
OVERSTONE PARK SCHOOL

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



AUGUST 2026, TO COME INTO FORCE
SEPTEMBER 2026
OVERSTONE PARK SCHOOL
Overstone Park, Northampton, NN6 0DT

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator
Effective September 2026	August 2027 or as required	Mrs D York – Designated Safeguarding Lead Miss A West – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Ms J Sinnamon – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Mr Alex Neophitou - Safeguarding consultant - Focus Education

1. Policy Statement

Overstone Park School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. A child's welfare is paramount. **Overstone Park School recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.** All staff, Governing Body, volunteers, contractors and visitors have a duty to protect children from harm.

Overstone Park School aims to provide a safe, caring and inclusive environment where pupils feel secure, respected and valued. All safeguarding decisions will be made in the best interests of the child and in accordance with statutory guidance, in particular the guidance set out in KCSiE 2026, to ensure it is followed effectively throughout Overstone Park School. Safeguarding issues often overlap, and this should be recognised.

This policy applies to all pupils regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Overstone Park School has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination (including racism, derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict).

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children from maltreatment.
- Prevent impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensure children grow up in safe and effective care.
- Take action to enable all children to achieve the best outcomes.
- Establish clear safeguarding responsibilities for all adults working within Overstone Park School.
- Ensure statutory safeguarding duties are met.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Working together to improve school attendance (2026)
- Children missing education (statutory for local authorities) (2025)

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002
- Independent School Standards Regulations
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- 2025 Data (Use and Access) Act
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Crime and Policing Act 2026

Overstone Park School will review this policy annually or earlier where legislation or statutory guidance changes.

4. Safeguarding The Principals

Overstone Park School will:

- Ensure that children and their safety are at the heart of all decision-making and throughout this policy
- Maintain a culture where safeguarding is embedded throughout Overstone Park School
- Develop a trauma-informed approach towards safeguarding
- Act immediately where concerns arise.
- Listen to children and take their views seriously.
- Work in partnership with parents, carers and safeguarding agencies.
- Ensure safer recruitment practices are followed.
- Provide safeguarding training appropriate to each role.
- Maintain secure, accurate and timely safeguarding records.
- Promote early help where concerns emerge.
- Promote the targeted early help level of Family Help or universal services and community-based early help in line with the Working Together to Safeguard Children framework.
- Ensure all safeguarding decisions are child-centred and evidence-based.
- Develop a culture of support for mental health, understanding that poor mental health can lead to safeguarding concerns

5. Safeguarding Culture

Overstone Park School promotes an open and positive safeguarding culture that enables:

- Pupils to know who they can speak to.
- Staff to understand safeguarding responsibilities.
- Concerns to be reported without delay.
- Low-level concerns that are encouraged and recorded (without delay).
- Whistleblowing procedures to be understood.
- Safeguarding to be discussed regularly
- Staff to develop their knowledge of safeguarding effectively through training and supervision.
- Governing Body to receive safeguarding reports and monitor compliance.

Safeguarding forms part of all strategic decision-making within Overstone Park School.

6. Responsibilities

Governing Body has a strategic leadership responsibility for Overstone Park School's safeguarding arrangements.

All members of the Governing Body will receive safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction and at regular intervals thereafter. This training will equip the Governing Body to provide strategic challenge and assurance regarding safeguarding arrangements.

Governing Body will ensure mechanisms are in place to help staff understand and fulfil their statutory safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Governing Body will ensure that Overstone Park School works with local safeguarding partners and contributes to multi-agency working, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026). All members of the Governing Body will read KCSIE (2026) and a record will be kept of this.

Part 2 of KCSIE (2026) sets out the responsibilities of governing bodies and our school; the Governing Body will adhere to this guidance at all times. As part of these responsibilities, the Governing Body will;

- ensure that they comply with their duties under statutory guidance and legislation including their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and our school's local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements;
- work to facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding by promoting an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture as part of their safeguarding responsibilities, by ensuring that safeguarding and child protection underpin all relevant aspects of policy and process;
- ensure that policies, procedures and training at Overstone Park School are effective and understood and comply with the law at all times and that they allow concerns to be responded to promptly;
- ensure that safeguarding training for staff, including online safety training, is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school safeguarding approach and wider staff training and curriculum planning;
- ensure that Overstone Park School takes into account local criteria for action and protocol for assessment and supply information as requested by the three safeguarding partners;
- ensure that Overstone Park School has an effective safeguarding and child protection policy, which is published on the Overstone Park School website and/or available by other means and review this annually;
- ensure that Overstone Park School has systems in place to allow children to raise concerns, which are well-promoted, well-understood and easily accessible;
- ensure that Overstone Park School takes safeguarding concerns seriously and takes the wishes and feelings of children into account;
- ensure that there are systems in place for young people to safely express their views and give feedback on safeguarding practice;
- ensure that Overstone Park School has a suitable behaviour policy for pupils and a staff behaviour policy or Code of Conduct;
- ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, will include an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) on induction and regularly thereafter;

- consider a whole-school approach to online safety, including the use of mobile technology in school;
- ensure that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying when children may be experiencing mental health problems;
- ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety.
- ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place to respond to children missing from education and those who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods;
- appoint an appropriate member of staff from the senior leadership team to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place) and ensure that the DSL has the appropriate status and authority, skills and experience to carry out their job, including additional time, funding, training, resources and support;
- ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to keep children safe online;
- regularly review the effectiveness of school filters and monitoring systems. They should ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff are:
 - aware of and understand the systems in place
 - manage them effectively
 - know how to escalate concerns when identified
- ensure that there are appropriate procedures in place to manage both allegations against staff (including supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers and contractors) and concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (low level concerns) and
- respond to allegations of abuse against The Principal.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for implementing this policy. The Principal will:

- ensure that this policy is reviewed annually and ratified by the governing body;
- ensure that this policy and associated procedures are adhered to by all staff and take action as necessary if not;
- ensure that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers are informed of our systems that support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction.
- ensure that all staff are made aware of the named governor for safeguarding and the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- ensure that the role of 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' is explicit in the role-holder's job description, that they have appropriate time, funding, training and resources and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent;
- decide whether to have one or more deputy safeguarding leads and ensure they are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- organise appropriate cover for the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead for any out of hours/out of term activities;
- appoint a 'Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children' to promote the educational achievement of children looked after and previously looked after;
- appoint a lead for online safety (the DSL);
- ensure that all recruitment follows the safer recruitment guidance (see Part 3 of KCSIE) and a single, central record is maintained with details of all members of staff who are in contact with children;

- respond to allegations of abuse against all other members of staff and act as the 'Principal' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate;
- make decisions regarding all low-level concerns;
- refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required;
- ensure that Overstone Park School works with social care, the police, health services and other services to: promote the welfare of children; provide a co-ordinated offer of universal and community-based Family Help and targeted support through Family Help when need is identified; contribute to inter-agency plans for children subject to children protection plans and to protect children from harm;
- safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012);

ensure that children's social care (from the host local authority or placing authority) have access to Overstone Park School to conduct, or to consider whether to conduct, a section 47 or section 17 assessment, as per Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will;

- Act as a source of support and expertise on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection to ensure that other members of staff can carry out their safeguarding duty;
- Advise on the response to safeguarding concerns;
- Liaise with the Local Authority and work with other agencies in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026);
- Identify if children may benefit from community-based Family Help and targeted support through Family Help;
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the relevant body (local authority children's social care, Channel programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or police), and support staff who make such referrals directly;
- Make referrals to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern and/or support staff that make a referral to Channel;
- Support Overstone Park School with regard to their responsibilities under the Prevent duty and provide advice and support on protecting children from radicalisation;
- Refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed;
- Be available during school or college hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If they are not available, a deputy will be made available;
- Undertake training to equip them with the skills to carry out the role, and update every two years;
- The Governing Body, working with the Principal, senior leadership team and Designated Safeguarding Lead, will ensure that all staff, including those who do not work directly with children, read and understand at least Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Staff will be directed to relevant sections of Annex A and other parts of KCSIE, where appropriate to their role. Mechanisms will be in place to help staff understand and discharge their safeguarding responsibilities. Update their knowledge and skills regularly and keep up with any developments relevant to their role;
- Provide staff in school with the knowledge, skills and support required to safeguard children;
- Take responsibility for the accurate and timely recording of safeguarding and child protection concerns and take overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection files;
- Take responsibility for the transfer of safeguarding files when a child leaves Overstone Park School;

- The DSL will consider whether safeguarding information should be transferred in advance of a pupil moving education settings where that information may assist in the management of risk or continuation of support.
- Attend or ensure an appropriate representative attends multi-agency safeguarding or child protection meetings;
- Work closely with other relevant education professionals (e.g. SENCO, Virtual School Head) to ensure children with additional vulnerabilities are safeguarded;
- Support children who have experienced or are experiencing safeguarding or child protection issues by using information they hold about children with a social worker to make decisions in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and to help promote educational outcomes. This will include ensuring that staff know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to support these children best;
- Promote a 'culture of safeguarding', in which every member of Overstone Park School community act in the best interests of the child;
- Ensure that staff are aware of Overstone Park School's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures;
- Regularly meet with the safeguarding link governor and/or Chair of Governors to review safeguarding at Overstone Park School;
- Liaise with the principal regarding safeguarding cases and issues;
- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour and how to support children if this issue arises;
- Know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support; and
- Be aware that children must have an 'appropriate adult' to support and help them in the case of a police investigation or search and understand.
- The DSL will ensure appropriate risk assessment, information sharing and safeguarding planning is undertaken where serious violence, weapon-carrying or weapon-related incidents are identified.
- The DSL will oversee safeguarding responses relating to Artificial Intelligence, deepfakes, AI-generated abuse material and emerging online harms
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Staff play a particularly important role because they are in a position to identify concerns and support children.

All staff;

- have a responsibility to provide a safe environment, where children can learn;
- will be trained so that they know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals;
- will be able to identify indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- will be made aware of systems in Overstone Park School that support safeguarding and child protection;
- will be made aware of safeguarding issues that put children at risk of harm and behaviours associated with these risks;
- should ensure that they know what to do if a child makes a disclosure of abuse and never promise confidentiality when a child makes a disclosure;

- will be made aware of and should be clear on Overstone Park School's or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it;
- will be made aware of the process for universal and community-based Family Help and targeted Family Help and understand their role in it;
- should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from Family Help and will discuss Family Help requirements with the safeguarding lead in the first instance;
- may be required to support social workers and other agencies following a referral;
- will be made aware of the process for making referrals to Children's Social Care (through the MASH), understand statutory assessments and the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- should be prepared to make referrals to the MASH if they have concerns about a child's welfare and understand the role that they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- will receive regularly updated safeguarding and child protection training to cover all of the above, as well as online safety (including IT filtering and monitoring procedures and how to report related safeguarding or technical concerns);
- reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g., sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online);
- will receive safeguarding updates throughout the year as part of continuous professional development;
- will be encouraged to contribute to the development of safeguarding policy and practice;
- should always seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are unsure;
- provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBT to speak out and share their concerns; and
- all teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (Teaching Standards, 2012).

All staff will sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year confirming that they have reviewed the guidance.

Although extensive mechanisms are in place to support staff understanding of safeguarding and child protection, staff are expected to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay if they are unclear about any aspect of school safeguarding policy or practice, so additional training can be put in place.

7. Quality Assurance

The Governing Body will monitor safeguarding arrangements through:

- Annual policy review.
- Termly safeguarding reports.
- Training records audits.
- Single Central Record audits.
- Safeguarding record audits.
- Site safety inspections.
- Monitoring compliance with statutory guidance.

Safeguarding practice will be evaluated continuously to ensure compliance with KCSIE 2026 and the Independent School Standards.

8. Child Protection Procedures

Overstone Park School is committed to ensuring that all concerns about a child's welfare are identified, recorded and acted upon promptly.

Where a member of staff has reason to believe that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, they must report the concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Staff must never assume that another person has taken action.

When the DSL is unavailable, report this to the deputy safeguarding lead(s) without delay. If, in exceptional circumstances, the DSL (or deputy) is unavailable, this should not delay appropriate action. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or seeking advice from local children's social care.

Although any member of staff can make a referral to children's social care, where possible there should be a conversation with the DSL. All staff must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

All staff will be alert to indicators of abuse (including child-on-child abuse, including discriminatory behaviour, including racism and faith-targeted abuse, harassment and violence) and will report any of the following to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately;

- any concern or suspicion that a child has sustained an injury outside what is reasonably attributable to normal play;
- any concerning behaviours exhibited by children that may indicate that they have been harmed or are at risk of harm, including unusual changes in mood or behaviour, concerning use of language and/or concerning drawings or stories;
- any significant changes in attendance or punctuality;
- any significant changes in a child's presentation;
- any indicators that a child may be experiencing child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence, discriminatory behaviour, including racism and faith-targeted abuse.
- any concerns relating to people who may pose a risk of harm to a child; and/or
- any disclosures of abuse that children have made.

Concerns should be reported to:

DSL

Dawn York – d.york@opschool.org.uk

DDSLs at Overstone Park:

Ashleigh West – a.west@opschool.org.uk

Julieanne Sinnamon – j.sinnamon@opschool.org.uk

Simmy Patel – s.patel@opschool.org.uk

Dr Oogu – Oogu-uzodike@opschool.org.uk

The DSL will decide on the most appropriate course of action. Whether the concerns should be referred to children's social care, using the [Northamptonshire Right Help, Right Time A continuum of Need](#) If it is decided to make a referral to children's social care, the parent will be informed, unless to do so would place the child at further risk or undermine the collection of evidence. All concerns, discussions and decisions will be recorded in writing.

The DSL will provide guidance on the appropriate action. Options will include:

- managing any support for the child internally via Overstone Park School's own pastoral support processes;
- seeking advice from the local Family Help partnership co-ordinator/s;
- Universal services and community-based Family Help or the targeted Family Help level of Family Help or
- a referral for statutory services where the child is or might be in need or suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

MASH – 0300 126 7000 (for advice and to report concerns)

Emergency out of hours MASH – 0300 126 7000

Online referrals – submit non-urgent or standard electronic multi-agency referrals via

Northampton Children's Trust: nctrust.co.uk/report-a-concern-or-request-support/

Email address: childrenstrust@nctrust.co.uk

CAMHS Advice Line – 0800 170 7055

Prevent – 101. National Prevent advice line – 0800 011 3764

prevent@northants.pnn.police.uk

NSPCC helpline – 0800 800 5000

Where a child is in immediate danger, **staff must contact emergency services on 999** before informing the DSL.

Overstone Park School will work collaboratively with safeguarding partners and will attend child protection conferences, strategy meetings and core group meetings where required.

9. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures or suspicions must be reported immediately.

Staff must:

- **Follow the Safeguarding Reporting Flowchart (see Appendix F)**
- Listen carefully without asking leading questions.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking up.
- Never promise confidentiality.
- Make an accurate, factual written record as soon as possible.
- Report the concern immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

At Overstone Park, 'My Concern' is used by staff to make written records of any concerns reported regarding children and safeguarding. 'Confide' is used by school staff to report any low-level safeguarding concerns regarding staff members, volunteers, contractors and visitors. Where a visiting adult has a concern about children or adults, they should report this to the DSL or DDSs.

The DSL will determine the appropriate course of action, including monitoring, providing early help or making a referral to Children's Social Care.

Report concerns about the principal directly to the LADO.

LADO contact details

LADOConsultations@NCTrust.co.uk LADOConsultations@nctrust.co.uk

LADO / Designated Officer
01604 362993 (voicemail)
LADO Officers -Andy Smith 07850 854309
Sian Edwards 07738 636449
Francesca Hamilton 07712 718701

10. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Overstone Park School maintains secure, accurate and confidential safeguarding records for all child protection concerns. Records are kept online through the use of 'My Concern'.

Safeguarding records are:

- Kept separately from the main pupil file.
- Stored securely with restricted access.
- Updated promptly following any concern or action.
- Transferred securely when a pupil moves school.

Information will only be shared with professionals who have a legitimate safeguarding need, in accordance with data protection legislation and statutory safeguarding guidance.

11. Information Sharing

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Overstone Park School has clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) does not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Lawful and secure information sharing between schools, Children's Social Care, and other local agencies is essential for keeping children safe and ensuring they get the support they need.

Overstone Park School adheres to all data protection laws.

Effective safeguarding depends upon appropriate information sharing between professionals.

Overstone Park School recognises that concerns about a child's safety must never be delayed because staff are uncertain about sharing information.

Information will be shared:

- Where there is a lawful basis to do so.
- In the child's best interests.
- With Children's Social Care, Police and other safeguarding partners where appropriate.
- In accordance with the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and statutory safeguarding guidance. (However, safeguarding will always take precedence and information regarding a child should always be shared to ensure their safety, which supersedes any GDPR requirements)

Overstone Park School will ensure that information shared is necessary, proportionate, accurate, timely and secure.

There is a shared mailbox for all members of the DSL team so that if the DSL is unable to respond to a concern, the DDSLs can act in their absence.

12. Working with Parents and External Agencies

Overstone Park School recognises that safeguarding is most effective when families, schools and partner agencies work together.

Parents will normally be informed of concerns relating to their child unless doing so would place the child at increased risk of harm or compromise a safeguarding investigation. Fears about sharing information must not stand in the way of promoting children's welfare and protecting their safety. All professionals responsible for children should not assume that someone else will pass on information that they think may be critical to keeping a child safe.

As with all data sharing, appropriate organisational and technical safeguards are in place and will be adhered to when processing safeguarding and child protection information.

Overstone Park School will work closely with:

- Children's Social Care
- Local Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Police
- Health Services
- Education Welfare Services
- Early Help Services
- Alternative Provision Providers
- Other relevant professionals

Overstone Park School will contribute fully to multi-agency meetings and safeguarding plans.

Family Help -Family Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Any child may benefit from support before statutory intervention, including from universal services and community-based Family Help, or the targeted Family Help level.

Early help will be promoted where concerns are apparent. Where Early Help is considered, the targeted early help level of Family Help or universal services and community-based early help will be explored. Included in these considerations will be children who:

- are disabled or have certain health conditions and have specific additional needs
- have special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care plan)
- has a mental health need
- is a young carer
- is pregnant and/or is a parent themselves
- has exhibited early signs of abusive, violent and/or harmful behaviours
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care

- has been repeatedly removed from the classroom, experienced multiple suspensions, is on a part-time timetable, is at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit
- is at risk of exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking, including criminal or sexual exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised into terrorism
- has a parent or carer in custody, or is affected by parental offending
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves
- is at risk of honour or faith-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage, and
- is a privately fostered child.

13. Managing Allegations Against Staff

Overstone Park School takes all allegations against adults working with children seriously and will respond promptly, fairly and consistently.

This procedure applies to employees, volunteers, Governing Body, contractors, agency staff and any adult working on behalf of Overstone Park School.

Where an allegation indicates that an adult may 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; or
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm,

The principal (or Governing Body where the allegation concerns The Principal) will immediately consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and follow statutory procedures.

LADO contact details

LADOConsultations@NCTrust.co.uk

LADO Officers -Andy Smith 07850 854309

Sian Edwards 07738 636449

Francesca Hamilton 07712 718701

The child's welfare will remain the paramount consideration throughout any investigation.

14. Low-Level Concerns

Overstone Park School recognises the distinction between allegations that meet the harms threshold and safeguarding concerns that do not (low-level concerns).

Patterns of low-level concerns may indicate emerging safeguarding risks and will be reviewed accordingly.

If there is a safeguarding concern about a member of staff, we will adhere to the guidance outlined in Part 4, Section 2 of KCSIE (2026) and Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance.

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant; it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harms threshold. 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 working in or on behalf of Overstone Park School or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.
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Low-level concerns must be reported. Such behaviours can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils

We will act quickly, proportionately and appropriately in the event of a low-level concern, to prevent abuse or harm of a child and to promote a culture of safeguarding. Dealing with low-level concerns also protects those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

15. Whistleblowing

Overstone Park School encourages all staff to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice.

Staff who believe that safeguarding concerns are not being appropriately addressed have a duty to report them.

Concerns may be raised with:

- The Principal.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Governing Body
- The Local Authority.
- Relevant regulatory or safeguarding bodies where appropriate.

No member of staff will suffer detriment for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

Overstone Park School is committed to maintaining a culture in which all adults are empowered to speak up to protect children and promote their welfare. **Further information can be found in Overstone Park School's whistleblowing policy.**

16. Safer Recruitment

Overstone Park School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by operating robust safer recruitment procedures.

Overstone Park School will ensure that all recruitment processes comply with statutory requirements and the Independent School Standards. Appropriate pre-employment checks will be completed before any individual begins work. Any adult working in school in a teaching, training or instructing capacity (including volunteers) must have a DBS check completed.

These checks include, where applicable:

- Verification of identity and right to work in the UK.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, including barred list checks where required.
- Verification of qualifications and professional status.
- Employment history and references.
- Prohibition from teaching checks.
- Section 128 direction checks for management positions.
- Overseas criminal record checks where appropriate.
- Online searches on shortlisted candidates to identify any publicly available information that may be relevant to their suitability to work with children.

Visitors to schools include:

- Professionals (educational psychologists, social workers, etc.)
- Educational visitors (guest speakers, performers)
- Site-related (contractors, children's family members, sports day attendees).

Overstone Park School maintains an accurate, up-to-date Single Central Record (SCR), which senior leaders, DSL and the Governing Body regularly monitor and audit.

17. Staff Induction and Training

All staff, Governing Body, volunteers and regular contractors receive safeguarding induction before working with pupils (including trainee teachers).

Induction includes:

- The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Safeguarding reporting procedures.
- Identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL(s).
- Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Safeguarding training is provided at induction and updated regularly. Staff also receive safeguarding updates throughout the year to reflect changes in legislation, local procedures and emerging safeguarding risks.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs complete multi-agency safeguarding training (Level 3) and refresh their knowledge at least every two years or more frequently where required.

18. Online Safety

Overstone Park School recognises that technology presents both educational opportunities and safeguarding risks. Cyber security is a safeguarding concern that is taken seriously, as it poses a risk to the children's safety and wellbeing.

Overstone Park School provides age-appropriate online safety education through the curriculum and pastoral programme, helping pupils to:

- Stay safe online.
- Protect their personal information.
- Recognise online abuse and exploitation.
- Report concerns confidently.
- Develop responsible digital behaviour.
- Financial education

Staff receive regular training on online safety risks, including:

- Cyberbullying.
- Grooming.
- Online exploitation (Does this include financial exploitation – sextortion?).
- Harmful online content.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) risks.

(Generative artificial intelligence in education, along with online resources produced by the Chiltern Learning Trust and the Chartered College of Teaching, can support schools and colleges in using AI safely.

- Sharing of indecent images.
- Misinformation and disinformation.

This is undertaken annually through the TES online platform and is recorded on Overstone Park School's training log.

19. Filtering and Monitoring

Overstone Park School maintains effective filtering and monitoring systems to safeguard pupils when using school technology. 'Securus' is the system used to filter dangers and monitor both staff and pupils effectively, notifying DSLs when inappropriate content has been accessed. This system also reduces the risk of disruption by preventing data breaches and mitigating safeguarding risks.

These systems are designed to:

- Block access to harmful or inappropriate content.
- Monitor internet activity for safeguarding concerns.
- Identify patterns of risky behaviour.
- Support appropriate intervention where concerns arise.

Senior leaders and Governing Body review filtering and monitoring arrangements monthly to ensure they remain effective, proportionate, and suitable for pupils' age and needs.

Pupils are educated about acceptable use of technology and are expected to comply with Overstone Park School's Acceptable Use Agreement.

20. Child-on-Child Abuse including harassment and violence

Overstone Park School recognises that children can abuse other children and that such behaviour can occur both inside and outside school, including online.

Child-on-child abuse will never be dismissed as banter, part of growing up or harmless behaviour.

Overstone Park School acknowledges that this form of abuse is preventable; however, examples may include:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying.
- Physical abuse (including child-on-child violence, physical assault and threats with weapons)
- Sexual violence (including rape or penetration with an object).
- Sexual harassment.
- Up-skirting.
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element). Abuse within intimate personal relationships.
- Making or sharing nude or semi-nude images (whether consensual or not, including AI-generated and deepfakes).
- Sextortion – victims are blackmailed online by perpetrators who threaten to release sexual or indecent images of them
- Misogyny – hatred and prejudice towards women
- Misandry – hatred of men or boys

Children means everyone under the age of 18.

Where child-on-child violence including harassment takes place, it is recognised that this can be a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the perpetrator.

All reports will be taken seriously, investigated promptly and managed sensitively, with appropriate support provided to all children involved. Referrals to family help for parental support, mental health support and youth services will be made where appropriate.

21. Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and County Lines

Overstone Park School recognises that some children are vulnerable to criminal exploitation, including involvement in county lines activity. CCE can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or 'gang', which the victim may identify as being a part of. Victims are not always recognised and can be criminalised for actions they take whilst under coercion. This remains a significant concern as the abuse experienced by the children is not fully understood.

Indicators may include:

- Unexplained money or expensive items.
- Repeated missing episodes.
- Increased secrecy.

- Association with older individuals or gangs.
- Carrying weapons or drugs.
- Sudden changes in behaviour or attendance.

Staff must report concerns immediately to the DSL, who will consider appropriate referrals to safeguarding agencies and the Police where necessary.

22. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse where an individual or group manipulates or coerces a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the child wants or needs, or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator. Sexual abuse is commonly committed by someone who the victim previously knows.

Possible indicators include:

- Going missing from home or school.
- Receiving gifts, money or mobile phones.
- Relationships with significantly older individuals.
- Changes in appearance or behaviour.
- Poor attendance.
- Emotional distress or self-harm.

Any concerns will be reported immediately to the DSL and managed in accordance with statutory safeguarding procedures.

23. Domestic Abuse

Overstone Park School understands that children who witness or experience domestic abuse are victims in their own right and may suffer significant emotional and psychological harm.

Staff should be alert to indicators such as:

- Anxiety or withdrawn behaviour.
- Aggression.
- Frequent absences.
- Changes in mood or behaviour.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Reluctance to return home.

Where domestic abuse is suspected, Overstone Park School will provide appropriate support and work with safeguarding agencies to protect the child.

24. Serious Violence

Overstone Park School recognises that children may be at risk of involvement in serious violence and that early identification and intervention are essential. Staff should be alert to times of day when children may be at highest risk.

Risk factors include:

- Persistent absence.
- Poor behaviour.
- Association with gangs.
- Substance misuse.
- Carrying weapons.
- Criminal exploitation.

Concerns will be reported to the DSL and referrals made where appropriate to safeguarding partners, Children's Social Care or the Police.

25. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Overstone Park School recognises that positive mental health is fundamental to children's wellbeing and educational achievement.

Although mental health concerns do not automatically indicate abuse, they may be a sign that a child is experiencing or is at risk of harm.

Staff should be alert to:

- Significant changes in behaviour.
- Ongoing difficulty sleeping.
- Withdrawing from interests
- Persistent low mood.
- Anxiety.
- Physical signs of self-harm or neglecting themselves.
- Eating disorders.
- Suicidal thoughts or behaviours.
- Risk of suicide
- Social withdrawal.

By identifying any of these factors or other potential warning signs, staff can recognise struggles with mental health that could lead to suicidal thoughts and make vital early intervention.

Where concerns are identified, staff will report them to the DSL, who will ensure appropriate support is provided and referrals are made to relevant services where necessary. Where staff feel a child is in significant danger, they should contact 999, take the child to A & E, get help from NHS 111 online, or call 111 as appropriate.

Staff should:

- Promote good mental wellbeing and support the prevention of the onset of mental illness
- Observe pupils and identify early those who may be experiencing mental health problems or are at risk of developing one.
- Ensure early targeted support is provided.
- Liaise with/refer to specialist services where needed.

Overstone Park School promotes a positive culture that supports resilience, emotional wellbeing and early intervention, ensuring that pupils receive timely and appropriate help.

If staff are experiencing their own mental health challenges, they are encouraged to share this through 'Confide'. They are signposted to the nationally rolled-out Mental Health Support Teams, and leaders should offer support where appropriate.

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

At Overstone Park, we recognise that a child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm; however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who other children perceive to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

Overstone Park School will:

- Create a culture where these children can speak out and share their concerns;
- Support and safeguard children in line with guidance and legislation;

If a child or their parent raises a request relating to social transition, our school will respond. We will seek to understand the thoughts and feelings of children who are questioning their gender and will remain aware of the potential vulnerabilities of children who are questioning their gender, including the possibility of complex mental health and psychosocial needs. We will maintain flexibility and avoid rigid rules based on gender stereotypes. School staff should not initiate social transition such as using different names or pronouns. All requests need careful consideration by the DSL, in consultation with parents, unless this poses a risk to the child's safety.

School will train staff and schedule updates to annual safeguarding training so that all staff understand the legal framework and can remain professionally curious and sensitive to the individual needs of the child.

About gender questioning, Overstone Park School can lawfully separate children according to their biological sex for sporting activities. Overstone Park School will consider any safety concerns and act in the best interests of the children to create safe environments where all children can participate successfully in PE.

Where toilets, showers and changing facilities are used, children must not be allowed to use spaces designated for the opposite biological sex. Where a child does not wish to use these spaces, school should consider whether they can provide an alternative. Records will be kept of any such situations and communicated appropriately.

Paragraphs 251-282 of KCSiE 2026 provide a full decision-making framework for requests to support social transition. Leaders and DSLs should read this section in full.

27. Children living in stealth

School is aware that there may be children in attendance who are living in stealth – children who have transitioned from an early age, but staff and peers may be unaware. These children are likely to approach puberty anxiously or fearfully. Where this becomes apparent, the DSL should be involved in supporting the child.

28. Support for children who wish to detransition

There may be circumstances where a child wants to fully or partially reverse a previously agreed transition. It is important to maintain flexibility and keep options open for children who have socially transitioned. Support should be provided to children who wish to de-transition. Schools will work closely with parents or carers and relevant experts to ensure that children in this position are supported.

29. Prevent Duty and Radicalisation

Overstone Park School recognises its duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Overstone Park School promotes fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Staff receive Prevent training annually to enable them to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation. Any concerns will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will consider referral to the appropriate safeguarding agencies, including the Prevent programme where necessary.

30. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal and is a form of child abuse.

Staff will be alert to indicators that a child may be at risk of FGM or has undergone the procedure.

Teachers have a legal duty to report to the Police where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

All concerns will also be reported immediately to the DSL.

31. Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Abuse

Overstone Park School recognises that forced marriage and honour-based abuse are serious safeguarding concerns.

Indicators may include:

- Extended or unexpected absences.
- Sudden withdrawal from education.
- Restrictions on personal freedom.
- Emotional distress.
- Fear of family members.
- Planned overseas travel causing concern.

Staff must never attempt to mediate with family members where forced marriage or honour-based abuse is suspected.

Report concerns immediately to the DSL.

32. Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

Modern slavery and human trafficking involve the exploitation of children for criminal, financial or personal gain.

Possible indicators include:

- Frequent absence from school.
- Signs of neglect.
- Unexplained injuries.
- Fearful behaviour.
- Living in unsuitable accommodation.
- Poor physical appearance.
- Financial exploitation

Any concerns will be reported immediately to the DSL, who will work with safeguarding partners to protect the child.

33. Children Missing Education

Overstone Park School recognises that children missing education may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation and radicalisation.

Attendance is monitored closely, and unexplained absences are followed up promptly, and concerns are investigated.

Where a child is removed from roll, Overstone Park School will notify the Local Authority in accordance with statutory requirements.

34. Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

Overstone Park School recognises that looked after and previously looked after children may have experienced trauma and may require additional support.

A designated teacher is responsible for promoting the educational achievement and welfare of these pupils.

Current designated teachers:

Miss Smith
Dr Ogu

As part of their role, the designated teacher will:

- The Designated Teacher and DSL will work collaboratively to ensure safeguarding risks, attendance concerns, mental health needs and educational outcomes are addressed holistically
- Work with virtual school heads to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including discussing how pupil premium plus funding can be best used to support looked-after children and meet the needs identified in their personal education plans.

35 Pupils with a social worker and those that have previously needed a social worker

Children who have, or have previously had, a social worker may experience additional safeguarding vulnerabilities. Overstone Park School recognises the significant impact that abuse, neglect, exploitation and trauma can have upon educational attendance, behaviour, learning and emotional wellbeing.

We work with the local authority to ensure we provide effective support for this group of children. The role of virtual school head now includes a non-statutory responsibility to oversee the attendance, attainment and progress of children with a social worker and children in kinship care.

The DSL and all members of staff will work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Where we are aware that a pupil has a social worker, the DSL will always consider this fact to ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the pupil's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. For example, it will inform decisions about;

- responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks; and
- the provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

36. Young carers

At Overstone Park, we are aware of the needs of young carers and recognise the impact that caring responsibilities can have on:

- Attendance
- Attainment
- Behaviour
- Wellbeing

Early identification is essential to ensure these young carers receive support at the right time and from the right services.

37. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Overstone Park School recognises that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may face additional barriers to recognising abuse, communicating concerns or accessing support. Safeguarding procedures apply equally to all pupils.

Staff will remain vigilant to the individual needs of pupils with SEND and ensure that safeguarding responses are adapted appropriately. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that every pupil can report concerns and access help.

Staff should be mindful of:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration,
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children,
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs,
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges, which risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse,
- the need for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others,
- that these children are more likely to be dependent on adults for care, and
- these children may have issues with cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

38. Alternative Provision and Off-Site Activities

Where pupils attend alternative provision or participate in off-site activities, Overstone Park School will ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Overstone Park School will obtain written information from the alternative provider confirming that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at their establishment (i.e., the same checks schools would otherwise perform on their own staff). This includes written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e., staff changes), so that the commissioning school can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on new staff.

Overstone Park School has processes in place to know where a child is based during school hours. This includes having records of the address of the alternative provider and any subcontracted provision or satellite sites the child may attend. We will regularly review alternative provision placements, at a minimum half-termly, to ensure the child is attending regularly and the placement remains safe and meets the child's needs.

Overstone Park School will ensure that safeguarding arrangements within alternative provision are reviewed regularly and that live information regarding attendance, welfare and safeguarding incidents is shared appropriately.

Where concerns arise regarding safeguarding standards within alternative provision settings, Overstone Park School will take immediate action.

Risk assessments will be completed where necessary. Overstone Park School will seek assurance that external providers maintain effective safeguarding policies, safer recruitment procedures and appropriate staff training. Communication between Overstone Park School and external providers will ensure that safeguarding information is shared appropriately.

39. Visitors, Volunteers and Contractors

All visitors, volunteers and contractors are expected to share Overstone Park School's commitment to safeguarding children (including trainee teachers).

Visitors will:

- Sign in on arrival.
- Wear identification.
- Be supervised where appropriate.
- Follow Overstone Park School's safeguarding procedures (see visitor safeguarding leaflet).

Volunteers and contractors who work regularly with children will be subject to appropriate safeguarding checks in accordance with statutory guidance.

40. Physical Intervention and Positive Handling

Overstone Park School aims to manage behaviour positively and minimise the need for physical intervention.

Reasonable force will only be used where lawful, necessary and proportionate to:

- Prevent injury (to the child and/or other children).
- Prevent serious damage to property.
- Maintain good order and discipline.

Any incident involving physical intervention will be recorded in a numbered and bound book, reviewed and reported to parents in line with Overstone Park School's safer handling policy. All staff are team teach trained (updated annually) to ensure that any physical intervention is deployed appropriately and only when de-escalation strategies have been ineffective. After any physical intervention, a careful review process is in place to ensure that any new triggers are identified, strategies have been followed effectively and if any further risk assessment is required.

41. Photography, Images and Mobile Devices

Overstone Park School recognises the importance of protecting children's privacy. Photographs and videos will be taken and used only with parental consent, in accordance with data protection legislation, and in line with School procedures.

Staff are expected to use mobile phones and personal devices responsibly and professionally. This means they should not access them during class time or when there are children present. The unauthorised use of mobile devices to photograph or record pupils is strictly prohibited.

All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default, and Overstone Park is no exception. Pupils should not have their mobile phones turned on during school hours. See Overstone Park School's mobile phone policy for further details.

42. Monitoring, Quality Assurance and Complaints

The Governing Body are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements remain effective.

Safeguarding practice will be monitored through:

- Annual policy review.
- Regular safeguarding audits.
- Single Central Record audits.

- Staff safeguarding training records.
- Local Authority visits
- Review of safeguarding incidents and outcomes (including termly reporting to The Principal by the DSL).

Parents, pupils and staff may raise safeguarding concerns or complaints through Overstone Park School's Complaints Procedure (see Overstone Park School complaints policy for further information). Complaints relating to safeguarding will be investigated promptly, fairly and in accordance with statutory guidance. You can see past complaints that have been addressed at the end of our complaints policy.

43. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL and the Governing Body or sooner if:

- There are changes to legislation or statutory guidance.
- Local safeguarding procedures change.
- Learning from safeguarding incidents identifies improvements.
- Inspection findings require amendments.

The Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead are responsible for ensuring that the policy remains current and reflects best practice.

All staff will be informed of significant updates and will receive additional training where required.

44. Linked policies

This policy document is to be read in conjunction with the following policies that form part of the wider agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The word 'safeguarding' is used as an 'umbrella' term which encompasses all the following policies:

- Accident
- Anti-bullying (includes cyberbullying)
- Asthma
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Child Sexual Exploitation (includes CCE & FGM)
- Confidentiality
- Critical Incident
- Dealing with Radicalisation and
- Extremism
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- E-safety, Acceptable Use and Data
- Policy Fire and Emergency Evacuation
- First Aid
- Medicines
- Health and Safety including fire evacuation and lockdown procedures
- IT/Online Safety/ Acceptable Use Policy
- Missing Child/lost child policy

- Manual Handling
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Risk Assessment
- Safe Recruitment and Selection
- Security
- SEN and Disability
- Sickness and Communicable Diseases
- Staffing Checks
- Staff Code of Conduct and Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Use of Physical Intervention / Restraint Policy
- Visitors
- Vulnerable Child
- Whistleblowing

Appendices

Appendix A: Child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence

Appendix B: Types of abuse

Appendix C: Safer recruitment

Appendix D: How Overstone Park School responds to allegations that may meet the harms threshold

Appendix E: Online Safety

Appendix F: Safeguarding Reporting Flowchart.

Appendix A: Child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence

Child-on-child abuse is any abuse of a child or children that is perpetrated by another child or children. This includes all forms of sexual harassment, sexual violence and abuse. We strive to create a culture of safety, where children are free from harassment or abuse of any kind. We take a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment – it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated.

We know that even if we do not receive any reports relating to child-on-child abuse, it does not mean that it is not happening. We support and encourage anyone – especially our pupils – to come forward to share any concerns about child-on-child abuse so that we can take action to keep all children safe.

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

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- Serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).¹

All children are capable of abusing their peers, and we recognise that girls are more likely to be the victims of child-on-child abuse and boys are more likely to be perpetrators. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

We recognise that children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. We refer to problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour as 'harmful sexual behaviour'.

When responding to HSB, we will:

- Consider the behaviours in a child protection context;
- Consider the ages and developmental stages of the children involved;
- Take action in line with local thresholds and pathways guidance and relevant statutory guidance; and
- Seek specialist support as required.

We will take action at the earliest possible point, to safeguard children and to prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

We recognise that children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma and we will offer support as required.

Staff training

All staff are made aware that children can abuse other children, that this can happen online or in person, at school or outside of school. All staff will receive training so that they can confidently recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence, in order to identify it and respond appropriately to reports. All staff will be made aware of the school's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the crucial role that they play in preventing it and responding to it as necessary. It will be made clear that addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

Procedures for minimising opportunities for child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence

We recognise that a crucial part of our safeguarding responsibility is to minimise the opportunity for child-on-child abuse to occur. In order to do this, and to establish a safe environment for all children, we:

- have a robust behaviour policy, which makes it clear that we have a zero-tolerance approach to any kind of child-on-child abuse;
- ensure staff understand what is meant by child-on-child abuse and the school policy on child-on-child abuse by reading the school policy and completing training every 12 months.
- train staff thoroughly so that they challenge inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous);

train staff thoroughly so that they are confident to challenge inappropriate behaviours between peers that are actually abusive in nature;

- It is the duty of all staff to recognise racism, faith-based prejudice, and other forms of discrimination as harm in their own right
- never downplay certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, misogyny, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it; and
- recognise that sexual harassment and sexual violence, as well as other forms of child-on-child abuse, may be happening even if they are not reported.

How we address child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence within the curriculum and across the school

Weekly PHSE lessons address issues such as consent, pornography and sharing of nude images or videos.

We ensure our systems for reporting safeguarding concerns are well promoted, easy to understand, and accessible so children can confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously. We ensure children are aware of our safeguarding and child protection procedures, including how to raise concerns about child-on-child abuse, by ensuring our safeguarding reporting systems are widely promoted, easy to understand, and accessible to all pupils.

Children are regularly informed about safeguarding and child protection procedures through the curriculum, assemblies, pastoral support, and safeguarding awareness activities. Pupils are made aware of who they can speak to if they are worried and how to report concerns, including concerns relating to child-on-child abuse. The school promotes a culture where children feel safe to share concerns and are confident that all reports will be taken seriously, responded to appropriately, and acted upon in line with safeguarding procedures.

Additional Vulnerabilities

We recognise that some children may be more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse than others. For example, children who have already experienced abuse, those who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), children living in care and children who are LGBTQ+ may be more likely to face child-on-child abuse than other children. We recognise that girls are more likely to be the victims of child-on-child abuse than boys. Some children may face additional barriers to telling anyone about abuse because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. We work to protect children with additional vulnerabilities by ensuring that children with additional needs understand how to seek help and report concerns through age-appropriate and differentiated safeguarding education, visual resources, adapted communication methods, and trusted adult systems. We actively promote inclusion, equality and respect through the curriculum, assemblies and wider school culture, challenging discriminatory language. It is the duty of all staff to recognise racism,

faith-based prejudice, and other discrimination as harm in its own right. We carefully monitor the wellbeing, attendance, behaviour and safeguarding concerns of vulnerable pupils and take appropriate action where concerns arise.

We recognise that some children may face additional barriers to disclosing abuse and therefore create a culture where children feel safe, respected and listened to. All concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly in accordance with our safeguarding and child protection procedures.

How to report concerns

Our pupils

If a young person witnesses or experiences any form of child-on-child abuse, we strongly encourage them to speak to a trusted member of staff, parent or trusted adult about it. If a child discloses to an adult outside of school, the adult should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay to report the issue.

All victims will be taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school will be treated with equal seriousness. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence or sexual harassment. A victim will never be made to feel ashamed for making a report or have their experience minimised.

In school, pupils can:

- Speak to their class teacher or form tutor.
- Speak directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL.
- Speak to any trusted adult in school, including teaching assistants, pastoral staff, learning mentors, lunchtime supervisors, office staff, or school leaders.
- Requesting a meeting with a member of the pastoral or safeguarding team.
- Raising concerns through the school counsellor, wellbeing team, or mental health support staff where available.
- Speaking to a peer mentor, who will help them access support from an appropriate adult.
- Sharing concerns with parents or carers and asking them to contact the school on their behalf

Outside school hours, children can also seek support by:

- Contacting Childline on 0800 1111 or via www.childline.org.uk.
- Contacting emergency services by calling 999 if they or another child are at immediate risk of harm.

Pupils are regularly reminded of these reporting routes through assemblies, PSHE lessons, tutor time, posters, the school website, and safeguarding awareness activities. We ensure children understand that all concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.

All of these methods can be used to report any form of harm or abuse, or can be used by pupils to share worries or concerns about any issue, including child-on-child abuse.

In the event that a pupil reports or discloses child-on-child abuse, we will take their report seriously, take prompt action to respond and to safeguard the child or children involved, and we will ensure that we are listening to the voice of the child when deciding on the best course of action to take. We will always act in the best interests of children. Following any disclosures or reports of child-on-child abuse, we will review our school systems, training and policies to determine if any learning can be derived from the situation to further strengthen our approach to this issue. We will always encourage our pupils to safely express their views and give feedback on how they have been supported following a safeguarding concern.

Our staff

Any member of staff who has concerns about child-on-child abuse should follow the procedure and must report concerns immediately.

Others

We encourage everyone to report any form of abuse or harm perpetrated by or against our pupils. Report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Wider concerns

We strive to create a safe and welcoming environment for all children. If you have any concerns about our culture of safeguarding, policy or procedures, please direct these to the safeguarding lead immediately, or follow our school Complaints Policy.

What happens when an allegation of child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence, is made?

We will adhere to Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) when responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse. The school takes child-on-child abuse seriously and will respond to all concerns or disclosures of child-on-child abuse, including those that have occurred outside of school and online, immediately.

Upon receiving a concern, report or disclosure of abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide what further action is necessary.

Our starting point for any report of child-on-child sexual harassment or violence should always be a zero-tolerance approach. It is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. It is especially important not to dismiss any sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys”, as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, misogyny and an unsafe environment for children.

The subsequent action taken will vary depending on the type of child-on-child abuse and the severity of the incident/s disclosed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take contextual factors into account when managing the report.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will always consider the following;

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. The victims will be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: the level of coercion or threat, whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
- both the chronological ages and developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children, including consideration of the age of children and whether children have special educational needs or disabilities;
- the impact on the victim;
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place in intimate personal relationships between children;
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
- if there are ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff; and
- Other related issues and wider context, such as links to child criminal or child sexual exploitation.

Depending on the nature of the incident/s, the Designated Safeguarding Lead may

- Seek further information from those involved and witnesses.
- Undertake a risk assessment and needs assessment to ascertain steps necessary to safeguard the victim, alleged perpetrator, adults and other children.
- Decide to manage the concern internally.
- Organise a meeting with relevant staff and agencies to assess risk and agree a safety plan.
- Refer the victim and/or the perpetrator to local services for targeted Family Help
- Refer the case to Children's Services via a MASH referral.
- Liaise with social workers working with children involved (if applicable).
- Make a report to the police.
- Liaise with specialist services.

In the event of a disclosure of child-on-child sexual violence, we will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. The risk and needs assessment will consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support (this will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s);
- whether there may have been other victims,
- the alleged perpetrator(s); 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 from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms.

More information about these options in relation to sexual violence and sexual harassment can be found in Part 5 of KCSIE (2026).

Recording procedures

All incidents, allegations, disclosures, concerns and reports of child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously and recorded promptly in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures. Staff must record concerns as soon as possible after the incident or disclosure using the school's safeguarding recording system My Concern.

Records will include the nature of the concern, details of those involved, dates, times, locations, actions taken, outcomes, and any support provided to the victim, alleged perpetrator and any other affected pupils. Records will be factual, objective and stored securely in accordance with data protection requirements.

The DSL will review all reports of child-on-child abuse and determine the appropriate response, including whether referrals to external agencies are required. The school will consider the needs and safety of all children involved and ensure that appropriate support and intervention are put in place.

Where necessary, the DSL will complete an individual risk assessment for the children involved. Risk assessments will consider the nature of the incident, the level of risk posed, the effectiveness of protective measures, the impact on the victim, and any ongoing concerns. Risk assessments will be stored securely within the school's safeguarding records system and will be accessible only to authorised staff on a need-to-know basis.

Risk assessments will be reviewed:

Immediately following any new incident or disclosure.

Following any significant change in circumstances.

After contact between the children involved where relevant.

At least half-termly until the risk has reduced and the assessment can be safely closed.

The DSL will monitor patterns and trends in incidents of child-on-child abuse to identify any emerging concerns and inform preventative work, staff training and curriculum development. Staff will follow the procedures for recording a disclosure as outlined in this policy.

How we support victims of child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence

The school recognises that child-on-child abuse has a significant impact on young people and victims are likely to need ongoing support. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. Appropriate support will be put in place for victims of child-on-child abuse whilst investigation is taking place and following the initial response. Support will continue as long as needed and will be reviewed regularly to ensure the victim is receiving appropriate care. The school will do everything we can to maintain the victim's normal routine. We will do everything we can to protect the victim from further bullying, harassment or abuse as a result of their disclosure.

When a report of child-on-child abuse is made, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will consider the victim's needs and determine what support, protection and intervention are

required. The school will work to ensure that the victim remains safe and is able to access a full education without fear of further abuse or harm.

Support for victims may include:

Regular welfare and safeguarding check-ins with the DSL, Deputy DSL or a trusted member of staff.

Access to pastoral support, mentoring, counselling or wellbeing services where available.

Providing a trusted adult to whom the child can speak when needed.

Developing a safety plan or risk assessment to reduce the risk of further harm.

Adjustments to timetables, seating plans, break and lunchtime arrangements, or movement around the school where appropriate.

Support to maintain attendance, engagement and participation in education.

Referrals to external agencies and specialist services where additional support is required.

Working closely with parents or carers, where appropriate and in the child's best interests.

Ongoing monitoring of the child's wellbeing, progress and safety.

If a victim of child-on-child abuse moves to a new setting, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will share the necessary information to ensure that support for the child continues.

How we will support alleged perpetrators and perpetrators of child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence

We have a responsibility to safeguard and support all children. We will adhere to KCSIE (2026) when managing reports of child-on-child abuse and decide on action and support on a case-by-case basis.

The school has a responsibility to ensure that an alleged perpetrator continues to receive a suitable education and will consider a range of options in continuing educational provision if they are unable to attend school.

Options may include

Temporary provision in an alternative room or learning environment within the school.

A personalised timetable, where appropriate and following a risk assessment.

Supervised learning away from the main cohort.

Access to remote learning and online educational resources.

Work packs and independent study programmes.

Support from the Local Authority where alternative provision is required.

Placement at an Alternative Provision setting, where appropriate.

Reintegration support and phased return arrangements, where safe and suitable.

One-to-one or small-group educational support.

Access to pastoral, behavioural and wellbeing support alongside educational provision.

Any arrangements will be informed by a thorough risk assessment, will take account of the needs and safety of all pupils involved, and will be reviewed regularly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), senior leaders and other relevant professionals. The school will work with parents/carers, external agencies and the Local Authority, as appropriate, to ensure that the alleged perpetrator continues to receive a suitable education while safeguarding the welfare of all children.

We recognise that children who perpetrate child-on-child abuse may be being abused themselves. The school will continue to safeguard the alleged perpetrator and provide them with support.

A plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator will be put in place as part of the risk assessment made following the alleged abuse. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take advice from children's social care, specialist services and the police as necessary.

All risk and needs assessments and action plans, whether internal or multi-agency, will be reviewed and updated regularly. If things do not improve or deteriorate, the situation should be reconsidered

The school may choose to impose a sanction or punishment on the alleged perpetrator following an incident of child-on-child abuse. In this case, we will follow the school Behaviour Policy in determining the level and severity of sanction.

Where a child is cautioned or receives a conviction related to an incident of child-on-child abuse, the school will carefully consider the implications for safeguarding and the ongoing education of all pupils involved. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Principal and other relevant staff will work with the child, their parents/carers, the Local Authority, Youth Offending Team, Police and other relevant agencies to assess risk and determine the most appropriate arrangements.

The school will:

Carry out and maintain an individual risk assessment and safety plan.

Consider the welfare, safety and educational needs of both the victim and the child who has been cautioned or convicted.

Put appropriate safeguarding, supervision and behaviour management measures in place.

Consider whether additional support, intervention programmes, counselling or mentoring are required.

Work closely with external agencies to support rehabilitation, reduce risk and promote positive behaviour.

Ensure that any return to school is carefully planned, risk assessed and supported.

Monitor the child's behaviour, welfare and engagement with education on an ongoing basis.

Review arrangements regularly and amend them in response to changing circumstances or identified risks.

Consider the views and needs of the victim and ensure that measures are in place to protect them from further harm.

Take disciplinary action where appropriate in line with the school's Behaviour Policy, while ensuring that safeguarding remains the primary consideration.

Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the nature of the incident, the age and developmental stage of the children involved, the outcome of any criminal proceedings, professional advice from relevant agencies, and the school's ongoing safeguarding responsibilities.

If the alleged perpetrator moves to another setting, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will share information as necessary to safeguard the individual and other children at the new setting.

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

How we will support other children who may have been affected by child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence.

The school recognises that incidents of child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence, can have a significant impact not only on the victim and alleged perpetrator, but also on other pupils who may have witnessed the incident, been aware of it, be friends of those involved, or feel affected by what has happened.

The school will provide appropriate support to any child affected by an incident to ensure their wellbeing, safety and continued engagement in education. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and relevant pastoral staff will determine the nature and level of support, taking account of the child's individual needs.

Support may include:

Pastoral support from a trusted member of staff, form tutor, Head of Year or member of the safeguarding team.

Regular wellbeing check-ins and opportunities to discuss concerns.

Access to school counselling services, wellbeing support or mental health provision where available.

Mentoring programmes and emotional support interventions.

Support from the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo) where appropriate.

Small group or individual sessions to address worries, anxieties or misconceptions arising from the incident.

Signposting or referral to external support services where additional support is required.

Restorative approaches, where appropriate and safe to do so.

Additional supervision or support during unstructured times of the school day if required.

The school will carefully monitor the wellbeing of affected pupils and will work with parents/carers and relevant external agencies as appropriate. Support arrangements will be

reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective and responsive to the needs of the children involved.

The school will also take steps to reinforce messages about respectful relationships, safeguarding, reporting concerns, and seeking help through assemblies, tutor time, PSHE/RSHE lessons and other appropriate educational activities, helping to restore a safe and supportive learning environment for all pupils.

Local Safeguarding Arrangements and making referrals

The school adheres to local safeguarding arrangements, as outlined by the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

For further details of how the school works with partner agencies in responding to safeguarding incidents (including incidents of child-on-child abuse), please see the main body of this policy.

Parents

Parents will be informed of incidents unless sharing information puts a child at greater risk of harm. Children will always be encouraged to speak to parents about child-on-child abuse unless it puts them at greater risk of harm.

Whole school response

We will keep detailed records of any incidents of child-on-child abuse and will look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a pattern is identified, we will take appropriate action. Consideration will be given to whether there are wider cultural issues that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur, and in order to minimise it happening again, we may:

- Dedicate more teaching time to a particular issue or topic;
- Deliver additional staff training

The designated safeguarding lead will refer to relevant assessment tools and guidance as appropriate, such as:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) part five
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school
- Behaviour in schools
- School suspension and permanent exclusion
- Stop it Now Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool
- NSCP Thresholds Document (note: this is currently under review)
- NSCP Safeguarding Children Procedures
- When to call the police – guidance for schools and colleges

When appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead may seek further advice from local or national safeguarding contacts.

Appendix B: Types of abuse

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse 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
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- 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
- Verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling

Sexual abuse involves forcing, causing or inciting 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. Children are more likely to know their abuser than not, and under-13s can never legally consent to sexual activity

The activities may involve:

- physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or penetration

with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing.

- 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.

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 caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Provide a suitable education

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

Children with Medical Conditions—A safeguarding referral would only be needed where an incident highlighted concern that the child or young person might be at an increased risk of being neglected, abused or exploited by persons inside or outside of their family unit because of their medical condition. This might occur where relevant information about a child or young person's medical condition is not provided to a school, college or setting, or where they are repeatedly sent without essential medication, thereby putting the individual at risk.

Children who are absent from education—Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation (particularly county lines), or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of FGM, honour or faith-based abuse or forced marriage.

Many circumstances can cause a child to be missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect.
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM.
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families.
- Come from the families of service personnel.
- Go missing or run away from home or care.

- Are supervised by the youth justice system.
- Cease to attend a school.
- Come from new migrant families.

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence, dealing with persistently absent pupils and children missing education to help identify the risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

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

This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements for sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

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

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

Children with family members in prison

Are at risk of poor outcomes as a result of poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. School and college staff should be aware that children who have experienced parental imprisonment are more likely to be absent (or excluded) than their peers, to experience mental ill health and drug and alcohol misuse; they are also less likely to be in education, training or employment in later life. Staff should understand the need for tailored, trauma-informed and sensitive support that can help mitigate potential harm and help encourage stability.

Child criminal exploitation

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

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

The victim can be exploited even when the activity appears to be consensual. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including sexual identity, cognitive ability, having a physical or learning disability, or being neurodivergent, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

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

Indicators of CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions which could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal and sexual exploitation,
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education
- Not taking part in education

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

County Lines

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

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

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

Serious violence

Signs that a child is at risk from, or involved with serious violent crime include:

- increased absence from school;
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups;
- a significant decline in performance;
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing;
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries; and/or
- unexplained gifts or new possessions, which could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

There are a range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as

- being male;
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school; and/or
- having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

If a member of staff suspects a child is involved in or at risk of serious violent crime, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority’s children’s social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Child sexual exploitation

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

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

CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, e.g., they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Children and young people often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

CSE can include both physical contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity. It can also happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. CSE may also occur without the victim's immediate knowledge, for example through others copying videos or images.

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

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

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

Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

- Teach road safety, personal safety and travel safety through the curriculum, assemblies and enrichment activities.
- Provide age-appropriate education on stranger awareness, healthy relationships, online safety and recognising unsafe situations.
- Promote safe and responsible behaviour when walking, cycling, travelling by public transport or being driven to and from school.
- Provide cycle and pedestrian safety training where available.
- Share safeguarding, travel and road safety information with parents/carers through newsletters, the school website and other communications.
- Maintain appropriate supervision arrangements at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Work with parents/carers to support safe collection arrangements and ensure any changes are communicated promptly.
- Liaise with the Local Authority, Police and other agencies where concerns are identified regarding pupil safety on journeys to and from school.

- Encourage pupils to report any concerns, incidents or unsafe situations experienced while travelling to or from school.
- Promote awareness of local safeguarding risks and reinforce strategies to help pupils stay safe within the community.

In order to keep children safe at school, we:

- Maintain a strong safeguarding culture where the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers and visitors understand and follow safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- Provide a safe, secure and well-supervised environment for pupils throughout the school day.
- Deliver safeguarding education through PSHE, RSHE, computing, assemblies and other curriculum opportunities.
- Teach pupils how to recognise abuse, exploitation, harassment, bullying and unsafe behaviours and how to seek help.
- Ensure pupils know who they can speak to if they have a concern and how to report worries or incidents.
- Follow robust procedures for managing visitors, site security and access to school premises.
- Carry out appropriate risk assessments for activities, trips, visits and individual pupils where required.
- Promote positive behaviour, inclusion, respect and healthy relationships through the curriculum and school ethos.
- Monitor attendance, behaviour and wellbeing to identify children who may require additional support.
- Work effectively with parents/carers and external agencies to safeguard children and promote their welfare.
- Take all safeguarding concerns seriously and respond promptly in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- Regularly review safeguarding practices, policies and procedures to ensure they remain effective and reflect current statutory guidance

In the event that anyone has concerns about child abduction or community safety incidents, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale

and at speed online) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

Cyber-dependent crimes include;

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

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If we have concerns about a child and possible risk of being drawn into cybercrime, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. We may also

Refer to Family Help/Early Help services.

Pastoral support and mentoring within school.

Individual support plans and targeted interventions.

Access to counselling, emotional wellbeing or mental health support.

Parenting support programmes and family-based interventions.

Multi-agency support through Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings where appropriate.

Referral to specialist services where additional needs are identified.

Attendance, behaviour and wellbeing support.

Ongoing monitoring and review of progress and outcomes.

and will refer to children's social care if we think a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering harm.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse (abuse in intimate personal relationships between children) and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse.

The abuse can encompass but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Children may experience domestic abuse directly, witness domestic abuse, hear domestic abuse or experience its wider

effects. Such experiences can have significant short and long-term impacts on wellbeing, behaviour, mental health and educational outcomes. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

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

Older children may also experience domestic abuse and/or violence in their own personal relationships. See Appendix A: Child-on-child abuse, including harassment and violence, for more details.

At Overstone Park School, we are working in partnership with North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council, and Northamptonshire Police to identify and provide appropriate support to pupils who have experienced domestic abuse in their household; nationally, this scheme is called Operation Encompass. To achieve this, Northamptonshire Police will share information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) about all domestic incidents where one of our pupils has been affected. On receipt of any information, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide on the appropriate support the child requires; this could be silent or overt.

All information sharing and resulting actions will be undertaken in accordance with the '[NSCP Protocol for Domestic Abuse – Notifications to Schools](#)'. We will record this information and store it in accordance with the record-keeping procedures outlined in this policy.

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

Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The DSL [and deputy/deputies] will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the local housing authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures).

Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also refer the case to children's social care.

Honour or faith-based abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)

Racism and faith-targeted abuse can significantly affect a child's welfare, wellbeing and sense of safety.

Honour or faith-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including FGM, forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in this context often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

All forms of HBA are abuse and will be handled and escalated as such. All staff will be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA or already having suffered it. If staff have a concern, they will speak to the DSL, who will activate local safeguarding procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 10 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
 - Having difficulty walking, sitting or standing, or looking uncomfortable.
 - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously).
 - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
 - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
 - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE.
 - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period.
 - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour.
 - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations.
 - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem.
 - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs.

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practicing FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practiced in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
 - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
 - Having a limited level of integration within UK society
 - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
 - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
 - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM

- Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to take into account the context of the discussion)
- Being unexpectedly absent from school
- Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not exhaustive.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. 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. Forced marriage legislation applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

Threats can be physical, emotional, or psychological. Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e. we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place.
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer.
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fmfco.gov.uk if required.
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate.

Modern Slavery and Trafficking

Modern slavery and trafficking are forms of child abuse. Safeguarding referrals will be made where indicators suggest a child may be a victim of trafficking, servitude, forced labour or criminal exploitation.

Private Fostering

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

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

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

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

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

School staff should notify the designated safeguarding lead when they become aware of private fostering arrangements. The designated safeguarding lead will speak to the child's family to confirm they are aware of their duty to inform the LA. The school itself has a duty to inform the local authority of the private fostering arrangements.

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

Preventing radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism.

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

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

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological

cause

Schools have a duty to prevent children from being drawn into terrorism. The DSL will undertake **Prevent awareness training** and ensure staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to identify children at risk.

We will assess the risk of children in our school being drawn into terrorism. This assessment will be based on an understanding of the potential risk in our local area, in collaboration with our local safeguarding partners and local police force. We will ensure that suitable internet filtering is in place and equip our pupils to stay safe online at school and at home.

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

Staff will be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour. The government website [Educate Against Hate](#) and the charity [NSPCC](#) say that signs that a pupil is being radicalised can include:

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

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or may be victims of bullying or discrimination. These signs can also be part of normal teenage behaviour, so staff should trust their instincts and seek advice if something feels wrong. If staff are concerned about a pupil, they will follow our procedures set out in Section 9 of this policy, including discussing their concerns with the DSL. Staff should always take action if they are worried.

Further information on the school's measures to prevent radicalisation is set out in other school policies and procedures.

Missing pupils

Our procedures are designed to ensure that a missing child is found and returned to effective supervision as soon as possible. If a child goes missing, we will:

- Remain calm and act immediately upon becoming aware that a child is missing.
- Ensure that a member of staff stays with the remaining children and maintains appropriate supervision.
- Conduct an immediate search of the school premises, including classrooms, toilets, communal areas, outdoor spaces and any other locations where the child may reasonably be.
- Check attendance records, signing-in/out systems and speak to staff who may have recently seen the child.
- Inform the Principal, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately.
- Contact the child's parents/carers as soon as possible to establish whether they have any information about the child's whereabouts.
- If the child cannot be located within a reasonable period, or if there are concerns about the child's safety, contact the Police without delay and follow any advice provided.
- Provide the Police with all relevant information, including a description of the child, clothing worn, known vulnerabilities, medical needs and circumstances surrounding the incident.
- Continue searching and liaising with parents/carers and the Police until the child is located.
- Ensure that the child is appropriately supported on their return and that any safeguarding concerns are considered by the DSL.
- Consider whether referrals to Children's Social Care or other agencies are required.
- Complete a written record of the incident, including actions taken, timescales, people involved, outcomes and any follow-up actions.
- Record the incident on the school's safeguarding recording system, My Concern and retain records in accordance with the school's safeguarding and data protection procedures.
- Review the circumstances of the incident to identify any lessons learned and implement additional control measures where required to reduce the risk of recurrence.

An appropriate member of staff will supervise and support the child following their return to school. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider whether any further welfare checks, risk assessments or support plans are required and will ensure that parents/carers are informed of the outcome and any actions taken.

Non-collection of children

If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day, we will:

- Ensure the child remains supervised at all times by an appropriate member of staff.
- Reassure the child and ensure they remain safe, comfortable and supported while arrangements are made.

- Check the child's records for the parents'/carers' contact details and any alternative emergency contacts.
- Attempt to contact the parent/carer immediately using all available telephone numbers.
- If the parent/carer cannot be contacted, attempt to contact the authorised emergency contacts listed on the child's records.
- Record all attempts to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts, including times, methods used and outcomes.
- Ensure that at least two members of staff remain on site with the child whenever possible.
- Continue efforts to contact the parent/carer and authorised contacts while maintaining appropriate supervision of the child.
- If the child has not been collected within a reasonable period and no contact has been made with a parent/carer or authorised contact, the Principal, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or senior member of staff will be informed.
- Where there are concerns about the child's welfare, or if no responsible adult can be contacted, the school will seek advice from Children's Social Care and/or the Police and follow their guidance.
- The child will only be released to a parent/carer or another adult who has been authorised by the parent/carer and whose identity has been verified.
- When the child is collected, staff will discuss the delay with the collecting adult and remind them of the school's collection procedures where appropriate.

The incident will be recorded in the school's safeguarding portal. My Concern, including:

- The child's name.
- The date and time of the incident.
- The names of staff involved.
- All attempts made to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts.
- Advice received from any external agencies.
- The time the child was collected and by whom.
- Any follow-up actions required.

The Principal and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead will review the circumstances of the incident and consider whether any further action, support or safeguarding measures are required. Repeated incidents may be addressed through the school's safeguarding procedures and, where appropriate, discussed with relevant agencies.

Appendix C: Safer recruitment

We adhere to Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education at all times. We consider safeguarding throughout the recruitment process, including when defining and advertising roles.

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Where appropriate, we will hold copies of these checks in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

Pre-appointment safer recruitment

We will include the following in all job advertisements:

- our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- clear confirmation that safeguarding checks will be undertaken;
- the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification; and
- whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020.

Where a role involves engaging in regulated activity relevant to children, we will include a statement in the application form or elsewhere in the information provided to applicants that it is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

All applicants will be provided with:

- a copy of the school's child protection policy and practices, and we will refer to links on our website.

Applicants

We require applicants to provide:

- personal details, current and former names, current address and their national insurance number;
- details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving;
- full employment history (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work), including reasons for any gaps in employment;

- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award;
- details of referees/references; and
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification.

We will not accept copies of curriculum vitae in place of an application form.

Shortlisting and selection

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. For more details of what this will contain, please see Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

At least two people will shortlist candidates and explore any potential concerns, including inconsistencies and/or gaps in employment.

We will seek references on all shortlisted candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the applicant's suitability to work with children.

When asked to provide references, we will ensure the information confirms whether we are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and provide the facts of any substantiated safeguarding allegations.

As part of due diligence checks, we will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any publicly available incidents or issues that we may wish to explore with candidates at interview.

New staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- verify a candidate's identity. This includes demonstrating awareness that individuals may change their name. Best practice is checking the name on their birth certificate, where this is available;
- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children regardless of whether they are supervised or not);
- obtain a separate children's barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available;
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities;
- verify the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals;
- If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate;
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate; and

- ensure that an applicant to be employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order.
- Check that those candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the Secretary of State.
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records check for overseas applicants.
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach.
- We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment in the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Regulated activity includes responsibility, on a frequent basis, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children. From 1 September 2026, the previous supervision exemption for unpaid activity no longer applies. Relevant activity may therefore constitute regulated activity whether or not the volunteer is supervised. Where an individual will undertake regulated activity, the school will obtain an enhanced DBS check with children barred-list information and will ensure that the individual is not barred from working with children.
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.

Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct;
or
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous

- Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- The 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e., they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
 - The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity.
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children.
- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.
- For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

An enhanced DBS check with children barred-list information will be obtained for

every volunteer undertaking regulated activity. This includes relevant teaching, training, instruction, care or supervision undertaken frequently, on more than three days in a 30-day period, or overnight where the statutory overnight condition is met. Activity undertaken across more than one setting will be considered collectively where required. All volunteers assisting with overnight school trips will be assessed under these requirements. For volunteers who are not undertaking regulated activity, the school will complete and retain a written risk assessment when deciding what level of DBS check and supervision is appropriate.

We will:

- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers regardless of whether they are supervised or not if they are classed as undertaking more than 3 days volunteering in a 30-day period in a role that involves teaching, training, instructing or supervising children
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment.
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

All members of the Governing Body will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008). [Section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have retained or been delegated any management responsibilities.]
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Checking the identity and suitability of visitors

All visitors must verify their identity to staff's satisfaction and leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit.

If the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will check their credentials and reason for visiting before allowing them to enter. Visitors should be ready to produce identification.

Visitors are expected to sign the visitors' book and wear a visitor's badge.

Visitors to the school who are visiting for a professional purpose, such as educational psychologists and school improvement officers, will be asked to show photo ID and the

organisation sending the professional, such as the LA or educational psychology service, will provide annually written confirmation that an enhanced DBS check with barred list information has been carried out.

All other visitors, including visiting speakers, will be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. We will not invite into the school any speaker who is known to disseminate extremist views, and will carry out appropriate checks to ensure that any individual or organisation using school facilities is not seeking to disseminate extremist views or radicalise pupils or staff.

Appendix D: How the school responds to allegations that may meet the harms threshold.

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

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

It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the school or elsewhere. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO).

We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation. We will apply our procedures for dealing with allegations with common sense and judgement.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension will not be the default position, and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will suspend an individual only if we have considered all other available options and there is no reasonable alternative. We will seek views from our personnel adviser, the local authority designated officer/s, the police and/or Children's Social Care (as appropriate).

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned.

- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children.
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation, and there has been a deliberate act to deceive

- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, where the principal is the subject of the allegation) – the ‘Principal’ – will take the following steps:

- Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children’s social care services. (The Principal may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the Principal will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police.
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children’s social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children’s social care services are involved, the Principal will share with the individual only the information agreed with those agencies.
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children’s social care services, as appropriate.
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension considered and why they were rejected. Provide written confirmation of the suspension to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and provide a named school contact and their contact details.
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the

allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.

- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or Children's Social Care services as appropriate.
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate.

Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The Principal will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice

- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child
- If the school is made aware that the Secretary of State has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.
- Where the police are involved, wherever possible, the Governing Body will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Timescales

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week.
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days.
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The principal will discuss with the designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the Principal and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required. If they think the individual has engaged in conduct that has harmed (or is likely to harm) a child, or otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child, they must refer the matter to the DBS.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the Principal and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the Principal will consider how best to facilitate this.

The Principal will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the principal, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the principal, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.

Confidentiality

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The Principal will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared.
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality.
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation.
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises.

Record-keeping

The Principal will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation.
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved.
- Notes of any action taken and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above).

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file, and provide a copy to the individual.

Where records contain information about allegations of sexual abuse, we will preserve these. We will retain all other records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer. Records of any allegation found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether we can improve the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff.
- The duration of the suspension.
- Whether or not the suspension was justified.
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

For referrals for adults in education and further information on the role of the Designated Officer (LADO), visit:

<https://forms.westnorthants.gov.uk/xfp/form/922>

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub: 0300 126 7000

If it is decided that the allegation does not meet the threshold for safeguarding, it will be returned to the employer for consideration under the school's internal procedures.

Appendix E: Online Safety.

Teaching pupils to stay safe online and keeping children safe online in school are crucial parts of safeguarding. Safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material is essential. We take a whole-school approach to online safety to protect and educate pupils, students, and staff in their use of technology, and to establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any concerns where appropriate.

Our approach to online safety runs through every aspect of our work with children, including (but not limited to):

- curriculum planning and RSHE;
- teacher training;
- the role and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding lead; and
- parental engagement.

This appendix complements and should be read alongside our Online Safety policy. Staff must read the Online Safety Policy alongside our Code of Conduct regarding personal online behaviour. All staff receive online safety training at induction, with regular updates and formal annual training thereafter.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) takes lead responsibility for online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. The DSL attends training regularly to ensure they understand the unique risks associated with online safety and are confident they have the relevant knowledge and up-to-date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school.

Risks to children

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

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories,
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes,
- conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated

- using AI and online bullying,
- commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

We refer to these four areas of risk when planning our approach to online safety and ensuring we safeguard children against a broad spectrum of potential online harms.

Filtering and monitoring

In order to keep children safe when using school IT equipment, weIn order to keep children safe when using school IT equipment, we:

Provide a safe and secure online environment for all pupils through effective filtering and monitoring systems.

Use filtering software to block access to inappropriate, harmful, illegal or extremist content in line with statutory guidance and the age of our pupils.

Use monitoring systems that alert relevant staff to potential safeguarding concerns, including searches, messages or online activity that may indicate a risk of harm to a child. Regularly review the effectiveness of our filtering and monitoring arrangements and ensure that they are appropriate to our safeguarding needs and technical infrastructure.

Ensure that senior leaders, governors and safeguarding staff understand the filtering and monitoring systems in place and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Teach pupils how to stay safe online through the curriculum, including PSHE, RSHE, Computing and dedicated online safety activities.

Educate pupils about safe online behaviour, cyberbullying, online relationships, privacy settings, misinformation, online grooming, exploitation and the reporting of concerns.

Ensure that all staff receive appropriate online safety and safeguarding training, including recognising and responding to online risks.

Maintain acceptable use agreements for pupils, staff and visitors outlining expectations for the safe and responsible use of technology.

Supervise and monitor pupils' use of technology within school and take appropriate action where unsafe or inappropriate use is identified.

Provide clear reporting routes for pupils, staff and parents/carers to raise concerns relating to online safety.

Investigate and respond to online safety incidents in accordance with the school's safeguarding, behaviour and child protection procedures.

Work in partnership with parents/carers to promote safe and responsible use of technology at home and provide guidance and resources where appropriate.

Ensure that personal data is processed securely and that systems are managed in accordance with data protection requirements.

Regularly review our online safety practices, risk assessments and procedures to ensure that they remain effective and reflect current safeguarding requirements.

Where filtering or monitoring systems identify a safeguarding concern, appropriate staff will review the information and refer it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as necessary. Any concerns identified will be recorded and managed in accordance with the school's child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Staff devices: To safeguard children and protect sensitive information, staff devices are managed and used in accordance with the school's safeguarding, online safety, data protection and acceptable use policies. We:

- Require all staff to use school-issued devices wherever possible for school business.
- Ensure that school devices are protected by passwords, encryption, antivirus software and appropriate security updates.
- Implement filtering and monitoring systems on staff devices where appropriate to support safeguarding and compliance with statutory requirements.
- Require staff to lock devices when unattended and prevent unauthorised access to pupil information.
- Ensure that safeguarding concerns, child protection records and personal data are stored and shared only through approved and secure school systems.
- Prohibit the use of personal devices for photographing, recording or storing images of pupils unless specifically authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- Require staff to use school email accounts and approved communication platforms when communicating with pupils, parents/carers and colleagues.
- Prohibit staff from communicating with pupils through personal social media accounts, personal email addresses or personal messaging applications.
- Ensure staff report any lost, stolen or compromised devices immediately to school leaders and/or the IT team.
- Monitor the use of school devices and networks in accordance with data protection legislation, safeguarding requirements and the school's acceptable use agreement.
- Provide training and guidance to staff on cyber security, information security, online safety and professional conduct when using technology.
- Ensure that any concerns identified through the use of staff devices or monitoring systems are reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Require staff to comply with all relevant policies relating to acceptable use, online safety, remote working, confidentiality and data protection.

Any misuse of school devices or systems may be investigated and managed in accordance with the school's disciplinary, safeguarding and data protection procedures.

We are mindful that “over-blocking” can lead to unreasonable restrictions on what children can be taught regarding online teaching and safeguarding. The appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems will be informed in part by the risk assessment required by the Prevent Duty.

The school recognises that mobile phones and other personal smart devices can present safeguarding risks if not used appropriately. We therefore have clear expectations for pupils' use of mobile phones.

Generative AI-

The school recognises that Artificial Intelligence technologies may create safeguarding risks through:

- deepfake imagery;
- AI-generated sexual content;
- impersonation;
- misinformation;
- image manipulation;
- exploitation through AI chatbots;
- technology-facilitated abuse.

Concerns relating to AI will be managed through existing safeguarding procedures.

Pupil mobile phones

The school recognises that mobile phones and other personal smart devices can present safeguarding risks if not used appropriately. We therefore have clear expectations for pupils' use of mobile phones.

We:

- Require pupils to follow the school's Mobile Phone Policy at all times.
- Expect mobile phones to be switched off and stored securely during the school day unless permission has been given by a member of staff for an educational or medical purpose.
- Prohibit the use of mobile phones in toilets, changing rooms and any area where privacy is expected.
- Do not tolerate the use of mobile phones to bully, harass, intimidate, threaten or abuse others.
- Prohibit pupils from taking, sharing or possessing inappropriate images, videos or recordings of themselves or others.
- Educate pupils about the risks associated with social media, messaging apps, image sharing, online exploitation, cyberbullying and harmful online content.
- Encourage pupils to report any safeguarding concerns arising from the use of mobile phones or online activity immediately.
- Investigate incidents involving mobile phones in accordance with the school's safeguarding, behaviour and child protection procedures.
- Work with parents/carers and, where necessary, external agencies to address concerns relating to mobile phone use.
- May confiscate mobile phones when there is reasonable suspicion that they have been used in breach of school rules or where there are safeguarding concerns, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Remote learning

Use approved school platforms, systems and communication channels for remote learning. Ensure that staff delivering remote learning understand and follow the school's safeguarding, online safety, behaviour and staff code of conduct policies.

Provide pupils and parents/carers with clear guidance on the safe use of technology and online learning platforms.

Maintain appropriate professional boundaries in all online communications between staff and pupils.

Take reasonable steps to ensure that online lessons and activities are conducted in a safe and secure environment.

Use filtering and monitoring systems, where applicable, to support the safe use of school devices and networks.

Promote online safety through the curriculum and provide ongoing reminders about safe and responsible online behaviour.

Work with parents/carers to support children's safety and wellbeing while learning at home.

Follow up concerns relating to engagement, attendance, welfare or wellbeing in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

How to report online safety concerns

If pupils, parents or staff have any concerns about online safety, or need to make a disclosure, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy without delay. The contact details for these members of staff can be found on the front of this policy.

Cybersecurity

We ensure we have appropriate security protection procedures in place to safeguard systems, staff, and children, and we periodically review their effectiveness to keep pace with evolving cybercrime technologies.

Regular review of our approach to online safety

We recognise that technology, and the risks and harms associated with it, evolve and change rapidly.

We carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks their children face.

More information

For more information about online safety, please see Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026).

Appendix F: Safeguarding Reporting Flowchart.

Procedure Flow Chart

