skills should be updated "at regular intervals, and at least annually".

All staff members are required to undergo child protection training that is "regularly updated". They should also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates "as required, but at least annually".

Staff should also be familiar with the school's child protection policy and procedures.

### **Abuse of position of trust**

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

Staff understand that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence.

Our Staff code of conduct is available in the school handbook which is read by all staff and reviewed annually.

## **Recruitment**

The school adopts recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. We have Safer Recruitment and selection policies and procedures in place. The statutory guidance sets out where DBS checks are required and where they are optional, and what other checks are required.

## **Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

Staff members should raise any concerns they have about a child.

The safeguarding lead will usually decide whether to make a referral to children's social care, but staff can make a referral themselves.

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage
- at risk of being drawn into extremism.
- at risk of living within a home where there is domestic violence

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

## **SEND children**

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in relation to children with SEN and disabilities. This could include an inability to communicate the abuse. These pupils will need additional support to ensure their safeguarding.

## **Children missing education**

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

As part of our attendance procedures registers are taken each morning and midday. The office check each register and contact the parents/carers of any absent children. If a child has an unexplained absence a member of SLT is alerted immediately. Procedures are then carried out to locate the pupil and if required the police will be informed.

## **Children living within a home where there is domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse has been added to KCSiE in September 2022. Below is advice from NCPCC on what domestic abuse is and how this can affect children living in a home where there is or has been domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can also happen between adults who are related to one another and can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.

Each UK nation has its own definition of domestic abuse for professionals who are working to prevent domestic abuse and protect those who have experienced it (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016; Home Office, 2013; Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, 2019; Welsh Government, 2019).

Domestic abuse can include:

- sexual abuse and rape (including within a relationship)
- punching, kicking, cutting, hitting with an object
- withholding money or preventing someone from earning money
- taking control over aspects of someone's everyday life, which can include where they go and what they wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill or harm them, a partner, another family member or pet.

## **Witnessing and experiencing domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse always has an impact on children. Being exposed to domestic abuse in childhood is child abuse.

Children may experience domestic abuse directly, but they can also experience it indirectly by:

- hearing the abuse from another room
- seeing someone they care about being injured and/or distressed
- finding damage to their home environment like broken furniture
- being hurt from being caught up in or trying to stop the abuse
- not getting the care and support they need from their parents or carers as a result of the abuse (Holt, Buckley and Whelan, 2008).

More information can be found via the following link <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse>

Spotting the signs of domestic abuse, finding support for pupils and reporting concerns is an important safeguarding duty.

## **Whistle blowing if you have concerns about a colleague**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. The school's whistleblowing code (available on the school website) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the headteacher. Complaints about the headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors or chair of Trustees.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

**NSPCC WHISTLE BLOWING ADVICE LINE 0800 028 0285 [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)**

## **Allegations against staff**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, our set procedures must be followed. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, Sept 2020)* and in the school's Allegations of Abuse Against Staff policy and procedures.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police. The school follows the procedures set out in statutory guidance when

managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity. You can find these in part four of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In such cases the school works with the police, the LADDO and H.R. following the school's disciplinary procedures. If the said member of staff resigns during the disciplinary procedures, where there is a safeguarding concern, the school is obligated to continue this to a hearing. The results of the hearing will determine whether a DBS referral is made.

## **Staff training**

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff and governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DSL. All staff, including the DSL, headteacher (unless the headteacher is the DSL) and governors will receive training that is regularly updated. All staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

## **Safer recruitment**

Our school complies with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2020) and the LSCB by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history. The school's Staff Recruitment policy and procedures set out the process in full.

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

All relevant staff (involved in early years settings and/or before or after school care for children under eight) are made aware of the disqualification and disqualification by association legislation and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the school.

Agencies and third parties supplying staff will be required to provide evidence that the appropriate level of safeguarding checks on individuals working in the School have been undertaken. This also applies to off-site Alternative Providers, who will be required to supply written confirmation that their staff have been subject to the necessary checks, in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2021*.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation will be obtained.

The school maintains a single central record of recruitment checks undertaken.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school, their contact with pupils and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

## **Contractors**

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS with barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school's day.

## **Site security**

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The headteacher will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

## **Extended school and off-site arrangements**

All extended and off-site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our school we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place and will be noted on risk assessments.

## **Staff/pupil online relationships**

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

Mobile telephones may only be used for official business in places where children are present and then only in a very limited range of circumstances.

Staff should not to give their home telephone number or their mobile telephone number to pupils. Staff may do this with parents, but must set clear professional boundaries regarding contact of any form.

Staff should not use their mobile phones in the proximity of children unless there is an emergency.

A school mobile phone is provided for off-site trips or visits.

Staff in the school, who work with children, should have all mobile telephones stored securely and switched to silent. Photographs and videos of pupils or staff must not be taken with mobile telephones.

## Conduct outside work

Staff must not engage in outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community. Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and social media and must be aware of the risks to themselves and others. It is recommended that when using social media staff should follow these guidelines:

- Posting on social media should be treated as public domain and confidentiality rules applied accordingly. **At all times professional discretion should be paramount.**
- Staff should exercise caution with 'friends' who are parents/carers of children in school.
- Staff should not have 'Friends' or have social media contact with current pupils of the school or ex pupils who are under the age of 18.
- When publishing information about yourself or having conversations with others online, it is important to be mindful of how you present yourself, who can see your content, and how you can manage this appropriately.
- Discretion needs to be exercised when making comments on 'open' pages so that school confidentiality is maintained and that the school's reputation and standing in the community is not damaged.
- When publishing information, personal contact details, videos or images ask yourself if you would feel comfortable about a current or prospective employer, colleague, pupil or parent viewing your content.
- Make sure you understand who is allowed to view your content on the sites that you use – and how to restrict access to your account where necessary. If you are not clear about how to restrict access to your content to certain groups of people, regard all of your content as publicly available and act accordingly.

## Child protection procedures

### Recognising abuse

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2016) refers to four categories of abuse. These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

## Child on Child abuse

Keeping Children Safe (DfE 2021) gives detailed guidance around peer-on-peer abuse and, in particular, sexual violence and sexual harassment. Peer-on-peer/Child on Child abuse includes:

- bullying
- physical abuse
- sexual violence
- sexual harassment
- Sharing nudes (formerly sexting)
- Initiation ceremonies

The school is clear that allegations of this nature should always be treated seriously and investigated fully. Staff training will focus on the need to understand what is meant by peer-on-peer abuse and how the school will deal with it.

Further advice can be found in the DfE document Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (May 2018)

1. 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.

2. 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 physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

3. Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are extremely complex to manage. It is essential that victims are protected, offered appropriate support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted. It is also important that other children, adult students and school and college staff are supported and protected as appropriate.

At Clare Community Primary School we make it clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up by;

- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”;
- challenging behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them; 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 (especially preventative education) is important.



## Guidance in dealing with an allegation

### Please also refer to our Behaviour policy and Anti Bullying policy

- 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 a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be anyone on the school or college staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportive and respectful of the child;
- listening carefully to the child, 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;
- 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 during the report (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;
- where the report includes an online element, being aware of searching screening and confiscation advice (for schools) and UKCCIS sexting advice (for schools and colleges). The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable.
- 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; and
- informing the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), as soon as practically possible, if the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not involved in the initial report.

***Under no circumstances should a member of staff view any photos or images that a child discloses information about. Seek immediate advice from the DSL/DDSL***

## Risk Assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should 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 should consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support;
- the alleged perpetrator; and
- all the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school or college, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.

Risk assessments should be recorded (written or electronic) and should be kept under review. At all times, the school will be actively considering the risks posed to all their pupils and students and putting adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should 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.

## Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures which can be accessed in our Anti Bullying Policy.

## Taking action

**Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".** Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, if necessary call 999
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DSL, definitely by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

## If you are concerned about a pupil's welfare

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the **welfare concern form** to record these early concerns. If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DSL.

## **If a pupil discloses to you**

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

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the DSL.** The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the pupils staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’
- not be afraid of silences
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the pupil’s mother think about it
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- report verbally to the DSL even if the child has promised to do it by themselves
- complete the **record of concern form** and hand it to the DSL as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed.

## **Notifying parents**

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children’s social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

## **Confidentiality and sharing information**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DSL, headteacher/principal or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, following a number of cases where senior leaders in school had failed to act upon concerns raised by staff, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)* emphasises that **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals. Records, concern forms and any related documentation are locked away and only the DSL and DDSL have access to these records.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held with a yellow dot sticker.

The DSL will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DSL may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection records, they will refer the request to the headteacher/DSL.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

The school's confidentiality and information-sharing procedures are available on the school website within our Data Protection policy and our privacy notices for students and staff.

## **Referral to children's social care**

The DSL will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding)

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and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

## Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated safeguarding lead, their deputy, the headteacher and the chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

## Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's **anti-bullying procedures** where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a pupil's sexual behaviour, including any known online sexual behaviour, should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

## Sexual exploitation of children

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

The school includes the risks of sexual exploitation in the PSHE and SRE curriculum. A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DSL who will inform the police if necessary.

## Honour-Based Violence

'Honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act

2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupil about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse. In England and Wales the practice is a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent in England. School staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to England.

All such incidents will be reported to the police by the DSL/DDSL

## **Radicalisation and Extremism**

The government defines extremism as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Some children are at risk of being radicalised: adopting beliefs and engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous. Islamic extremism is the most widely publicised form and schools should also remain alert to the risk of radicalisation into white supremacy extremism.

School staff receive annual training to help to identify signs of extremism. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum to enable pupils to discuss issues of religion, ethnicity and culture and the school follows the DfE advice Promoting fundamental British Values as part of SMCS (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) in Schools (2014).

## **Online protection and sharing nudes (formerly known as sexting)**

Students are not permitted to have their mobile phones on them within school hours. All students with a mobile phone are required to store these in the school office. We recognise that 3G and 4G technology allow pupils to access the internet outside of the school's firewall protection systems. Therefore they are not permitted to use personal devices within school. All allegations of 'sexting' will be dealt with immediately by the DSL/DDSL. Staff are not permitted to view any photos or content when an allegation is made. They must report the incident immediately to the DSL. If an allegation of sexting outside of school is made by a pupil this must be reported immediately to the DSL, who will investigate accordingly.

## Private fostering arrangements

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with the DSL and the school should notify the local authority of the circumstances.

## Looked after children

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children and the DSL have details of the child's social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority's virtual head for children in care.

## In the case of working online due to school closures or isolating

### Guidance from local safeguarding partners

<https://suffolksp.org.uk/coronavirus/schools-information-on-coronavirus/>

### Safeguarding pupils self-isolating

Whilst pupils are isolating or unable to attend school office staff and class teachers will keep in regular contact with the family with academic and welfare checks.

### Returning to school following Lockdown or self-isolation

Children's mental wellbeing will be monitored when children return to school.

### Emails

We are very happy to receive emails from pupils and parents, concerning home learning and we will be responding to these individually also. Please ensure that you have access to your child's email account, and are overseeing emails and their content, especially if photos are attached. I know many of you are enabling your children to respond via your own email accounts, which would be our recommended preference for primary-age children. *Acorn and Beech class will continue to communicate and receive communications via Tapestry as usual.*

### Using Video Apps

You will be invited to attend Zoom meetings via parent/carer email accounts, therefore if the meeting is joined by your child, then we will assume that you have given permission for this. These are the guidelines we are adopting and asking you to follow.

1. No recording (audio or video) of the lessons should be made by either party.
2. You or another responsible adult (nominated by yourself) is to be present in the room for the duration of the lesson (and able to see the screen) whilst online tuition takes place.
3. The lesson should take place in a living space and not in a bedroom.
4. All people in the teaching room should be appropriately dressed. For example, no pyjamas or other bed wear or dressing gowns.
5. If your child is `skyping` or `face-timing`, pre-arrange times and ensure that these are contacts known to yourselves. Adhere to points 3 and 4 above if the contact is not a close family member.

#### Children Accessing the Internet at Home

1. Research-based projects should take place in a communal area where adults can see what material children are accessing.
2. Parents and carers should check that children know to make them aware if they come across any material that makes them feel `uncomfortable`.
3. No personal details should be given out by children at any time.

The Government have also issued some new safeguarding advice for parents:

## **Guidance for parents and carers: keeping children safe online**

We have updated our information for parents and carers to include a section on keeping children safe online. It provides links to online resources that will help support parents and carers in keeping their children safe online.

Full details can be found in section 6.3 of the guidance for parents and carers on the closure of educational settings:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>



# Appendix One

## Four categories 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 (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

### Emotional abuse

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

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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### Neglect

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

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

### Domestic violence

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 has now come into law. For the first time the definition identifies that children are victims of domestic abuse, if they 'see, hear or experience' the effects of the abuse. The new statutory definition now includes not only violence, but also

emotional, coercive and controlling behaviour and economic abuse.

## **Indicators of abuse**

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

**It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.**

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSP to decide how to proceed.

## Appendix Two

### Related Safeguarding policies

- Staff code of conduct located within the staff handbook
- Volunteers code of conduct
- Physical intervention and the use of reasonable force- within our Behaviour Policy and SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy *available on website*
- Intimate care Policy and agreements
- Complaints procedure *available on website*
- Anti-Bullying and Cyber Bullying policy *available on website*
- Safe working practice, Working together to Safeguard Pupils July 2018, Keeping Children Safe September 2021
- Whistleblowing Policy *available on website*
- SEND Policy *available on website*
- Missing children – attendance policy *-available on website*
- Recruitment and selection Policy
- Grievance and disciplinary Policies
- Staff/pupil online communication *Within staff handbook*
- Hand held devices *Within Staff Handbook*
- Confidentiality and information sharing – *School handbook sent to staff and Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices available on website*